Chapter Two

'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue': Representations of the British Empire in the Firm's Pantomime Productions 1882 - 1914
London is becoming frightfully crowded, and crossing the streets will soon become an impossibility, unless it be to go over on top of the buses from one to the other. The London streets are most narrow, which is a great disadvantage to the traffic especially at Jubilee time. I was looking round the City yesterday at the decorations which are beginning to assume great proportions. When all is completed London will look like one of Williamson and Musgrove's pantomimes. The decorating is very elaborate. Most of the statues are being draped with crimson and yellow hangings and columns coloured with crimson and gold are erected at intervals along the streets from which flags and artificial flowers are hung across the street. The monument has strings and flags from it and from all the windows bunting is to be seen. Even the dingy smoky building of St. Paul's looks gay in crimson cloth.  

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1 Undated letter from George Pontin, scene-painter of Kingsholm Scenic Studios, Gloucester to Frederick McCubbin. Pontin first visited Australia in 1885 and the reference to the Jubilee refers to Victoria's in 1897 MS 8525 Box 987/2 Frederick McCubbin Papers, State Library of Victoria
Introduction

Scene painter George Pontin's image of the streets of London looking like a Williamson and Musgrove pantomime during Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations uncannily highlights the important way in which Australian pantomimes participated in celebrating British Imperialism up to at least 1914. It suggests a cultural connection which Michael Booth (1981) also noted between British Imperialism and the 'Victorian spectacular theatre'.

The elaboration of theatrical spectacle corresponded to the elaboration of urban architecture from the 1820s until the end of the nineteenth century. The rapid growth of the metropolis and other cities, the concomitantly rising prosperity of the nation, and the spread of empire and mercantile imperialism meant the construction of docks, warehouses, bridges, factories, gasworks, railway stations, hotels, banks, department stores, office blocks, government buildings, insurance offices, and exhibition halls on a scale previously unimaginable: massive monuments to wealth, imperial glory, and commercial supremacy, self-important spectacle productions in real stone, brick, steel, iron, and glass. The fact that many of these same monuments appeared repeatedly on the canvas of scene painters is evidence that the new architectural environment was too significant and too much a source of pleasure to be left outside the theatre. Conditioned to mass, grandeur, and elaborate ornamentation in the buildings about them, it is not surprising that the public responded enthusiastically to the same sort of thing translated into the values of theatrical production. Indeed, demand, creation, and response must have been almost simultaneous: managers, scene painters, and stage carpenters were members of that same larger public and also moved into the world outside the theatre. The developing taste for luxury, ostentation and outward show, which defined personal and public status in an age that could increasingly afford all three, was naturally reflected on the stage as well as on the street and inside the home (3).

George Pontin's letter to Frederick McCubbin also raises the question of how Williamson's pantomimes imaginatively created a sense of 'empire'. Post-colonial theorists in Australia, such as Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1989), have argued that white European settlers 'faced the problem of establishing their "indigeneity" and distinguishing it from their continuing sense of their European inheritance' (135). However, Williamson's theatre suggests that dominant figures shaping Australian theatre also creatively attempted to replicate the 'Old World' and framed any sense of indigeneity within notions of imperialist expansionist policies which, according to Raymond Betts (1975), were part of a 'dramatic alteration of spatiotemporal relationships' in European thought during the nineteenth century' (10). The corollary to this was that far-flung regions of the empire offered a space for 'dynamic action and
personal fulfilment' (Betts, 14). This meant that non-expansionism was thought to be equivalent to cultural atrophy.

Williamson makes clear in *Life Story* that he regarded Australian theatre as a space to be used opportunistically to make his fortune and at the same time as a place in which to 'develop' European theatre. My analysis of the presentation of 'empire' in the Firm's pantomime productions investigates more specifically than Chapter One how Williamson's theatre 'business' was connected to pre-1914 imperialist rhetoric and how this, in turn, further altered the pantomime's potential to be 'localised'.

The notion of Australia as an Anglo-Saxondom was contested around how supportive Australia should be of the Empire. Ernest Scott's 1911 review of 'Australia and the Empire' illustrates that this involved whether or not Australia should support British militarism and thus, for instance, pay for a British naval fleet in Australian waters.

There are many people in Queensland, for instance, who have a vivid recollection of the bitter criticism levelled against the then Premier of that State, Sir Samuel Griffith (Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia), for his share in bringing about, some 20 years ago, what was contemptuously styled the 'Naval Tribute'; an arrangement by which the six Australian colonies, as they then were, agreed to pay a total annual subsidy of £126,000 to the Home Government, in return for the maintenance in these waters of an additional special Australian squadron, consisting of five third-class cruisers and two torpedo gun-boats. Queensland's share of this 'tribute', on a population basis, was about £12,000. Those were the days when 'Imperialist' was synonymous with 'Jingo' as a term of reproach, and a writer or speaker could count upon a sympathetic audience when he declared that 'Australia was being dragged into European complications to serve England's own greedy and selfish ends' - 'European' complications, since the 'portent of the East' had hardly yet appeared above the horizon. It was even hinted that the real reason for the presence of the English warships on our coasts was that they might overawe the people of Australia, should they show any signs of resenting the mother country's insolent lordship. But now, England's quarrels, England's interests, are ours also, and Queensland, which once grudged the payment of a few thousand pounds a year to the British Admiralty for its protection, is proud, in common with all the other states, to form part of a Commonwealth which cheerfully faces an expenditure of millions in order to furnish its quota of a great Imperial fleet, and even considers that as only the first instalment of its task. No doubt the people of Australia look upon their ships as primarily designed to protect their own coasts, but the leaders of all political parties in the Commonwealth have made it clear that in case of need they will be available for the defence of the Empire as a whole, wherever their services may be required (Scott 1911, 19).

Similarly, historians have noted the different public reactions in 1887 and 1897 to celebrating Queen Victoria's Jubilee: the former was dampened by republican cries in the Sydney Town Hall calling for 'three cheers to liberty' while the latter was enthusiastically taken up and confirmed Australia's support for the Boer War (Alomes

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 141
Stephen Alomes argues that this growth in imperialist fervour ironically came 'after relative British economic and military decline, [which] would see an increasing call on the colonies in economics and defence and the gradual closing off of the British economy from the world' (183). This was further related to Australian fears of being invaded by the 'yellow hordes' and the belief that 'let England be defeated and humiliated, no matter where, and the colonies would suffer for it.' These issues were to 'produce a predominantly imperial patriotism in Australia, even before it was finally sealed in the blood of World War I' (Alomes 1993, 173).

The prevalence of military-style spectacles in Williamson's pantomime productions is overwhelming. These highlight the relationship of militarist notions to an Australian 'imperialist' nationalism. Indeed, 'imperialism', 'patriotism', 'nationalism' seem interchangeable descriptors of both the pantomimes' 'military' spectacles and Australian pre-1914 politics. As such, they also parallel the way Music Hall and other forms of popular entertainment provided audiences with what J. S. Bratton termed 'acts of supremacy' as they 'made an obvious contribution to that much-discussed national mood. They played a large part in the creation and propagation of the 'traditions' of the nation, supplanting local, fragmented and potentially subversive histories' (Bratton 1991, 5). Outlining the importance of Australian popular entertainment for the propagation of imperialist ideology, Stephen Alomes (1993) notes:

The new power of the mass media and the attempted assertion of power by working-class groups were most frequently met by the use of the idea of Empire and its attendant rituals and propaganda which permeated so much of popular culture and everyday life. This was as true in the commercial cities of Australia as in the industrial cities of Britain. Formal socialisation into Empire was paralleled by the opportunities for Imperial entertainment for old as well as young. Socialisation into Empire by schooling, by reading, by theatre, by ritual, by advertising, by tourism (and the idea of tourism), by patriotic religion and by ruling science and pseudo-science culminated into a major political as well as social and cultural force (180).

It is thus possible to see how the pantomime (like other forms of popular entertainment) constructed celebratory histories of British Imperialism in Australia. But as Bratton (1991) also makes clear these cultural negotiations were never simple and involved both the identification with heroic images of Anglo-Saxon culture and the
presentation of 'potentially contradictory and anti-heroic figures and actions, to be incorporated rather than suppressed by the narrative' (5).

Most significantly, if the Firm's representation of 'England and its other' resulted in the visual absence of 'Australia' on stage, then theatre management should be seen as vitally implicated in representing imperialist rhetoric on stage. Theatre managers were themselves represented as empire-builders. Furthermore, I believe the imperialist historiography involved in framing Williamson in Australian theatre history is ideologically related to the Firm's representation of British Militarism.

The relationship is not a simple 'causal' one as the pantomime's creation of an Anglo-Saxondom through the 'specularisation' of women reveals. Women were used to construct both an 'utopian' and specifically 'patriotic' sense of empire. The fact that the 'boys in the Red, White and Blue' were, ironically, the 'ladies of the ballet' cross-dressed to represent 'Australian' soldiers moving off to fight for England is both absurdly festive and politically powerful. The construction of 'patriotic women' and 'fighting men' literally danced around gender archetypes as the female body was used as both the imaginative embodiment of desire for going to war and the weaker vessel which needed to be protected from its advances.

In order to outline these complex cultural negotiations, this chapter will consist of three parts. The first will examine representations of Williamson, the theatrical empire builder, in Australian theatre history. The second will outline the prevalence of images of British Militarism in the Firm's productions and the third will specifically focus on *Little Red Riding Hood*, the 'Boer War' pantomime of 1899, and *Cinderella*, the First World War pantomime of 1914. Fortunately, the New South Wales Colonial Secretary Papers of 1899 contain Williamson's correspondence with Premier John See requesting that the sending off of the troops to the Transvaal be incorporated within the Sydney production of that year. Similarly, the typed manuscript of the 1914 *Cinderella* shows that the pantomime was used as part of a recruitment drive. These productions foreground how political pantomimes were in

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Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 143
content and in dramatic effect despite their manager's apolitical notions of staging 'spectacle'.

Indeed, I will make the case that pantomime achieved in political terms what Brecht understood was needed for 'epic theatre' when he defined it as a 'Theatre for Pleasure' as well as a 'Theatre for Instruction' (Brecht 1965, 69). The difference between Williamson's theatre and Brecht's 'political' theatre, however, was that the latter refused to accept that theatre could and/or should ever be, as stated by Williamson in Life Story, merely 'a distraction' and believed that audiences should receive 'instruction' by way of cultural and political 'universal' values (Life Story 1913, 28). Yet, as with English Music Hall, the pantomime's 'uncritical support for the monarch, the Empire and the government of the day was not considered "political"' (Summerfield 1986, 42).

This returns us once again to reviewing how the pantomime's military-style spectacles were part of the everyday, as suggested in the ubiquitous use of military-style organisation in schools and the use of military motifs in commercial advertisements such as that for 'Dr Waugh's Baking Powder' (Plate 21). Perhaps then, the pantomime is another illustration of what Bratton identifies through George Rignold's and Laurence Olivier's presentations of Henry V as an ideological operation in which 'consent is waiting to be organised' (Bratton 1991, 14). Indeed, such a review of militarism suggests the circuitousness of the pantomime's imperialist rhetoric, also acknowledged in the World War I song 'We're here because we're here because we're here.....'.

Was the pantomime's representation of imperialism, as Janice Carlisle (1991) contends, a ritual of 'social order and control' (176) or was it, as Jim Davis (1994) argues, a much more ambivalent enactment of British supremacy which 'employed music hall singers who presumably subverted, in every possible way, the respectable middle class tone to which it arguably aspired'? Certainly, Williamson's productions suggest a continuity of 'imperialist' effects which gives Carlisle's viewpoint much plausibility. But, at the same time, given the ad libbing and other 'performance'
Dr Waugh's Baking Powder

Always in front

The Call to Waugh
elements such as cross-dressing, Davis's reading of the English pantomime's continuing satiric potential must also be kept in mind. My own reading is that the multiplicity of effects generated by the pantomime supported military imperialism despite the theatre manager's inclusion of potentially subversive theatre practices such as travesty roles and music hall routines. Indeed, the productions suggest something of the fervour of Sydney and Melbourne's jingoistic celebration of British military campaigns, and their acceptance of the 'White Australia Policy' in what became the two predominant characteristics of the pantomime, its spectacle and its 'racist' humour.

However, Williamson's pantomimes also show the sophistication needed to weave 'racist' sentiments into a celebration of British Militarism. As a result, while the productions were never counter-hegemonic in the sense of suggesting pacifism or racial and gender equality, they do show that changing perspectives are always accommodated within hegemonic discourses. This much we also know from Foucault's analysis of power. Therefore what is most noticeable is the way that 'sex' is the primary means by which the pantomime production portrays its sense of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority and also its sense of respectable middle class 'family' values. David Mayer (1974) reminds us in 'The Sexuality of Pantomime', that the scantily dressed pantomime boy and Ballet Ladies of late nineteenth-century pantomime were 'one of the few genteel middle class entertainments (the circus being another) where the pleasing configurations of a woman's body, clothed in tunic and fleshings could be observed by all the family without shame or guilt' (56). Certainly, the pantomimes illustrate how patriotism and eroticism were inextricably implicated in framing British imperialism within an Australian 'Anglo-Saxondom'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
2.1 Imperialist Historiography and the 'Legitimation' of J. C. Williamson.

The historiography which frames J. C. Williamson in Australian theatre history is clearly aimed at 'legitimating' his domination of the pre-1914 Australian theatre industry. This has been closely connected to his status as an actor in the American theatre and the success of his first Australian season in 1874. Mark Casson (1979) argues that one of the strategies used by an entrepreneur to deter competition is to 'build up goodwill toward himself in the early stages of exploitation, and thereby hope to make his trading partners suspicious of any competitors who appear' (119). The evidence from newspaper coverage of Williamson during his lifetime suggests that the skill with which he created the 'goodwill' around his name was dependent on his ability to write his own 'history' throughout his thirty-four years in theatre management.

The concept of 'goodwill', still used in business practice today, might be explained, as Steven Connor (1992) does cultural value, as 'the necessity to value'. Regardless of whether or not we speak of 'value' as philosophically existing in an absolute or relative sense, as Connor observes, 'the peculiar torsions in the question of value make for a strange kind of claim upon us, for we can never be entirely separate from the question of value, never fully escape its gravitational pull, nor ever fully inhabit it as our home or ethos' (32). The goodwill around Williamson's name served as the 'trade mark' for his productions, their evaluation inextricably connected to the objectification of his own personality. Therefore, in business terms Williamson became his own commodity. However, the cultural values which allowed him to 'write' himself into the Australian theatre industry between 1882 and 1913 were (ethically) incommensurable with his 'right' to commodify others within that same industry.

Perhaps even more tellingly, Williamson's self-objectification, which exposes itself as narcissistic, was brought about by others (by journalists in fact). Therefore, if, as Hayden White outlines, historical narratives always include a
paradigm of explanation and an interpretative decision along moral and ideological grounds, then from the first biographical account one might read the 'imaginary' Williamson as being reproduced as history or, as Peggy Phelan (1993a) explains, male representations of the male body:

The other (sic) transformed into the image of the Same, an image projected by he who looks at the other in order to see himself. The economy of representation, like the economy of reproduction, takes two and reproduces one (45).

Beginning with the first biographical article in September 1874 in the Australasian Sketcher, Williamson’s public and private personae were transformed into a Oneness which mirrored what Lacan was to name the 'self as other' (Grosz 1990, 32). Interestingly, therefore, what began in that biographical account was a 'paradigm of explanation' which consistently argued throughout the course of his life (and beyond) that Williamson's initial Australian success was a perfect 'mirror' of his previous successes in the American theatre.

The extraordinary success which has attended the appearance of this lady and gentleman is sure to make some account of them acceptable to our readers, and their portraits in the present number, therefore, are only a just acknowledgment of the popularity they have won for themselves in this city. The interest attaching to them is not lessened by the circumstance that they are both natives of America, and have been trained entirely in the theatres of that country. Mr Williamson was born at Mercer, in Pennsylvania, in August 1844. At an early age he removed westward with his family, and was educated at Milwaukee with the purpose of engaging in business pursuits, but when only 16 years old a passion for the stage possessed him, and as is usual with most aspirants for theatrical fame, his leanings in this direction were opposed by his friends. Upon the stage, however, he went, commencing at the lower rungs of the ladder, playing small comedy parts, juvenile parts, now and then an Irish part, utility parts - striving much, hoping more, and making that sort of progress which hard work and limited opportunity infer. After awhile he went to Toronto in Canada, where he remained a year, and then his very laudable ambition led him to New York, where he was so completely unknown that it was only after much disappointment and frequent solicitation that he was engaged at Wallack's theatre. Here he continued five years, long before the end of which period he had fully established his reputation as an actor of eccentric comedy, playing all the current parts commonly included under this designation. He then removed to the Broadway, where for a time he was the principal attraction in Irish and low comedy, but an advantageous offer coming from the house where he had won his metropolitan reputation, he returned there with an improved position. For some time, however, offers had been coming to him from California, and in 1871 he proceeded thither, making his first appearance in San Francisco at the California Theatre, under the management of Mr. John McCulloch, whose name is by this time tolerably well known in Australia. Here, with the exception of occasional starring excursions into the country, including Salt Lake City, he has since continued, notwithstanding frequent invitations to return to New York. His talent has been liberally recognised both by managers and the public, and his position, therefore, has been of the most satisfactory kind.²

² I am, of course, assuming J. C. Williamson was the source of information for this article.
Hence, a causal effect is set up by way of further explaining the struggle and journey towards 'success' which actors commonly underwent in the star-driven theatre industries of America and Australia: only the most worthy succeed. Williamson cannot just be any actor in order to be thought 'successful' but requires star status because, as Richard Dyer (1991) argues for twentieth-century film stars, 'the star phenomenon is defined by an in-built means of authentication' (135).³

With respect to this, the biography of Williamson in Australasian Sketcher is remarkably consistent in its details with numerous writings on Williamson such as Garnet Walch's The Williamsons: Being a Brief Account of the Career of Mr and Mrs Williamson Together with Facts and Figures Relating to the Firm of Williamson, Garner and Musgrove (1885); T. W. H. Leavitt's 'James Cassius Williamson' in Australian Representative Men (1887); 'J. C. Williamson: The Record of a Successful Life' in Table Talk, 17 October 1890; Mrs Charles Bright's 'Mr J. C. Williamson' in The Cosmos Magazine, 30 April 1896 and, of course, the Bookfellow interviews of 1907, reprinted in the Sportsman on 13 March 1912 and also as J. C. Williamson's Life Story Told in His Own Words (1913). All stress his American pedigree and exploit the initial successes of Struck Oil with Melbourne audiences between August and December of 1874. Furthermore, the uncritical use of these articles by post-1913 Australian theatre historians is most noticeable. Williamson's interviews with A. G. Stephens in The Bookfellow in 1907 are particularly significant in this respect. As Life Story (1913), they provide fifteen out of forty-one references in Chapter One of Ian Dicker's A Short Biography of James Cassius Williamson (1974), yet Williamson is not acknowledged by Dicker as the main source of his own history.

Interestingly, Williamson's name and persona continued to be used by the Taits after they took over the company in 1920 through their consistent claims in theatre programmes and annual business reports that the company of 'J. C. Williamson Ltd' was as great as its founder. At the time of the company's centennial celebrations in 1974, Williamson was presented as the primary reason for the

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³ Dyer's explanation of stardom, interestingly based around the film A Star is Born, amounts to describing how stars embody 'authenticating authenticity'.
company's 'success' despite the sixty-one years of theatre productions since his death and the fifty-four years of theatre staged by the five Tait brothers since 1920. It was Sir Frank Tait's daughter, Joan Stegge, who noticed how his image had taken over the public celebrations of 'the Firm's' one hundred years when she wrote to the Australian complaining that:

Although James Cassius Williamson died in 1913, a stranger to the local scene might well be forgiven for thinking that he is still around, and indeed had something to do with the current production of Irene.4

This alerts us again to the fact that the 'primary' sources of evidence with regard to Williamson are journalistic: theatre advertisements, theatre reviews and newspaper interviews - the predominant source of 'primary' evidence for all nineteenth-century theatre histories - and so, historians must consider the co-dependence of the capitalist practices of theatres and newspapers.

Claude Levi-Strauss' concept of myth's signification as occurring in a 'transformational group' serves to highlight how modernist and post-modernist discourses see methodological similarities between 'mythology' and 'history'.5 However, the mythologising potential of journalistic sources was clearly also a concern in the pre-1914 period. More radical journalists, such as those working on the Lone Hand, for instance, voiced their profound concerns as to the accuracy of journalistic sources in assessing the success of theatre enterprises. According to Edmund Fisher's article 'The Business Side of Drama' (1 July 1909), Williamson's company spent £25,000 on newspaper advertisements in 1908/1909 alone, so that historical 'evidence' in newspapers must never be taken at face value. In the August edition of the Lone Hand, Helen Jerome further asserted that:

Any theatrical manager who advertises liberally in a paper receives, by right, the courtesy of its critic...All plays, however bad, are treated to the well-known formula - 'A crowded and enthusiastic audience witnessed, etc' (2 August 1909).

Claude McKay notes in This is the Life (1961) that his work as J. C. Williamson's press secretary involved devising 'free publicity' in newspapers by way

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4 Sir Frank Tait's daughter Joan Stegge wrote to the Australian (16 August 1974) protesting the fact that the Taits were ignored in the ABC documentary of the Firm. Julie Anthony was starring in the J. C. Williamson Ltd production of Irene at the time.
5 Roland Barthes' Mythologies (1972) being apropos.
of contriving newsworthy sensations. On one occasion he used dancer Ivy Schilling as 'shark bait' and contrived, after taking her photograph on the beach in a suitably revealing bathing suit, to have her rescue a boy from 'sharks' off Manly beach (107)! Similarly, Harold Love's (1989) erudite analysis of James Nield makes the partisan bias of theatre criticism abundantly clear. Indeed, Nield's partisan approach in both Melbourne's *Argus* and *Australasian* was in its time a contentious issue, with fellow critic Marcus Clarke openly attacking him in the *Brisbane Courier* on 25 November 1875, claiming that even Williamson was aware that Tahite's [Nield's] praise for him was 'very flattering; if I deserve it in ten years I shall think myself fortunate' (Love, 255).

Nineteenth-century newspapers thus indicate the problematics of reporting 'commercial' success in artistic terms, particularly under the influence of the monopolistic practises of nineteenth-century theatre managers. This is manifestly clear, for instance, in the libel case the management of the Theatre Royal Melbourne brought against the Melbourne *Herald* in June 1874 for adverse criticism of its forthcoming production of *The Princess of Trebizond*. The management of the Royal took particular exception to the following 'offensive' article which appeared on 10 June.

True to their instincts of monopoly, the parsimonious management of the Theatre Royal have secured the Opera-house, and will next week make an attempt to play the fag end of their dramatic company in opera bouffe. The piece they have selected to mutilate is the Princess of Trebizond.  

A business partnership between Lyster's Opera House and Coppin's Theatre Royal had also been alluded to by the *Herald* of 28 July 1874 in an article entitled the 'Great Monopolists'. The *Argus* reported the libel action between 21 and 29 August, revealing that the *Herald* had been correct in its allegations that the management of the Opera House and the Theatre Royal had joined forces to produce *The Princess of Trebizond* and other operas bouffe. The proprietor of the *Herald*, Samuel Winter, made it clear under cross-examination that he did not support the amalgamation:

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6 Harwood and others v. Feigl. Correspondence in the Coppin Collection for 1874/1875 shows that 'Harwood & Co' was Coppin's business company.
I have read the article about 'a great monopolist'. I don't know who it refers to. I can't say that if refers to Mr. Harwood or to Mr. Coppi... It is only a sketchy article. The article about the Great Monopolist refers to Mr. Harwood as a Turk. It also alludes to someone eating everything and leaving nothing but bones and offal for anyone else. Mr. Harwood did look like a Turk in the piece, and as Cabriolo he pretended to swallow a lot of things which he merely handed over to someone else behind him. I don't consider that the article about the Great Monopolist refers to the Royal management. I do not think it desirable that all the theatre should be under one person's control; competition would benefit both the profession and the public. I don't know whether the plaintiffs have anything to do with the Opera-house. I have heard as a general rumour that the Princess's Theatre is in their hands.

The Herald's article was eventually found to be libellous because the jury of four decided that a newspaper had no right to judge a theatre production 'mutilated' before at least viewing it. The issue of theatre monopolisation was therefore sidetracked by the plaintiffs' lawyers. This was only after defence lawyers had confirmed in their cross-examination of Henry Harwood that the management of the Theatre Royal had 'combined' with the Opera-house to produce 'several operas during the season.'

Our performers combined with those of the Opera-house. Our forces were any of the performers we had Mr. Stewart, myself, Mr. Bracy, Miss Clara Thomson, Miss Dicky Stewart, Mrs. Bryer, and some of the ladies of the ballet. The performers supplied by Mr. Lyster were Miss Winston, Mr. Bell, Miss Royal, Miss Leslie, and Mr. Daniels (Argus, 25 August 1874).

In its summation, the defence pointed out that even though the article on the 'Great Monopolist' was not part of the libel case, if the theatre managers wished to make it so 'let the theatre people bring an action founded on any accusation of monopoly; and the Herald, if it put in a plea of justification on the record, would endeavour to prove it.' The case highlights the extent to which the Theatre Royal management was prepared to go to defend their business against unfavourable newspaper criticism, even while it used favourable newspaper reviews to bring audiences to their productions. The same point was made by the Herald's lawyers who also made some interesting comments concerning the Theatre Royal's relationship to 'powerful' newspapers.

...these plaintiffs, who were not at all improperly treated, brought an action against an obscure and a comparatively weak paper. If such an article had appeared in any of the morning, or more powerful papers, no action would ever have been brought. The Theatre management seemed to claim the right to nothing but favourable criticism; but they could not be allowed to take all the praise and take no censure.

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7 Lawyers for the theatre managers were Mr. G. P. Smith and Mr. Williams and for the newspapers Mr. Higinbotham and Mr. Molesworth.
The value of newspaper sources therefore is that they best reveal how 'commercial success' is arrived at within the monopolistic tendencies of capitalistic theatre practices in Australia between 1874 and 1914. The point is aptly made in the Geelong Times on 18 January, 1883 in 'The Drama and Its Critics', when William Archer's 'English Dramatist of Today' is liberally quoted to reveal Archer's confession that he often 'toned down everything to an inoffensive grey' when reporting on 'absolutely worthless' plays. The article's main purpose, however, was to highlight the pecuniary links between some theatre journalists and managers. When, for instance, the Geelong Times theatre critic had given an adverse press coverage of Alfred Dampier's production of The Green Lanes of England, it had to contend with the wrath of Julian Thomas (the Melbourne theatre critic 'The Vagabond') who, the newspaper reported, was in Geelong as Dampier's partner. That theatre managers saw the value of having their own journalists to ensure favourable publicity should hardly surprise anyone. Williamson had a string of journalists working for him as his 'private secretary' including Garnet Walch, A. H. Adams, W. H. Hughes (later PM), Monty Grover and Claude McKay.

Contrary to later histories of Williamson, late nineteenth-century newspaper reporting of his 'extraordinary success' with his manifestly 'ordinary' play Struck Oil is indicative of the contradictions endemic in primary journalistic accounts of Williamson and Maggie Moore's advent into Australian theatre history. This is further related to the 'charismatic' qualities which the 'star system' employs within capitalistic theatre practices. As Richard Dyer notes, the star's charisma seems to 'be' the very tensions that [run] through the ideological life'. This is certainly apparent from the outset of Neild's analysis of Williamson and Moore's Melbourne successes.

Somebody asked me the other day how it is the Williamson's have proved to be such a single success, and I answered that they are the best of their kind. If Mr Williamson were to play Othello, and Mrs Williamson Desdemona, it is possible we might not like them so well. I say it is possible, but by no means certain. Up to this time, however, it does not concern us to inquire any further into the essential reason of their remarkable popularity than may relate to what is actually before us. Mr Williamson plays a Dutch shoemaker, who speaks broken English. There is nothing in the play in which they have make their success which could especially help them to succeed. It is a good useful acting-drama, but nothing more; and yet for six weeks the Theatre Royal has been crowded every night to see this Dutch shoe-maker and his daughter. The whole secret of it consists in the entire
naturalness of the performance. And if you, who may have had a long experience of the stage, will but let your memory take you back to other successes, you will have to confess that, in every instance where particular success has been reached the explanation has been exactly of the same kind. In short, whenever the public is shown something on the stage which, being judged by a natural standard, conforms closely to it, they declare resolutely in its favour. It was so with Brooke's Othello, it was so with Montgomery's Hamlet, it was so with Charles Kean's Louis IX., it was so with Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle...I could go on selecting dozens of other examples, all helping to confirm the belief that, whenever something true, or, in other words, something natural, is presented, the public readily accept it (Australasian, 12 September 1874).

Articles such as this appeared simultaneously with other 'biographical' articles, such as the one in the Australasian Sketcher, again highlighting the interdependence between nineteenth-century journalism and the 'star' system - an interdependence which has exponentially mushroomed between theatre and film industries through the twentieth century. As Thomas Postlewait and Leigh Wood's analyses of 'auto/biographical' writings in Interpreting the Theatrical Past (1989) show, actors clearly self-aggrandise the importance of their own careers in the face of a 'public appetite for gossip' which exploits the fractured identity of the 'actor' and the 'authenticity' of the 'star'.

Since the eighteenth century, the publication of theatrical autobiographies has increased in number, concurrent with the enormous growth of performance in its various forms and appeals. An expansive 'public appetite for gossip', provided, as Fanny Kemble acknowledges on the first page of Record of a Girlhood, sufficient cause and justification for publishing 'gossip about myself.' Even before the twentieth century, the supply and demand for such 'gossip' had become an industry, matching the growth of the entertainment industry. Today autobiographies, memoirs, reminiscences, recollections, self-edited diaries (sic) all pour out in enormous quantities to a public that cannot get enough information about actors and other performers...For the theatre historian and the biographer, this supply of information is an apparent godsend...Their value is immeasurable, for they give us, in historical abundance, the direct report, the inside story on events, personalities, and organizations. But how direct? And how reliable and forthcoming are they?...Typically, they are episodic, chatty, and of course, self-aggrandising. Their defining character, and often their charm, depends upon the self-serving performance of the autobiographer, a masquerade moved from stage to page (Postlewait 1989, 251).

Aggrandising success was clearly also an essential part of newspaper advertisements. For instance, theatre advertisements in the Argus of 3 August to 19 September 1874 for Struck Oil tell readers that it was an 'IMMENSE SUCCESS', that there were 'THUNDERS OF APPLAUSE' and 'ENTHUSIASM UNBOUNDED in CROWDED HOUSES'. From 6 August, readers were also told to 'see opinions of The Argus', 'Age' and 'The Daily Telegraph'. Advertisements on 14 to 17
September claim that the theatre had been visited by 90,000 PEOPLE. However, for the theatre historian the success which this describes must be tempered by the fact that advertisements for the Theatre Royal in July 1874 just prior to Williamson and Moore's season also all state that its productions and artists that month were 'immensely popular', 'immensely successful' and 'still triumphant'.

Nonetheless, the information contained in advertisements in nineteenth-century newspapers give us as full details of the production as one might find in a theatre programme. Indeed, the theatre broadsheets such as *Entr’acte and Playbill*, and *The Lorgette* were designed to be used as both theatrical newspapers and a daily theatre programme, remembering that theatres played from Monday to Saturday of every week except for Christmas Day and Good Friday. Details given included the names of managers, stage crew, the cast of actors and a scenario of the work to be presented. The cost of tickets and box-office opening hours were also reported. Nothing seems to have been hidden from the public who were invited to view the advertised productions. As exemplars of the 'politics of the visible' (Phelan's term), their language played between hyperbole and objective truth in the face of the uncertain outcome that audiences would believe their claims.

Furthermore, the theatre reviews reporting of important minutiae significantly inform the historian about the social ambience of nineteenth-century performance. The more extraordinary details sometimes arise from a journalist's idiosyncratic outbursts such as in Neild's article on 5 September 1874 when he complains about members of the audiences coming to see Williamson and Moore 'obviously because they had been told it was the proper thing to do so.' He then moves on to describe how the audience proceeded to talk right through their performance.

*It is good for the management and the stars that the house should be filled, but if it is to be filled, for the most part, with a talking audience, it is clearly bad for those who go to listen. I almost envy my deaf friend when I am unfortunate enough to be seated next to some self-sufficient pragmatical embodiment of ill manners, whose sole delight in the world seems to be to hear the sound of his own unpleasant voice.*

While such observations exist 'in the margins', journalists predominantly and consistently highlight Williamson's American theatrical pedigree by emphasizing the
fact that he was the son of a 'well-known doctor' who, as a 'star-struck' lover of the theatre from a very early age, decided to become an actor and report how his uncle taught him to think ambitiously about his work as an actor:

One thing, however, my lad, I would impress upon you most firmly, and that is, make it a point to rise at least one rung up the ladder every year... 'This advice,' says Williamson 'I have endeavoured to follow (Walch 1885, 9).'

Leavitt (1887) uses the term 'star struck' and describes Williamson's success in the theatre through 'obstinate pluck, dauntless energy and unwearying zeal and attention to every detail connected with the business' (249). Most noticeably, the foregrounding of Williamson's early devotion to the theatre sets in place his credentials as a theatre practitioner. *Cosmos Magazine* thus concludes that:

The boy is father to the man, and the embryo manager showed himself so active and willing in those early days that he was called upon to give assistance to the management, who quickly recognised the capabilities of the young actor. At that time the stock companies supported the visiting 'stars' in all kinds of plays, and this necessitated Mr. Williamson tackling almost every kind of business, and many principal comedy parts. This severe apprenticeship lasted for three years, and it was as a young man of eighteen, full of energy, experience and much promise, that he went up to New York to seek a position of more exalted type (30 April 1896, 312).

Williamson, the young American actor, thus becomes the 'embryo Australian manager' and shows how, once in management, Williamson wanted to be thought of as an 'actor-manager' in the same league as Henry Irving and the Bancrofts and not a 'merely speculative manager':

the actor-manager is so much better qualified than the merely speculative manager to give a proper representation of the drama, on account of his complete knowledge of the interior workings of a theatre. His instincts are artistic, and his commercial keenness must prompt him to give the best to the public that can be given. The trouble is, that an actor-manager may not exercise a judicious control over the good parts of the play, for, having the power to select for himself, and loving his profession like all true actors do, he may be tempted to keep himself before the public to the detriment of his productions. For all that, experience goes to prove that balance is in favour of the actor-management system. There is Irving, the most notable instance of his time, an actor and manager. Bancroft, who achieved a perfection of style, unsurpassed anywhere (Cosmos, 312).

The metaphorical and metonymical processes which allowed an equivalence to be formed between the images of Williamson as actor and manager were profoundly important in a nineteenth-century Western theatre dominated by the 'actor-manager'. In economic terms, the actor who became a star in his own theatre worked

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8 Williamson's uncle was also his guardian as his father was tragically killed when Williamson was only a boy. He gave him this advice despite his qualms about young Jimmy taking up a stage career.
to ensure its economic survival while simultaneously exposing the tenuousness of long-term success. As James Thomas (1984) notes, the role of actor-manager reveals the competitive tensions of the theatre industry in which he worked:

The manager's role was formalised during the 1880s, and by 1887 the London stage could count Henry Irving, Wilson Barrett, John Hare, Charles Wyndham, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, George Alexander, and Henry Neville among its finest actors as well as its greatest managers. Because actor-managers held so much power in the theatre, they came under increasing attack, especially from new playwrights. It was alleged that actor-managers chose plays only for their starring roles, and then mainly from authors whose popularity had been previously tested. New writers saw little hope for success in this situation. Actors, too, had little sympathy for actor-managers, for it was believed that even they could not receive their just merits in this authoritarian arrangement. Moreover, less successful managers attacked successful ones for their extravagant expenditures on decoration, allegedly resulting in the debasing of public tastes (6).

Such criticisms were also made of Williamson's theatre management. However, strictly speaking, Williamson was not an actor-manager as he retired from acting almost immediately after taking up theatre management in Australia in the early 1880s: his sensitivity towards being thought a 'speculative manager' exposes the illegitimacy of his claims. However, what remains clear in newspaper articles is his continuing necessity to aggrandise his status at a time when 'speculative managers' had not yet dominated the theatre industries of England, America and Australia.

Ironically, when J. C. Williamson absented himself from acting after 1882 there was a noticeable shift to seeing him as the most valuable partner in the firm of Williamson, Musgrove and Garner. As a result, Mrs Bright (1896) in the Cosmos Magazine chiefly credits Williamson as being responsible for staging productions:

with a magnificence that never varied, and the parts, from the leading artistes down to chorus singers, were all taken by performers specially trained and adapted for the business. It was a relief to persons wearied with business to go to a spectacle where no hitches occurred, and everything went smoothly as the marriage bell, with both ear and eye gratified by the tout ensemble (314).

Williamson's 1907 interviews, which later became his Life Story, re-emphasize the importance of his American origins and American theatrical training as the foundations of his success. In them he tells, for instance, how he was educated in excellent American schools which 'encouraged independence of character' (11). It was this he believed which allowed him to convince the elder Mr Wallack to give him a position at Wallack's. Williamson also attributes his arrival in Australia to the
American pioneering philosophy as captured in Horace Greeley's advice 'Go West, young man! Go West!' which he said inspired his decision to come even further west to Australia from San Francisco (18).

Not surprisingly, therefore, Williamson's status as an 'actor-manager' co-existed with the portrayal of him as an American-Australian. He characterised this duality in *Life Story* as his essential Americanness combined with an adopted Australianess:

I was born at Mercer, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., on 26th August, 1845. Mercer is a county town where my father was a doctor. Both my father and mother were Americans. He was of Irish descent, she of Scottish. Of course, I look upon America as my native country. Sometimes people have said to me, 'Your fortune is bound up in Australia now; why don't you get naturalised?' I don't see that. Australia is my country, too, and I expect to spend the rest of my days here, but I think a man should never deny his mother country (11).

This nationalistic essentialism seems to have ensured that his 'Americanness' was always a fundamental part of Williamson's public persona. *Cosmos Magazine*'s description of him was thus as:

a typical American of the modern type that has quite superseded the Yankee of the comic papers of a quarter of a century ago. No better class of business men can be found than the high-class section met with throughout the great Republic, combining all the straightforward manliness of the typical Englishman, with a courage and enterprise but rarely met with among the more phlegmatic Britshers (312).

Of course, Mrs Charles Bright could have just as easily have been referring to any 'currency lad'. In *Inventing Australia* Richard White (1981) outlines how nineteenth-century Australia shared a common status with America as new societies within England's colonialist enterprise and how America had acquired a special authority in Australian culture.

[America] was commonly considered to be, as the *Australian* put it in 1831, 'a model for all new countries and New South Wales (hereafter) in particular.' It was a model, not only in the sense of being worthy of imitation, but also in the other nineteenth-century sense of being the archetypal example of a new society, and therefore the one to which the others would assimilate simply because they were all thought to be going through the same experience. Thus separation and an Australian republic were often seen as being as inevitable as democracy and federation - America had provided the model. So when observers made a comparison between Australia and the United States, they were in fact indicating Australia's status as a new society (49).

J. C. Williamson's arrival in 1874 was nothing special since American actors, circus entertainers and minstrel performers had been coming on a regular basis since the gold rushes of the 1850s. American tragedians James and Sarah Stark had come

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 157
in 1853 and left one year later £20,000 richer. George Coppin had made his American connections in the 1850s by producing Minstrel shows. In the early 1860s he brought out American actors such as Joseph Jefferson to work in his 2,500 seat Haymarket Theatre and in the mid-60s he went to America as Charles and Ellen Kean's theatre agent (*Entertaining Australia* 1991, 47). As Michael Booth (1991) points out, the late nineteenth century saw American actors crossing the Pacific by steamship between San Francisco and Sydney via Honolulu as well as English actors going to America via Australia. Touring of this type therefore extended the 'English' provincial circuit to include America, New Zealand, Australia, India and South Africa (20).

In fact, Williamson's advent into Australian theatre history was built upon Australian interest in the American Civil War. In July and August 1874, for instance, Melbourne audiences attended an exhibition of war pictures in St George's Hall.9 Williamson and Moore's *Struck Oil* was promoted as 'the drama founded upon stirring events during the late CIVIL WAR in AMERICA'. Advertisements for *Struck Oil* thus highlighted the 'Americaness' through which Melbourne audiences first came to know the future 'Napoleon of theatre in Australia'.10 The play's subtitle 'The Pennsylvania Dutchman' also identifies him as an immigrant, thus further underscoring Australia's connection to America as a 'new society'.

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**THEATRE ROYAL**

Lessees: Messrs. Harwood, Stewart, Hennings and Coppin

FIRST APPEARANCE IN AUSTRALIA

OF

Miss MAGGIE MOORE

And

Mr. J. C. WILLIAMSON,

From Wallack's New York and the leading Theatres in America,

TWO ENTIRELY NEW PIECES

TO-NIGHT, and every Evening until further notice,

At half-past 7,

A new and original drama, written expressly for and the sole property of J. C. Williamson, in three acts and tableaux, entitled

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9 Mimi Colligan documents the longevity of the popularity of the American Civil War panorama in her thesis *Canvas and Wax* (1987).

10 A title M.B. Leavitt (1912) gave Williamson in *Fifty Years of Theatrical Management*.
One can reasonably conclude that audiences valued the mention of Wallack's Theatre and other non-specified 'leading' American theatres from which Williamson was said to have emanated. Whether this was because of a specific knowledge of these theatres or merely a generic use of American culture via its theatres, it is nonetheless clear that pre-1913 accounts of Williamson were concerned with correcting any adverse comments about his prior status in the American theatre. In *The Williamsonsons* (1885) Walch corrected, for instance, 'an erroneous report' circulated after *Struck Oil* that he had not come out to Australia under a star engagement:

> It was said that the Williamsonsons offered to play for a fixed salary, and that luck alone enabled them to assume the position of 'stars.' This, Mr. Williamson distinctly denies. They came out to Mr. Coppin, the latter acting for Messrs. Harwood and Co., to a definite 'starring' engagement on 'sharing terms,' and no alteration was either suggested or made, save and except that, instead of playing but three months in Melbourne and then proceeding to Sydney, the season in the former city was extended to five months (15).

Two years later, Leavitt (1887) corrected the impression that it was 'luck' rather than talent which made Williamson a star in *Struck Oil* and that he was only a 'one part' actor:

> it must not be supposed that Mr. Williamson's success is entirely the result of luck, or that it has been attained as a 'one part' actor, as during his career he has played almost every line of business. Shakespearian roles, varying from Macduff to Touchstone and Dogberry, come within his category; the leading comedy parts in the old English comedies have been played by him, and he has been foremost in sensational drama and burlesque, and in every class of dialect parts, including Irish, German, Scotch, Yorkshire, Somersethshire, Cockney, French, Yankee, Chinese, Negro and Indian (251).

Perhaps the most curious example used to confirm Williamson's prior importance in the American theatre appears in the 1907 Bookfellow interviews and therefore in *Life Story* (1913). Williamson presents the interviewer, A. G. Stephens, with an article by Augustin Daly in which he was praised for being an ambitious 'third and fourth rate actor'.

> Room for the Little People of the Stage! Make way there! and let us bow in the third and fourth rate actors, who as 'lords', 'gentlemen,' 'Marcellus and Bernardo,' or
'Catesby' and the 'Lieutenant of the Tower,' have so often in their turn bowed in the Star of the evening. The first-rate actors have their chroniclers; the second-rate actresses have their flatterers; who shall be the historians of the neglected ones of the lower grade? Shall we not lift them from the small notoriety of their favourite porter-house, and make them proud of something more that the awful admiration of dirty little boys along the street?...In fact, - it requires more real ability to be a fourth-rate actor with his ceaseless and unnoticed labours, than to be a distinguished star who has half-a-dozen stage pieces, which he enacts all the year round, and who sees his name constantly mentioned in the papers. It is a matter of congratulation that we are now having a better class of people in the humbler roles. If every stage only had a competent manager, to assist in developing the young talents, many famous actors might be made of the staff at present under command. As it is, Mr Williamson, of Wallack's company, Mr Burrows, of the Winter Garden, and Mr Rockwell, of the Olympic promise (if their modesty continues) to be actors of no mean order five years hence. But Mr Williamson will be better than them all - not because he is more ambitious - but because he is more attentive and less vain (25)!

There are important sources, however, which support the idea that Williamson's fame as an actor was 'Australian-made'. Firstly, George Coppin's letters to San Franciscan theatrical agent Andrew Birrell, responsible for contracting Williamson and Moore for Coppin's Theatre Royal, show that American stars were hard to lure to Australia in the early to mid-1870s, particularly before the advent of the steamship. This is obvious in Birrell's letter announcing to Coppin on 30 September 1873 that he had engaged the Williamsons.

Enclosed with this letter you will find an engagement made for you with J. C. Williamson and wife which will be the most profitable engagement ever made for you by me. They will take with them all Baker and Farren's plays, songs and business, also Joe Murphy's, with other great novelties (Emmets Snyder) Jefferson's Rip V.W. They are young, handsome, sober, sing & dance good. Their engagement at the California theatre will finish next June their salary $200 per w. there. I made the engagement for Sydney so that you will make a profit by them there. If the steamers was running between this city and the colonies I would have no trouble in sending you all the attraction you may require. It is impossible to persuade artists to go so long a journey by a sailing ship.

While a Sydney/San Francisco steamship service came into being in 1874, the letter suggests that Williamson's engagement was made against the background of a more difficult means of passage and, inexplicably, at a time when Californian theatres were doing brisk business. Birrell informs Coppin in the same letter, for instance, that the three main places of amusement in San Francisco - Alhambra, California and Shield's Opera House - were all 'making money'. This confirms Harold Love's (1989) argument that the buoyancy of theatre businesses in England and America made Australia a much less attractive prospect for English and American

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11 It was in the steamer 'S. S. Mikado' that Williamson and Moore travelled to Australia.
stars in the 1870s in general. As a result, Love argues, 'the era of the stars was passing' (238).

Coppin and Birrell's correspondence also clearly shows that Coppin was importing 'lesser' American actors at this time since Coppin complains to the San Franciscan theatre agent that he was having unsatisfactory results with the Californian actress May Howard. In a letter on 30 April 1873 he thus objected to the fact that:

Miss Howard has now played four characters and without being a positive failure she has failed to create any impression calculated to attract. It is a pity to encourage any person of her capacity to visit Australia; with her pronunciation she labours under great disadvantage. I presume you do not notice it living in America, but in an English colony it is very objectionable to the ear. I fancy there is a feeling on the part of Americans to make this a school preparatory to visiting England, in order that they may rid themselves of their peculiarities. If this is the case it ought to be discouraged as it will only prove a disappointment to themselves and loss to the management, for, altho' they do not receive anything until the expenses of the Theatre are nearly paid, their engagement prevents the production of any attraction we may have on hand.

The correspondence also suggests they were transacting the bringing out of 'novelties' rather than 'stars' and thus the interchangeability of the terms in the Australian theatre at that time. Coppin's reply to Birrell on 15 December, 1873 concerning Williamson's engagement confirms as much:

Williamsons - I have never heard of them but should think they are good from what you say. Novelty is the attraction, in pieces as well as in people.

Certainly, Maggie Moore's 'diary' suggests that she and Williamson were treated as minor actors of the American stage when she remembers an inauspicious and depressing arrival in Melbourne in July 1874:

Arrived in Melbourne on the 8th of July at cold Sandridge - wet, I think all the little Aussies had their watering pots out that morning. It was cold, wet and oh so miserable - There was a train left - Then a letter was handed to J. C. Williamson, from George Coppin - telling him what Hotel to go to - It was the 'White Hart' - cnr of Bourke and Spring Sts. We hadn't a soul to meet us. It was dreadful.

This seems to be corroborated by John Sandes, author of the 1933 J. C. Williamson Ltd souvenir programme of Sydney's Her Majesty's Theatre, who

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12 May Howard was known to Williamson and Maggie Moore. Maggie Moore noted in her diary that May Howard, who had come from the California Theatre like themselves, was staying at the 'White Hart Hotel' when they arrived in Melbourne. She was then about to return home.
13 The precise date of the document is not given by Moore nor have librarians at the Mitchell Library been able to even confirm when the Library acquired the document. The Original Manuscripts Librarian was able to tell me that the paper was North American and the watermark confirms it as a type used in Canada and the USA in the 1920s. This would suggest that it was written near the end of her life. Moore died in America in 1924.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
claimed that 'a certain business man of Sydney, named Sutton knew 'how it was that
J. C. W. came to Australia.'

Chatting in the vestibule of Her Majesty's Theatre on some personal idiosyncrasies of
the manager, during an interval between the acts, Mr Sutton remarked surprisingly: 'I
am the only man in Sydney that 'J. C. W.' is never too busy to see. I can walk into his
room at any time and be sure of a warm welcome. This challenging observation evoked
an application for 'further and better particulars,' as the lawyers say, and Mr Sutton
courteously unburdened himself as follows: In 1874, he said, I was a passenger-clerk in
the office of the Oceanic Steamship Company at San Francisco when one morning the
handsomest young fellow that I had ever seen in my life walked into my office, and
inquired the sailing date of our next ship for Sydney, New South Wales. We had a ship
on the berth loading for Sydney at the time. I am not sure of her name after all these
years, but I think she may have been the old 'Alameda'. Anyway I told him the sailing
date, and waited for more. He said that he was an actor and had come from California
from New York with John McCullough, and had been acting in dialect and comedy
parts. He had been with Wallack in New York before that. He also mentioned that he
had married Maggie Moore, a clever young San Francisco girl, who was a member of
McCullough's Company when he joined it. And still I waited. At last he said that he
wanted to arrange for three passages to Sydney - for himself and his wife and a fellow-
actor who was to take a big part in a new play called 'Struck Oil'... Pretty soon he
infected me with his own enthusiasm. As he talked about that play I began to feel that
'Struck Oil' was good collateral. He was so convinced himself that he convinced me.
The end of it all was that I was able to arrange the necessary finance and he sailed for
Sydney with Maggie Moore and 'Deacon Skinner' and his ten tons of scenery and props.
You know what happened in Australia. 'Struck Oil' was an Eldorado. He remitted
the money to San Francisco at once and his box office receipts in Sydney and Melbourne
from that wonderful play beat all records. And that's why J. C. W. is never too busy to
see Sutton.

Ian Dicker's (1970 and 1974) account of how Williamson and Moore first
met during Moore's time at the Metropolitan Theatre, San Francisco contradicts the
assertion in Sutton's story that Moore was already a member of the California Theatre
when Williamson joined it. Sutton was also unable to identify the third member of
Williamson's company as James Moore, Moore's brother. Despite these
discrepancies, the fact that the story contradicts the image of Williamson the 'star'
American actor is not seen to detract from Williamson's theatrical status some twenty
years after his death. Indeed, the story is used by Sandes to praise the 'indomitable
courage' which allowed Williamson to back 'his own estimate of the public taste in a
country that he had never seen' (5). Surely, this in itself further illustrates how
Williamson's theatre successes were all along 'Australian-made'.

Perhaps the most important confirmation that this was so comes, ironically,
from American sources in Ian Dicker's biography. These were, of course, meant to
'prove' that he was an up and coming star of the American stage, in particular with

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
regard to Williamson's career at the prestigious Wallack's Theatre. A closer look shows that Dicker's American sources are, in fact, framed within Williamson's own account in *Life Story* of how as a young actor he made it into Wallack's company through J. W. Wallack Senior (13). At no stage, however, does Dicker attempt to contextualize Williamson's account within American theatre practice at the time, especially with regard to stock companies. Thus he seems to present Williamson's success at Wallack's primarily through his mere association with the prestigious theatre company and discusses a handful of productions in which the young actor appeared as evidence of how highly regarded he was by New York theatre critics by 1871.

T. Allston Brown's *The History of the New York Stage* (1903) and George Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage* (1936), however, show Williamson only appearing in secondary parts and hence provide no evidence that he was regarded in New York as a brilliant young actor. Indeed, Odell distinguishes Williamson as the 'secondary' actor at Wallack's from the powerful theatre manager in Australia. For example, in discussing Williamson and Moore's season at the Union Square Theatre between 15 September and 27 October 1877 he writes:

> The run [of Pink Dominoes] terminated on September 15th, in order to allow J. C. Williamson (once a secondary actor at Wallack's and since a power in Australia) to introduce his pretty, talented wife, Maggie Moore, to a public that took her readily (380).

Yet Professor Dicker claims that Williamson was regarded as an up and coming star as early as 1866. To prove this he again uses Williamson's own report in *Life Story* of how he replaced 'John Brougham' as Lucius O'Trigger in *The Rivals* and concludes that it was this incident that made Wallack's theatre managers 'appreciate James' professional devotion, his versatility and his ability to come to their rescue in any emergency.' And, quoting again from *Life Story*, he refers to Williamson remembering that 'in the last years of my time at Wallack's, whenever

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14 It is perhaps for this reason that Professor Dicker's evidence of Williamson's American successes seems to be strangely divorced from the historian's own eulogistic narrative which describes Williamson's New York career as demonstrative of the future theatre manager's 'characteristic, bold initiative', his 'professional devotion' and his 'versatility and ability'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
there was anything out of the way to do they said 'Where's Jimmy Williamson?' (Life Story, 15 and Dicker 1970, 12)

The main problem with this 'proof' is that it is based on a chronological error and a confusion over whom exactly Williamson replaced in the 1866 production. According to Odell, it was Norton not Brougham who played Sir Lucius at that time - a discrepancy which Professor Dicker blames on Odell. Williamson's version would be correct if it were the 1870 production of The Rivals, when Brougham was making a star appearance at Wallack's. Surely this is what Williamson infers when he states that the production was 'in my last years' at Wallack's. We know them to have been 1870 - 1871.

Dicker's mistaking of the 1866 production for the 1870 serves to expose how much Williamson's own mythologizing of his career at Wallack's became part of the ideological construction of 'his' narrative in later histories. This is further demonstrated by Dicker's avoidance of the issue of why Williamson never became a leading actor at Wallack's. Instead, he moves on to telling the reader that, after making a success of his role in Rosedale in 1869, Williamson accepted an engagement as first low comedian at the Broadway Theatre. No explanation is given as to why Williamson left the prestigious Wallack's Theatre to move to the Broadway - a theatre about to be demolished. Nor why, after that, he then moved onto Lingard's Theatre Comique to play in musical comedies when he obviously couldn't sing - a fact which became apparent when Williamson attempted to sing roles in Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas in 1879 in Australia. And why was it that he returned to Wallack's in September 1869 and then left again in July 1871? On the contrary, these entrances and exits from various New York theatres are usually described as his 'seven years at Wallack's', and so we read in John West's (1978) Theatre in Australia that:

By the time he was eighteen he was ready to try New York, and was soon taken into the company at Wallack's Theatre, the city's newest and most popular playhouse. He got his engagement by a typical piece of Williamson enterprise, bluffing his way in to see old Mr Wallack himself. The Wallack company was strong on ensemble work and Williamson's training there could not have been more useful. He developed a flair for stage dialect roles and spent seven happy years learning his craft (52).
I believe a re-examination of American theatrical sources is required. However, they cannot be as important to Australian theatre history as a review of how the American theatre was used to legitimise Williamson's Australian-made theatrical successes and, therefore, how important America was to Australia's imperialist construction of an Anglo-Saxon doctrine. Williamson's own dual Australian/American identity, in fact, further verifies how nineteenth-century Australian theatre was constructed along the concept of 'race' and not 'nationality' and, as Benedict Anderson (1983) illustrates, it was race which was the ideological foundation of nineteenth-century nationalism(s).

Ironically, there is a strange disconnection with American theatre history in post-1913 histories of Williamson. For instance, neither Ian Dicker nor John West draw on works such as Jack Poggi's (1968) *Theater in America: The Impact of Economic Forces 1870 - 1967*. Poggi details how the American stock companies evolved into 'combinations' under entrepreneurial theatre managers from at least the 1870s.

Around 1870 the American theater began to undergo an economic revolution. Hundreds of independent stock companies disappeared and were replaced by a few producing units in New York City that sent their wares to syndicated theaters throughout the country...Like so many of our social and economic institutions (General Motors, for example) the commercial theatre has become highly centralized (5).

He also details how the 'combinations' were related to the star system already in operation in the stock companies.

Tired of the same old faces in the stock companies, audiences came to expect an unbroken succession of new personalities. The managers, realizing that they could not make much money without a star, and that with a famous star they could make a great deal, began competing for the services of the most popular actors by paying higher and higher percentages of the receipts. The biggest stars often demanded so much that the management lost money, even with a full house and increased prices. The only recourse was to cut expenses: the salaries of the local actors were reduced (impelling the better ones to set off in search of stardom, leaving the worse behind), and budgets for scenery and costumes were cut. These economies made for further deterioration of the local company and greater dependence on visiting stars. The stars, now almost in complete control, began taking one or two actors with them to play supporting roles in a particular play or a limited repertoire - apparently they were dissatisfied with the work of the actors left in the local companies. Nobody knows when this custom began, but from there it was but a step to the practice of gathering an entire 'combination', rehearsing it in a single play and touring the country (Ibid).

Arguably, what Poggi is alerting us to are the problems of the 'ordinary' American actor such as Williamson who needed a 'star' billing in order to survive in a
star-dominated industry. We know through Odell (1936), for instance, that Wallack's 
was used as a 'combination' house as early as 1871: he states in disgust that 'to our 
surprise, this temple of comedy was turned over to Lydia Thompson, who on August 
16th, began an engagement in Blue Beard...The company was almost entirely of new 
importations' (7). Could the coming of the 'combination' to Wallack's have 
something to do with Williamson's decision to leave the company that year? 
Furthermore, Poggi's (1968) research highlights the possibility that the coming of the 
'combination' system also assisted the ambitions of local actors who 'feeling they 
could do as well and begrudging the English stars their higher salaries, tried to break 
away from the stock companies and set themselves up as stars' (4).

Quite clearly, Williamson's search for theatrical fame and fortune had its 
denouement in the Australian theatre and his successes as a theatre manager involved 
legitimising himself in artistic, moral and political terms. This, in turn, was connected 
to giving legitimacy to 'developing' European theatre in Australia during his lifetime. 
Let us admit then that, when Australian theatre was being made by Williamson the 
entrepreneur, it was based on the skills of an 'ordinary' American actor who was 
subsequently transformed into a dominant force within the Australian theatre industry 
by the manufacturing of a consensus amongst Australian theatre critics, artists and 
audiences as to the worthiness of his enterprise. 'Struck Oil', therefore, alludes as 
much to a weltensicht as it does to a play on which an Australian theatrical empire was 
to be founded.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
2.2 Representations of British Militarism in Pantomime Productions, 1882 to 1914.\textsuperscript{15}

Both soldiers and artists, in an ideological and practical sense, 'toured the Empire' and, while there can be no doubt that the former initially cleared the way for the latter, once the imperialist enterprise was underway, each was needed to sustain the activities of the other. Thus, at a most fundamental level, Williamson's Australian pantomimes, like all theatre staged between 1882 and 1914, were dependent for their existence on the movement of theatre professionals travelling within a British Empire. This is clear, for instance, from the way that English actors were largely responsible for writing most of Williamson's pre-1900 arrangements and also from the way that the Firm's managers travelled to and from England throughout the 1882-1914 period.

The itinerant lives of actors as 'strolling players' (as evident from at least Elizabethan times) seemed to have fitted easily into the idea of theatre professionals 'touring the empire'. As Michael Booth (1991) observed, this seemed a logical extension to touring the provinces.

There was a larger dimension to the late Victorian phenomenon of touring than the provincial. In 1882 a writer for the Theatre remarked that the theatrical life of the present day actor might be described as a round of glorified strolling. The 'circuits' of Bristol, Norwich and York of the last century are now replaced by those of the United States, South Africa, India and Australia, and a modern actor thinks as little of a season in Melbourne or New York as his grandfather did of a week's 'starring' in Edinburgh (20).

It is a paradox of English social history, therefore, that a profession that had been and continued to be both socially marginalised and politically censored, as is evident from the English theatre's struggle for 'legitimacy', should have so fulsomely supported the British Imperialist enterprise. English theatre in Australia might also be read therefore as having been paradoxically constructed between an 'imperialist' sense of conquest of 'foreign' territories and the cultural displacement of artists continually leaving 'home'. Indeed, Williamson's pantomime productions reveal how the euphoria of appropriation masked the artist's sense of displacement.

\textsuperscript{15} Plate 22 is from the souvenir programme of William Anderson's 1914 Sinbad. The sundry images of the production show the placement of the exotic alongside the military. In particular, they show the pantomime's dependency on the woman's body to carry both kinds of costume. Frame 5 is a rare glimpse of the 'March of the Allies', a spectacle which all managers staged in 1914.
1. March of the Allies (Belgium).
2. LAURA ROBERTS as "Zoe."
3. A Harem Queen.
4. MAUDIE GOLDSPINK (Leader of Silver Guards).
5. Principals in March of the Allies.
Evidence of cultural displacement can be found in sources such as actor's diaries and letters, including Maggie Moore's 'diary', which tells how desperately homesick she was on her arrival in Australia.  

[When Mr Williamson came in the sitting room [of their hotel] I was shedding tears. He said 'What's the matter Margaret? I said, 'Oh, Jimmie please let me go home to mother. I'm so alone. Send me in a sailing boat if you can't afford a steamer.'

Similarly, May Pollard's personal letters show her dilemma at being caught up in the Boer War while on tour in South Africa and include, for instance, her day-pass for the 26 February 1902 to proceed through the lines of the Bloemfontein District.16 Though much more difficult to find than newspaper sources reporting on the celebratory nature of pantomime productions, these 'private' sources suggest how in reality pantomimes contestingly and even brutally achieved their effects as 'acts of supremacy'.

In this regard, Jane Feuer's (1982) identification of an idealised 'community' in Hollywood musicals seems even more applicable to the social dynamics which enabled the pantomimes to come into being. In particular, their sense of community was predicated on the way theatre professionals valued any place which provided them with employment: in turn, this allowed them to reproduce English theatre in a diversity of locations. Conversely, the assumption was that the metropolitan centre of the Empire, London, kept the best for itself. A London engagement, as is evident even in Williamson and Maggie Moore's career when they travelled there from San Francisco via Australia in 1875, was considered the hallmark, emulated both in the English 'provinces' and at the 'margins' of the Empire.

Not surprisingly, the importance of London matched its legislative powers to censor 'English' theatre through the Lord Chamberlain's office. Writing of the 1843-1967 laws of dramatic censorship Richard Findlater (1967) noted:

\[\text{About eight hundred scripts a year come to (sic) the Lord Chamberlain and his men - doing their legal duty under the Theatre Act of 1843...He can ban any play or part of a play, either absolutely - says the law - 'or for such time as he shall think fit': as long as he believes it is necessary for 'the preservation of good manners, decorum or the public peace so to do'. Every word and every bit of 'business' must have the sanction of the Chamberlain before it is seen by an audience. Even after he has}

\[\text{16 Papers held at the Mitchell Library, Sydney.}\]
issued a licence, he can change his mind and veto a line, a scene, or indeed the entire play. Against his verdict there is no appeal. As censor of the stage he is above Parliament and outside the law (10).

The banning of Marcus Clarke's *Happy Land* in Melbourne in 1880 indicates that censorship of the stage was also a reality in Australia and one which, unfortunately, Australian theatre history has largely left unwritten. Veronica Kelly (1983) points out that the banning of the play in Melbourne in 1880 and its brush with the police in Sydney brings into 'unusual visibility the connecting links between the three chief forums of popular opinion-making: press, stage and parliament, while the relationship with the police which was to become so vital in the banning of the early Ned Kelly and other bushranger plays and films is also present in shadowy outline' (101).

This must be kept in mind as we view the English and Australian pantomimes' celebration of British Imperialism from at least the 1870s, in particular with regard to the diminishing use of satiric lampooning of local or Imperial politics and/or politicians. However, the absence of any listings of Williamson's pantomime scripts in New South Wales and Victorian Copyright Offices, and in the Australian Copyright Office after 1905, suggests that a different kind of arrangement might have existed between pantomime arrangers and theatre managers from the time of the formation of the Triumvirate. For instance, as Atkinson and Fotheringham have documented for the Victorian Copyright Office between 1870 and 1907, Garnet Walch submitted his 1877 pantomime *Hey Diddle Diddle* but not his 1885 arrangement for Williamson, Garner and Musgrove of *Sleeping Beauty*. Did the 1885 arrangement belong to the managers and therefore not to Walch? Atkinson and Fotheringham (1987) suggest that copyright and censorship operated in a similar way in Australia as it did under the auspices of the Lord Chamberlain's Office in London, in that the Copyright Office granted the 'copyright (to prevent unauthorised copies of a published work being made), and performing right (to prevent the unauthorised presentation of a story in acted form on the public stage)'.(48).
Pantomime productions of the post-1882 period suggest that they operated within the theatre manager's self-censorship rather than under official sanctions as to what was put on the stage or omitted in the pantomimes' topical reviews of current affairs. This is implied by the Bulletin, for instance, of Williamson's 1900 Federation production of Australis when, on 5 January 1901, it stated that the production was hampered by the feeling that Federation was 'too holy a thing to be treated in a frivolous spirit.' I shall thus assume that late nineteenth-century Australian theatre managers, and in particular Williamson and his various partners, exercised an extraordinary service to the Empire in staging pantomime productions which celebrated English military campaigns and, in turn, the ideology of the British Imperialist enterprise.

The importance of Drury Lane in setting such a precedent has been well-noted by theatre historians such as David Mayer and A. E. Wilson, as Augustus Harris turned to staging patriotic spectacles within his productions. For instance, the Egyptian and Sudanese campaigns of 1882 were part of that year's production of Sinbad, when Harris staged the rise of the British Empire through a procession of the kings and queens of England.

The long line of English sovereigns enter in proper sequence, each monarch being attired in the costume of his period and attended by his Queen or Queens and an appropriate suite. Henry VIII has his due number of wives. Other historical characters join in the procession. Shakespeare presents a copy of his plays to Queen Elizabeth, Guy Fawkes rides on a barrel of gunpowder, and Napoleon I., after much pantomime effort signifying that he tramples Europe under foot, yields up his sword to Wellington. The Victorian era is marked by a procession of miniature policemen and by a review of juvenile soldiers representing the different sections of the Army, English and Indian, recently engaged in Egypt...As the crowning feature of this scene, Britannia, with helm and trident, comes forward and sings a patriotic song (The Times [London], 27 December 1882).

A similar strident glorification of British militarism in Egypt was presented in Williamson's Australian pantomimes the following Christmas when, in Jack and the Beanstalk, the Triumvirate depicted the 'Grand Panorama Of The Egyptian War, Concluding With The Bombardment Of Alexandria And The Landing Of The Troops.' Williamson, Garner and Musgrove's 1884 and 1885 pantomimes

17 Frank Towers also staged a celebration of the campaign in his 1882 production of Sinbad. Billed as English pantomime writer 'Frank Green's Successful Juvenile Burlesque', the production included 'Grand Military Manoeuvre by the Household Brigade'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
continued to feature in the campaign. Their 1884 Sydney production of Little Red Riding Hood, for instance, included a 'Patriotic and Vocal March' which ended with the patriotic song 'Shoulder to Shoulder':

The storm long brewing's burst at last,
O'er England's peaceful shore,
And cross the mighty ocean comes the cannons deafening roar.
But 'tis to save our prestige there,
That our weapons fiercely speak,
And safety for our sons at sea is all we ask to seek.

Then shoulder to shoulder, steady and true,
Fight as your forefathers taught you to do,
Fight for your homes, and the red, white and blue,
And be proud that you're fighting for England.

Australia's sons will surely fight, if called to face the foe,
They've English hearts and English arms to deal a deadly blow;
And those who scoff at England's power,
Let them silence then their cry,
For England's bound to rule the main,
She'll conquer or she'll die.

Garnet Walch's more counter-hegemonic arrangement of their 1885 production of Sleeping Beauty, which featured the Australian Prince 'Austral' as Beauty's preferred husband over the 'Seven Champions of Christendom', seems to have been caught up in the patriotic fervour of the Sudanese Campaign which saw the killing of General Gordon in that same year. As Stephen Alomes (1993) noted, Gordon's death 'whipped up a frenzy':

The Imperial and Australian events of 1885 and 1887-88 reflected the limited political power of radical nationalism despite its expressive and populist character. When in 1885 that native, the Mahdi, defeated the British forces in the Sudan, killing General Gordon and many less well-known British soldiers, some Australians responded feverishly. Learning of the events by cable, the press and politicians of New South Wales whipped up a frenzy of British imperialism. In a tradition as much Australian as British, defeat led to deification. Statues of Gordon were raised near the Parliament of Victoria and streets were named after him in most Australian cities. School children were gathered in their thousands to sing patriotic songs or offered prizes to write patriotic essays on the subject of 'General Gordon as hero'. The New South Wales contingent sent to the Sudan War was the beginning of the tradition of expeditionary nationalism which would recur in South Africa from 1899, in the two world wars, in Korea, Malaya and in Vietnam (174).

Unfortunately, Walch's 1885 programme/script has not survived to enable us to see if the campaign was also featured in its 'topical' stage business. Nor do newspaper advertisements and reviews mention that it was referred to in the production. On the other hand, Maltby's 1886 version of Walch's arrangement clearly shows that patriotic fervour was part of its stage business from the outset. In Act 1,
Scene 1, Beauty's Guardians, the Good Fairy Progressa and Mother Goose and the
'Seven Sisters of Australasia', sing

We sisters of the southern land,
Proud of our noble mother,
We'll join together hand in hand,
And stand by one another.
With dear old England we unite,
To form a firm alliance,
And, battling in the cause of right,
We'll bid each foe defiance.
Together! Together!
We'll journey on together;
Through good report and ill report we mean to hold our own,
Together! Together!
In fair or stormy weather,
And the world shall yield us pride of place,
Beside Britannia's throne.

With this in mind, it is interesting to note what Raymond Williams (1981) has
argued about the relationship between dramatic forms and history and, in particular,
the way that cultural critics should not reduce dramatic forms to 'anticipations or
reflections of (sic) more general social processes'.

To insist that the practices are different is not some form of reservation, marking off an
'aesthetic' sphere, but a social indication of the actual modes and functions of different
practices. Thus that these evidently related dramatic forms occurred well before the
forms of political action and the new political philosophy is a point of absolute
significance which must not be lost by some historical elision or some notion of
prophecy. When these 'actions' were enacted, in different kinds of practice, they were
not the same actions; crucial changes and breaks had occurred...It is not only that the
dramatic mode, by its essential cultural properties and signals - its intrinsic capacity,
most obviously, to mark the definitive end of an action which in other practices may
not be ended or capable of being ended - operates, socially, under different conditions. It
is also...that these properties and conditions - in the broadest sense, these signals - shape
conclusions which are both historically and formally different from those of other
practices (138).

Similarly, I want to argue that the representation of British military campaigns
and military spectacles, and other 'imperialist' emblematic representations in the
pantomime, do not inform us of 'history' but more importantly of the 'crucial changes
and breaks' (including the continual displacement of artists already alluded to) which
occurred within cultural practices which aimed at writing their own version of
'history'. David Mayer has long since established the fact that:

the pantomime is by its nature an imperfect instrument for recording history, for the
greatest of its faults was a refusal to discriminate between the worthy and the paltry;
like the tabloid of today, the pantomime leaned toward the immediate, the
sensational, the most readily apparent or easily understood, and above all, it deferred
to the view that theatrical managers and pantomime arrangers calculated to be most
popular with their audiences (Mayer 1969, 8).
The pantomime's representation of an Australian 'Anglo-Saxonism' is thus primarily, to use Benedict Anderson's (1981) term, through the presentation of an 'imagined' community who lived 'the image of their communion' (6). Mayer's explanation as to how the pantomime refused to discriminate between the 'worthy and the paltry' thus becomes the best indication of how the productions' multifarious effects operated within hegemonic structures: how, in fact, a seemingly infinite variety of military marches, processions, pageants and tableaux - both 'officially' important and trivially decorative - enhanced the notion of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority within Australia's predominantly Anglo-Saxon 'community'. If the pantomime arrangement 'anticipated or reflected' anything, it was the transiency of its form, the itinerancy of its artists and the heterogeneity of its audience. This was the case even while it enacted expressions of British military power as 'bound to rule the main'.

Programme/scripts and photographic evidence indicate that Williamson and other Australian theatre managers used pageants, marches and processions both as part of the production's narrative and/or as part of its 'Variety Entertainment'. For instance, in Williamson's 1884 Little Red Riding Hood, a 'Grand Patriotic And Vocal March' finishing with 'Shoulder to Shoulder', was presented immediately following an acrobatic display. The company's 1885 and 1886 productions of Sleeping Beauty staged the 'Grand March of the Argent Army' as part of Prince Austral's march into the enchanted forest to rescue Sleeping Beauty from her one hundred year sleep. A similar effect would have been achieved by the representations of the 'army' of the 'forty thieves' in various arrangements of Forty Thieves such as is shown in Plate 23 from the 1898 productions. But the most common military-style representation was a processional march which accompanied the entrance of royal personages. For example, a 'Grand Processional March' heralded the Emperor's entrance in the 1882/83 and 1889/90 productions of Aladdin. This kind of procession usually occurred in Act 1 in what invariably amounted to the setting up of the love interest between the pantomime boy and girl, here Aladdin and Princess Badroulbudour.
The forty Thieves themselves, in their armour, and on their best behaviour.
However, military-style marches could occur anywhere within a production and be of the most fantastic type. For instance, George Musgrove's 1901 production of *Aladdin* staged a procession of 'porcelain' including the Willow Pattern, Royal Worcester, Crown Derby, Wedgwood, Copeland, Sevres and Dresden. Plate 24 illustrates chorus members from that production dressed as 'Crown Derby'. Undoubtedly a play on the word 'china', William Anderson also used the effect in the European Imperial setting of the 'Palace of a Thousand Lights' in his 1909 production of *Babes in the Wood*. Besides alluding to a specific British military campaign, therefore, marches and processions were emblematic representations of an 'imperial' space which was invariably opulent, often surrealistic, and confirmed in imaginative terms the monarchist rule of the pantomime world.

The fact that there were no 'republican' pantomimes is highly significant in relation to late nineteenth-century Australian politics, particularly with regard to the obvious escalation of imperialist sentiment in pantomimes of the 1890s. This is perhaps not surprising given that, according to Stephen Alomes (1993),

radical nationalism and the labour movement (sic) was weakened by the Depression, by the formation of opposing 'National Associations' of employers and by the drought. Despite gains in the election of the first Labor members of Parliament and in some electoral and social reforms the radical tide would be stemmed by these conservative tendencies, by economic difficulties and by the rising tide of Imperial militarism associated with the Boer War (177).

As a result, while the 1890s did not offer managers specific military campaigns to include in pantomime spectacle until the Boer War production of 1899, they continued to present patriotic spectacles and imperial pageants of Kings and Queens of England during the years of economic hardship. Coppin staged a procession of the Kings and Queens of England in his 1892 production of *Babes in the Wood*, which concluded with 'God Save The Queen'. The following year Fred Gunther, in another production of *The Babes*, staged another 'Historical Procession Of The Kings And Queens Of England' which also concluded with the figure of Queen Victoria singing the National Anthem. Ironically, as Beverley Kingston (1988) has noted, this was at a time of 'potential' revolution.

In 1892 it was estimated that upwards of 70 000 men were involved in the strikes and lock-outs of 1890. The employers were provocative. The union leaders were
pugnacious. Governments and citizens who were not involved or were pacifist by nature were fearful of a widespread breakdown of law and order. Many of the protagonists believed the rhetoric about war between labour and capital, and not only because they wished to see labour win. Ernie Lane did think there was a chance for revolution. His elder brother, to judge from his later career, had a natural propensity for militaristic or totalitarian solutions. With William Lane's encouragement, Henry Lawson and E. J. Brady wrote battle hymns for the 1890s. Australia seemed edgy. For some it was on the brink of greatness (304).

Furthermore, only on very rare occasions does one find criticism of the jingoism of the pantomime's patriotic displays, such as in 1893 when the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 27 December stated that:

> It is worth noting that our audiences do not greet the arrival of the standard-bearers and gaily-accoutred military officers of the various nations with the frantic applause or savage sibilation of London playgoers. European wars and rumours of wars are too far removed, perhaps, to cause us to 'take sides' even in sport, and a gentle hissing at the entry of the Russian group has been so far the only demonstration worth speaking of.

Instead there seems to have been fulsome praise for the 'bizarre' nature of military-style processions. The *Argus* noted of Williamson and Musgrove's 1896 *Matsa* the magnificent staging of the 'Grand March and Triumphal Return Of Ramesis and Grand Procession Of Ancient Egyptian Warriors' that:

> For bizarre grace and lavish profusion of display it would be difficult to surpass the triumphal entry of Ramesis; warriors, priests, and captives marching in procession, followed by the monarch borne in a truly gorgeous palanquin. And when the floral ballet succeeds, danced amid a rain of roses, the shaded tints of the dancers' drapery forming a beautiful harmony of colour, one feels that in this department the most sanguine anticipations have been exceeded, and that Mr Will Barnes, the designer of the dresses, has no more worlds to conquer (27 December 1896).

The review's description of the costumier, Will Barnes, as having 'no more worlds to conquer' is significant as an indication of how 'ancient Egypt' was appropriated by pantomime producers and designers for the purpose of pantomime spectacle. The presentation of the warriors of other cultures thus served, paradoxically, to show Western cultural superiority. In *Matsa* this is done through the English, American and Irish characters of Colonel Kidstone Boomley, Kitty Truelove and Mrs McLonely who have 'magically' gone back in time and witnessed Ramesis's 'Ancient Memphis'. They continuously comment on the primitiveness of the civilisation, the scantiness of its female costumes and, perhaps most significantly, their own unwillingness to bow before a foreign monarch. Thus the 'elderly Irish spinster' Mrs McLonely announces, for instance, that she is 'a free son of Ould Ireland, and I won't be detained by anyone.' The remarkable paradox of how the
production thus used an 'Irish' rebel to denounce a 'non-English' and more primitive foreign power is an apt illustration of the extraordinarily complex cultural negotiations which 'military' spectacles in pantomimes called up for 'Australian' audiences.

Military spectacles, therefore, drew wide imaginary boundaries in which extraordinary parallels between real events could be made and an ahistorical use of time and place could be practiced. This is, of course, what all 'fictional' representations do but, in the case of the pantomime spectacle, it is important to note that it generated 'racist' humour which, as Said argued in *Orientalism* (1978), depended on a positional superiority which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand (Said 1978, 7).

A similar point may be made on the way Williamson and Musgrove's 1890s pantomimes inextricably connected patriotic displays with 'sports processions'. Referring to *Little Red Riding Hood* at the Princess Theatre in 1893, the *Argus* noted that 'every kind of recreation is symbolised by its implements and adjuncts - angling, rifle and pistol practice, billiards, boating, tennis, football, bicycling, cricket, horse racing - introducing a capital jockey dance in costume - and sea-bathing, with a party of nymphs emerging coyly from a couple of bathing-machines' (27 December 1893). The pantomime's iconographic representation of the various sports points to Richard Fotheringham's argument in *Sport in Australian Drama* (1992) of how sport and drama were connected to 'muscular Christian' values of the period.

There were social as well as commercial reasons for the theatre profession to cultivate a relationship with sport and sportsmen. As the nineteenth century progressed the playing of field sports came to be widely applauded as being highly beneficial to society. Cricket, football, athletics, gymnastics, rowing, boxing and other outdoor activities were considered to be manly pursuits which cultivated both the body and the mind, prepared young men for war, and developed team spirit, moral fibre, sexual restraint, leadership qualities, and a willingness to accept the rules of the game and implicitly, the rules of society (28).18

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18 Fotheringham (1992) distinguishes this attitude from those surrounding the cricket match in *Australia Felix* by claiming that Walsh's play 'was written and performed during one of the short periods in colonial history when the majority of Anglo-Australians were forced to recognise that their attitudes towards the 'mother country were complex, and when the colonial stage could reflect and exploit this ambivalence' (142).
Williamson and Musgrove's 1894 production of *Cinderella* was even more clearly jingoistic, with its 'Pan-Britannic Festival of Sport' in which 'British Sportsmen Form a Band Around the World!' The games included 'Cricket, Football, Fishing, Yachting, Billiards, Shooting, Bathing, Racing, and Cycling by the Champion Team of Lady Cyclists.' Indeed, a comparison of this display to a similar procession of sports in Williamson, Garner and Musgrove's 1887 *Robinson Crusoe* shows the degree to which patriotic fervour for the Empire was steadily growing in the depths of economic depression.

Williamson also staged a 'Procession of Trades' in the same 1887 production but, not surprisingly, 'work' (and particularly the lack of it in the 1890s) did not lend itself as suitable subject matter for the creation of a spectacle in very many productions. Interestingly, it was Coppin not Williamson and Musgrove who staged a 'Celebration Of the Eight Hours' Anniversary' in his 1891 *Dick Whittington*. According to its programme/script, the 'Grand Trades Procession' was immediately preceded by the song 'In Regular Employment now' as a means of celebrating Dick Whittington's new found job as Lord Mayor of London.

A regular job in these very hard times is a difficult thing to obtain,
For depression and strikes have made billets scarce,
And many seek employment in vain.
Poor Dick Whittington once I drove from my door,
But since all his poverty's past
I shall loot on him now as a permanent job;
He's in regular employment at last.

Chorus:
Dick's in regular employment now
And he's fairly on the job somehow,
They've put him in the chair,
And made him Lord Mayor -
He's in regular employment now.

The procession then proceeded with heralds, Trades' Union Banners, peasants, firemen, agriculturalists, brewers, sheepshearers, brickmakers, gold diggers, vinegrowers, shoemakers, the Sailors' Union, The Gordon Cadet Corps Band , The Silver Knights and Beefeaters. The inclusion of imperialist emblems is still, however, most noticeable in the production even with its Trade Union references.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
The procession evolved into a more symbolic 'March of Muscle and Sinew' which culminated in the 'Triumphant Entry Of Sir Richard Whittington'.

Besides the 1887 'Procession of Trades', Trade Unionism was only ever a source of spectacle for Williamson in 1900 when, in his *Australis*, unionists were ridiculed as the Sydney 'Push Brigade' and characterised, in a way common to 'respectable' circles, as thugs.

If you want a bit of mauling,
Or yer hungry for a 'scrap'
If you want to stouch a Johnny,
Or to wipe him off the map,
We're a Push that's in the business,
And we'll put the matter through,
For we're known as boys of metal,
And you bet the metal's blue.

Salute! Salute! THE PUSH BRIGADE,
When ten to one
We never run
And never are afraid! We yearn to burn our powder on parade,
And fight alone,
By telephone
Salute! THE PUSH BRIGADE!

What is most suggestive in the marches, processions and pageants of Williamson and Musgrove's 1890s productions is, to use Adorno and Horkheimer's term, their 'promissory note' of better things to come. Therefore, if one agrees with Jim Davis, that there was 'something rather absurd about a nation which celebrated its imperial achievements and supremacy most effectively through pantomime', it should also be noted that the pantomime's effectiveness was in celebrating imperial achievements and supremacy as the promise of better things to come in the most desperate of times.19 The crucial importance of pantomime productions to the financial survival of Australian theatre managers during the 1890s, well-noted by Williamson at the time of his 1896 production of *Djin Djin*, underlines how their success was inextricably bound up with allowing audiences in Sydney and Melbourne to celebrate the 'Power and Progress of the Anglo-Saxon Race'.

Such was the title of the Grand Patriotic Tableaux in Williamson and Musgrove's 1898 production of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. After the final

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19 A similar point could be made in relation to the use of popular culture in Hollywood musicals of the 1930s.
reconciliation scene, the main characters of the pantomime (Ali Baba, his wife Cogia, Ganem their son, Haidee his sweetheart, Ali's brother Cassim, Beda his wife and the villain Hooliman) come together to view a series of patriotic tableaux and to announce the entrance of soldiers from various parts of the British Empire. In a bizarre twist, the 'Arabian' characters confess to 'British blood' as Ali Baba and his wife Cogia tell how their son Ganem 'came from a tight little island'. The word play on 'tight' allows for the image of the anti-heroic drunk to be incorporated in this prelude to a patriotic display in the magnificence of Ali Baba's palace.

Ganem: You must all come to-night to my new palace.
I pardon all, and bring the Forty, too,
For there my volunteers I shall review!
Ali: I may mention that Ganem has British blood in him.
Cogia: His ancestors came from a tight little island.
Ali: Yes, we'll go back to the little island and all get tight.
Ganem: My volunteers shall show you at my place
The power and progress of the Anglo-Saxon Race!

Vocal March-off

SCENE III.

HALL IN ALI'S PALACE

A Series of

GRAND PATRIOTIC TABLEAUX
Painted by PHIL W. GOATCHER

ILLUSTRATING THE

Power and Progress of the Anglo-Saxon Race.

The music selected and arranged by Mr Alfred F. Hill

1. THE SPANISH ARMADA
2. THE DEATH OF NELSON
3. THE CAPTURE OF MANILA
4. DESTRUCTION OF THE SPANISH FLEET AT SANTIAGO
5. THE BATTLE OF OMDURMAN
6. KITCHENER THE CONQUEROR

Again, as in the processions of 'Kings and Queens of England', there is a chronological and 'evolutionary' imperative portraying the English as inevitably

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 179
conquering all before them. The topically important Kitchener in South Africa at that moment is thus portrayed as the ordained successor of other British military heroes in other famous battles on land and sea. The portrayal of British military prowess, however, does not end there. The now transformed 'British' Ganem parades his 'Volunteers' in a military review which further characterises him as an Australian Federationist who looks forward to working with other British colonies for the glory of the Empire. Thus the 'Grand Kaleidoscopic March By Ganem's Volunteers' praises the military successes of 'Britannia and her boys'.

Ganem: Well done; with you, my noble volunteers, Of our future success I have no fears, And politicians now must recognise our might, When we for Federation ready are to fight! But in the world we'll now make much more noise, For we have got new allies.

Morgi: Who are they? Ganem: Britannia and her boys! Hadiee: Now any insults to us all will rue, For here comes Tommy Atkins, staunch and true!

*Enter* BRITISH SOLDIER

Cogia: Ready to hand her navies always are; Shiver my timbers, here's a British Tar!

*Enter* BRITISH SAILOR

Ali: And from our fur-clad Lady of the Snows, Our bold Canadian cousin fronts his foes.

*Enter* CANADIAN SOLDIER

Beda: And out of tropic India - Ranji’s land - Our gallant Sikhs now with us proudly stand!

*Enter* INDIAN SOLDIER

Cassim: Ready to fight old Kruger comes the Cape; Our flag all over Africa we mean to drape!

*Enter* CAPE SOLDIER

Morgi: And here comes one, his loyalty to show, A Sydney Lancer, ready for the foe!

*Enter* SYDNEY LANCER

Hass: A brother, yes, by blood, is Uncle Sam; The valour of his soldiers is no sham!

*Enter* UNITED STATES SOLDIER

Hool: His sailors took a stern revenge on Spain; Too well, she learnt, they all remembered the *Maine*!

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
Enter UNITED STATES SAILOR

Fairy: His officers gentlemen, and brace men too!
     For Hobson showed the world his heart was true.

Enter LIEUTENANT HOBSON

Ganem: So let these types in history take their place,
     As emblems of the power and progress of the Anglo-Saxon race;
     And may the sisters twain for ever stand,
     Britannia and Columbia, hand in hand!

CHORUS

Britannia, home of loyal hearts and free;
Columbia, goddess of sweet liberty!
May both in bonds of love united be;
Prosperity shall be their dower!
Between them they shall rule and keep the main,
And never shall their power and glory wane,
Australia joins her elder sisters' twain,
All one for progress, peace, and power!

GRAND FINALE -

BRITANNIA AND COLUMBIA

The potency of this patriotic display seems even greater when one realises that the 1898 arrangement of *Ali Baba* was a continuation of the jingoistically-inspired spectacle of two earlier arrangements. George Musgrove's 1891 and Williamson and Musgrove's 1892 arrangements of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* had both staged 'The Triple Alliance and Federation of English Speakers' in which, after a march of nations in similar style to the march by Ganem's Volunteers, Britannia, America and Australia pledged their support to one another.

Enter BRITANNIA

Britannia: And I the land of glorious renown,
     Whose flag the nations never can pull down.
     That flag that o'er slave is ne'er unfurled,
     Ruled by a woman, honoured by the world.

Enter FEDERATED AUSTRALIA

F. Australia: I'm greater Britain, sprung from the old stock,
     Seven daughters united, firm as a rock.
     Proud, independent, yet loving and true,
     Heart in the right place, my colour true blue.

(Tableau. BRITANNIA, AMERICA and AUSTRALIA)

Britannia: The English speaking nations to which we three belong.
     United form a bulwark, firm, loving, proud and strong.
America: The glorious land of stars and stripes, that see the darkies free,
Australia:  To dear old mother England, shall ever faithful be.  
Her youngest daughter of the South in filial union seen,  
We all unite in joyous strain to pray, God Save the Queen?

GRAND NATIONAL FEDERATION FINALE

This presentation of an Australian federation remaining within the 'English family' was thus staged nine years before Federation. Amazingly, like Arthur Adam's 1898 arrangement, it draws on 'Republican' America's assistance in seeing that Australia remains subservient to 'Mother England' in what, ironically, radical nationalists would later refer to as a 'Fetteration'.

The power of such enactments in shaping the Australian political imagination must be seriously considered given that, as Beverley Kingston (1988) points out, 'the imagery of federation nationhood was often militaristic' (305). Furthermore, the allusion to an impending Australian Federation in strictly Imperialist terms in pre-1900 productions stunningly shows the potency of the idea of a 'Imperial Federation' which Luke Trainor (1994) argues had been advocated since 1884.

During the years 1880 - 1886 there was considerable British public support for federation of the Australian colonies provided it was fashioned on a basis to ensure the permanent unity of these colonies with Britain. More particularly, the Australian Federal Council, which first sat in February 1886, was formed in response to British needs. It was not foisted on the colonies by a British conspiracy but the imperial government was the key player in its creation. For some British observers colonial federations could be the building blocks by which an imperial federation was created; a belief that the Imperial Federation League, founded in 1884, was to espouse. Thus, federation was a doctrine to be applied to specific areas in the empire, and also to the empire as a whole with perhaps colonial delegates serving on some central body in Britain. Federation involved, on a minimum definition, some fixed division of powers between central and regional government. In fact imperial federation was used to mean the closer permanent union of the empire (9).

The coincidence of Australian Federation and the Boer War occurring almost simultaneously thus allows us to see the making of an 'Imperial Federation' and Australia's participation in an Imperial war. The New South Wales Colonial Secretary's Papers show the extent to which Williamson was prepared to go, to endorse Australia's participation in the Boer War. Correspondence between him and Premier John See in January 1900 indicates that arrangements were made to allow contingents of soldiers to view Little Red Riding Hood prior to their departure to the Transvaal. Pantomime writer Espinasse obviously had this military audience in mind.
when, in Act 2, Scene 4, he changed the Wolf’s stronghold into a Boer stronghold from which Red Riding Hood needed to be rescued. Dressed as the Leader of the New South Wales Lancers, the pantomime boy Carrie Moore entered with the Troops who then performed ‘evolutions’. The programme/script represented ‘Our Boys’ through the Naval Brigade, Royal Irish, Grenadier Guards, Gordon Highlanders and New South Wales Lancers. (Plates 25 and 26 show Carrie Moore and the Gordon Highlanders from that production.) The pantomime boy, Boy Blue, then delivered the following patriotic announcement after which the Boer stronghold was successfully stormed and they all sang the newly-penned patriotic song, ‘Children of the Empire’.

Boy. My Gallant Contingent. You have volunteered for active service, and there’s plenty of it to be had just now. This is your chance to show that you are real Soldiers, not make-believe. There is plenty of fighting to be done, and you’re the boys to do it! Once more we’ll teach the world the lesson it has learned before: Though Nations fall by conqu’r ing foes beset, Britannia’s Sons were never beaten yet. Forward!

(The Storming of the Stronghold) Troops advance to the attack. The Wolf and Fox escape. Troops enter the Castle, pull down the [Boer] Flag and run up the Union Jack. Red Riding Hood is rescued, amid cheers of the Troops.

Boy. Well done, boys! Isn’t that a fine army? RRH. The finest in the world! and do you know why it always wins? Boy. Because it’s made of good soldiers. RRH. Yes, and better than that, because wherever they may be, they never forget that they are Children of the Empire.

When Britannia calls Her voice goes round the world And all its millions see The Lion’s Flag unfurled It rings from Pole to Pole It travels with the sun And still from Dawn to Dawn That call goes rolling on.

Then the drums begin to beat In the lands beyond the seas, And the pipes are playing up When the Troops are on the Quays There’s a tread of marching feet From the Tropics to the Snows And the boys come flocking in When the British Bugle blows.

Chorus: Children of the Empire Hear Britannia call Far and wide her brave ones Have answered one and all Not all the World against her Can drive her to the wall

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
MISS CARRIE MOORE.

As the Leader of the N. B. W. Lamoger, Princess' Theatre.

Talma photo.
THE GORDON HIGHLANDERS,
in the pantomime of "Little Red Riding Hood, Princess' Theatre.

Photo by Talma, Swanston street.
For the Children of the Empire
Have heard the Mother's call.

When Britannia calls
She calls with tongues of steel
It rings out trumpet-toned
And drowns the cannon's peal
And yet no sound is heard
That's known to mortal ear,
The thunder of that voice
The soul alone can hear

When the grim red games afoot
Where the stakes are living men
When the guns begin to speak
There are hearts that hear it then
And our Mother need not fear
For the sceptre of her pride
All the Sons will answer 'here'
When she calls them to her side.

Reviews state that this patriotic spectacle was 'warmly applauded' (Age, 20 May 1900) while other critics noted the way that the war gave the pantomime its dramatic purpose.

Needless to say, the whole production is plentifully seasoned with references to the one engrossing topic of the hour. We wander through a thicket of war allusions, all received just now with spontaneous and enthusiastic applause. At another time adapters would be cudgelling their brains to shape something effective out of the latest parliamentary fiasco or law court scandal. Now little thought is required. Every convenient pause invites a patriotic song. Mr. Shine and Mr. H. J. Ward, in the characters of Mother Hubbard and the Baron, have a duet, with the refrain 'Our Native Land,' humorous, yet with the true ring about it. Miss Dorothy Vane, a dainty Red Riding Hood, celebrates the sending of the contingents with one song, and before the close of the performance, nearly eleven thirty, by the way - she sings 'The Absent-minded Beggar,' with a spirit that brings the coins showering on the stage. Miss Carrie Moore (Boy Blue) completes the military tableau in Act II, by singing 'Children of the Empire' who 'have heard the mother's call,' an equally stirring ditty. Neither scenic artist nor librettist, in fact has wasted an opportunity in this direction. Mr. Goatcher has painted a fine canvas representing the kopjes at Elands Laagte. In front of this, parade with their bands detachments of the Gordons, the Grenadiers, the Royal Irish, the New South Wales Lancers, &c., and their evolutions culminate in an attack upon the Boer stronghold, where Red Riding Hood's enemy, the Wolf, has providentially taken shelter (Unidentified notice in Theatre scrapbook, 1897 - 1899, State Library of Victoria).

Indeed, Melbourne Punch's theatre critic 'Peter Quince' clearly identifies Williamson's pragmatic intentions in spicing the pantomime with patriotism:

The flavour in every dish and the atmosphere surrounding every scene, situation and song is decidedly pro-British. This was only to be expected at such a time, and any theatrical manager who neglected to take advantage of the War of the Empire would not only be an Absent-Minded Beggar, but for that absence of mind would have to pay, pay, pay - and very dearly, too...The justification for this excess of warlike fervor is made manifest by the great favour with which ever Jingo-jot and Australia-atom are received. The climax is reached when 'Little Red Riding Hood,' who is necessary a 'Ruinek,' comes forward with the everlasting tambourine and takes the audience into her confidence about a gentleman in khaki, who has been invited to run down the easting in the direction of Africa. The response of stray coins was remarkably good on Saturday night, and as Miss Vane coined her notes in Sydney into over £300 in aim of the fund, her record of 'Little Red Riding Hood's' contribution to the War Fund is likely to be

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 184
something very large before the popular little lady has abandoned 'The Absent-minded Beggar' (20 May 1900).

Similar support of British militarism was incorporated into *Australis*, Williamson's Federation pantomime of 1900, which concluded with a 'patriotic' finale where the pantomime boy, Valentine, and his contingent take over the South Pole and announce the renaming of its capital, the 'City of Zero', as 'Hope-town' after the first Governor General, Lord Hopetoun. Valentine introduces the 'March of Boys of the Red, White and Blue' who he explains have 'gone all over the world'. The *Sydney Morning Herald* described the march as consisting of 'scores of girls, bearing pennons, and dazzlingly arrayed in the colours named, manoeuvred beneath the coloured light (27 December 1900). The patriotic song 'United Australia' was then sung. It was not a song of independence, but one which affirmed the close ties between the newly Federated Australia and Britain.

At Australia's birth all the nations of the earth
Envied England a daughter so fair,
And the lands of the west sent their strongest and best,
To watch o'er her childhood with care;
She can now stand alone for her sons are full-grown,
In every land, in everything, they hold their own,
And the day is at hand, when their loved native land
Shall be a free and United Australia.

Staging 'imperial nationalism' had always been inherently related to displays of 'nationhood' in countless ballets 'of Nations' in Williamson's productions before and after Australian Federation. Furthermore, the presentation of other European nations and British colonies seems to have euphorically staged Australia's desire to be thought important in English international relations. A 'Ballet of Nations' was staged by Williamson's competitor, M. L. Raphael, in his 1885 'Drury Lane' production of *Mother Goose*. While these generic 'nationalist' displays were also evident in the Firm's productions, what was more noticeable was its harnessing of an 'internationalist' mood. In the pre-1900 period, for instance, Williamson and Musgrove's 1893 and 1894 productions of *Beauty and the Beast* staged Australia's participation in the Chicago World Fair. The narrative thus included Beauty and her transformed Beast's travelling to the Fair via a 'Flying Machine', and a scenic

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 185
representation of the Fair itself, including its Hall of Administration, in which the 'Ballet of Nations' was performed by a hundred of the Corps de Ballet.

French, Russian, Austrian, German, Italian, Spanish, and American nations as well as Great Britain and her Indian Empire appearing with their appropriate flags, emblems, and insignia, one after another, the orchestra playing the national airs of each, and the whole forming themselves, after some effective evolutions, into a compact alliance with their colours interlaced when there arises, from the centre of the mass, a figure of Peace, clothed in samite, mystic, wonderful, surrounding the globe, and holding aloft an olive branch. This pacific forecast of the New Year seemed to be greatly appreciated by the audience, and was heartily applauded. (Sydney Morning Herald, 24 December 1893)

This hope-engendering image seems to have been a deliberate strategy by Williamson and Musgrove given the economic chaos surrounding the production.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST is constructed on lines calculated to please an audience composed of sightseers and pleasure-seekers of all ages, and although doubtless psychological problems and theories may or may not be expounded in the course of the entertainment likely to satisfy the cravings of those who yearn for higher things, every effort will be made, and no expense spared to achieve success and to satisfy the public in the fullest degree (Theatre Advertisement, 24 December 1893).

These 'Ballets of Nations' seem to feature even more frequently in post-1900 pantomimes. This was also noticeable amongst Williamson's competitors. In 1904 William Anderson, for instance, staged the 'Grand March of Nations' after the 'Cherry Blossom Ballet' in the denouement of his production of Sinbad as the wedding preparations got underway. (Plate 27) The Argus derisively explained that the 'little nation of Japan' was represented in the procession/ballet.

However, Williamson's post-1900 pantomimes also illustrate the way military images were decontextualised from their own 'topical' potency and made appear 'apolitical'. For instance, the diverging opinions between England and Australia over England's alliance with Japan, and the debate over Australia's need to have its own navy, are uncomplicatingly signalled in the Firm's 1908 and 1910 productions by presenting Australia's future navy and 'Building an Australian Navy'. In fact, there seems to be a strong parallel between the sentiments of Williamson's productions and the sentiments of the organisers of 'Empire Day', with both putting forward the idea of Australia as a country which was, according Stewart Firth and Jeanette Hoorn, (1993) 'sorely in need of better defences' (129).
"SINBAD THE SAILOR," AT THE MELBOURNE ROYAL.

MARCH OF NATIONS.
The British Empire League, formed to oppose the Anti-War League calling for an end to Australia's involvement in the Boer War, pressed for and succeeded in getting a national day of celebration on 24 May 1903. At the same time, a wide range of other defence measures was introduced and militarism was seemingly practiced in many non-military institutions.

The Defence Acts of 1903 and 1904 provided for conscription within Australia in time of war, and between 1905 and 1913 defence expenditure increased six-fold. Peacetime conscription into the cadets and citizen military forces was introduced in 1911. School activities such as the Rural Camp Schools designed to give Sydney boys a taste of country life, were run on military lines. A day at a rural camp school began with reveille, a compulsory shower and a military parade and ended with the last post. Everyday school life itself was influenced by military forms of organisation. Children marched in columns, fell-in, dressed ranks and gave salutes. The boys like a 'touch of militarism; with the polish and finish it gave to school proceedings, according to one senior school inspector (Firth and Hoom 1993, 129).

It is important to note, however, that these military and nationalistic displays continued alongside more fantastic marches. For instance, J. C. Williamson Ltd's 1910 Jack and the Beanstalk staged an 'All Nation Military Ballet' and the 'March of Vines and Spirits', while their 1912 Puss in Boots featured the 'March of the Young Guard' and the 'March of Catland Couriers'. Likewise, in the 1913 production of Forty Thieves audiences were entertained by the 'March of the Forty Thieves' in Act 1 and the Grand Patriotic Pageant of 'The Drums of All Nations' in the finale. Despite the essentially fantastic nature of these spectacles, Williamson and other theatre managers could thus easily return to presenting the 'real thing' at any time, as they did in 1914 when both J. C. Williamson Ltd's Cinderella and William Anderson's Sinbad presented the 'Grand March of the Allies'. The Age of 21 December 1914 reported that it was the most effective part of Williamson's production: the allies were New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, Ireland, Japan, India, Canada, France, Russia, Belgium. Music was especially written for the march - its sub-title was the 'Freedom March'. After this display, the music changed to 'It's A Long Way To Tipperary' as 'Australia' entered the stage. This was followed by 'Rule Britannia' as a number of John Bulls entered and a curtain was drawn to discover the Fairy Godmother transformed into Britannia. Plate 28 shows Celia Ghiloni in costume. She then came down centre stage and sang the patriotic song 'Fighting for the Motherland':

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 187
CElia GHiLONI

BRiTTANiA
There's a call upon the ocean,
There's a whisper on the breeze
The Mother Country's calling us
Across the deep blue seas.
In ev'ry corner of the earth
You hear the same old cry
Where England's sons have manned the guns
Prepared to do or die
They come from snowy Canada
From India's burning strand
New Zealand and South Africa
To aid the Motherland.

Then heart to heart and hand to hand
Shoulder to shoulder we'll take our stand.
We've heard the call
We'll stand or fall
Fighting for our dear old Motherland.

From Melbourne to the Leeuwin,
From Brisbane to the Bight.
Australia's Sons are marching forth
Are marching to the fight
They're coming from the lonely bush
They're coming from the town
To bravely go and fight the foe
Australia's Boys in brown
Forgot our party politics
Forgot our varied creeds
Perhaps we've wrangled over words
We stand as one indeed.

Then heart to heart and hand to hand
Shoulder to shoulder we'll take our stand.
We've heard the call
We'll stand or fall
Fighting for our dear old Motherland.

The predominance of female dancers and chorus members in the presentation of these militarist/imperialist/nationalist spectacles clearly implicated women in the patriarchal militarism and the 'muscular Christian' values of the time. To what extent might we now judge her complicity? Was she merely 'the body' on which patriarchal and imperialist desires were projected? This is quite literally suggested in Williamson and Musgrove's 1893 Melbourne production of *Little Red Riding Hood* when Mary Weir, Williamson's then constant companion, had projected onto her swirling costume British Imperialist motifs even as she danced her 'luminous dance'.

The stage is completely walled in black velvet, and all the light is concentrated upon a single figure, that of Miss Mary Weir, whose voluminous white draperies radiate light under the circumstances. Portraits of the Royal Family, the Union Jack and the Australian flag are successively thrown upon the robe, and then a serpentine dance is executed, with a rapidity and grace of movement which knows no intermission; all the folds of the dress are artificially elongated at the arms so as to give it the appearance of wings, when fully expanded, fall into a series of curves and spirals which satisfy the eye without wearying it. Then the effect of continually changing coloured lights is brought

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 188
to play and waves of tinted lustre ripple over the convolutions of the dancer's costumes like the iridescence of a seashell or of a peacock's neck; and eventually four other white robed figures suddenly emerge out of the impalpable gloom, and join in the serpentine movements of the principal, while a lowered star seems to be engaged in an ineffectual effort to fix itself upon their flying draperies; and the delight of the audience finds expression in tumultuous applause. Altogether, it may be asserted without exaggeration that this is one of the most beautiful things of the kind that has yet been seen upon the Melbourne stage (Argus, 27 December 1893).

On the other hand, 'Amazons' had long since been a feature of pantomimic spectacles as many of Garnet Walch's arrangements including Australia Felix demonstrate. As Veronica Kelly (1988) has noted

there was no question that the favourite scene was the March of the Amazons...Public taste was definitely in favour of the Amazons, portraying the army of the good genius, whose march was a series of geometrical evolutions while coloured limelights played on their gold and silver armour and dazzling mirror shields. Images of Utopian intensity and abundance were created by the startling brilliance of limelight in the gas-lit theatre, and by the sheer mass of shapely women; a tradition known to us from Hollywood (11).

Images of warrior women and cross-dressed soldiers, played by 'ladies of the ballet', were devised to show as much of women's bodies on stage as possible. Dampier's 1886 production of Dick Whittington and His Cat included a 'Troop of Amazons' who were 'Ready for any Sudden Contingency'. Williamson, Garner and Musgrove's 1888 and 1889 productions of Sinbad also presented a 'Dazzling Review of the Sultan's Amazonian Body Guards' which in the 1889 Sydney production was reported to have been one of the most spectacular features of the pantomime. Williamson and Musgrove's 1896 production of Sinbad carried over this spectacle as did Williamson's 1903 production of Sleeping Beauty. While female warriors will be discussed in much greater depth in the third part of this chapter, it is important to note that the 'feminization' of late nineteenth-century pantomime 'military' spectacles did not seem to deter the fulsome celebration of the British Imperialist enterprise in Australia.

A similar point can be made concerning the use of children. Indeed, their presence shows how cultural negotiations included the establishment of the pantomime production as an 'innocent' spectacle calculated to interest children. Act 1, Scene 5 of Williamson and Musgrove's 1892 Little Red Riding Hood, for instance, included a school scene which changed to 'Doll's Land' in which was also staged a 'Doll's March' and the 'Grand Doll Ballet and Finale'. The scene change, the march and the

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
ballet, suggest a continuity of effect which allowed the spectacle to cathartically empty
the audience of everyday economic worries and thus create a 'happy world'. Such a
creation was constantly claimed by nineteenth-century theatre critics and managers as
the benign purpose of pantomimes. Indeed, its dialogue was often self-reflexive on
the subject.

(Scene changes to Doll's Land)

Baron: How do you like it? All my own idea.
Dame: But how did that young person bring us here.
Baron: To understand it I have no pretension.
It's some new fable of Edison's invention.
Dame: Just fancy that, well, ain't it lovely? There!
It beats King Street Arcade, I do declare.
Rose: Here is a happy world - in which you see
A host of friends who never disagree.
Red Riding Hood: Oh, thank you very much for such a treat.
Boy Blue: The friends of early childhood here we meet.
Rose: And not the friends of early youth alone,
As many a grey crowned head I think will own.
For pantomime with all its childish fun,
Will carry sixty back to twenty one.
Progress: As grandpa sits nodding in his chair,
It cheers him up to hear his grandson there.
Relating the adventures of the clown,
How with a goose he knocked the policeman down.
The young wife with her son and heir of three,
Sits proudly watching his excited glee.
As in the past and present, so hereafter,
Gay pantomime shall make all ages rock with laughter.

Exeunt Rose, Red Riding Hood, Boy Blue, Dame and Baron.

GRAND DOLLS' BALLET AND FINALE

Theatre critics often noted the 'clever children' who abounded in the
pantomimes and, as in the 1893 production of Little Red Riding Hood, praised their
aptitude and 'remarkable amenability to instruction and discipline'. Plate 29 shows
children in the 1899 Boer War production of Little Red Riding Hood. Productions
often used 'juvenile' warriors and 'dwarf cadets' in various processions. Coppin's
1893 production of Sinbad featured, in Act 1, Scene 2, 'Juvenile Sports Up To Date'
and the 'Living Representation Of Nursery Rhymes' including the 'Procession Of
Heroes And Heroines Of Nursery Love Headed By A Military Baby Brass Band'.
Similarly, George Rignold's 1893 Jack the Giant Killer included 'an army of juvenile
warriors representing the navy, the cavalry of Australia, and the foot forces of
England Scotland and Ireland'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
A GROUP OF LITTLE DANCERS

From the pantomime of "Little Red Riding Hood," who were trained by the able Ballet Mistress, Miss Minnie Everett. The two young ladies in the centre are Misses Hendley and Alma Skinner.

Talma photo, Swanston-street.
The use of children to represent 'miniature' armies continued in the post-1900 period. Act 1, Scene 3 of J. C. Williamson Ltd's 1910 production of *Jack and the Beanstalk* included the 'March of the Little Wooden Soldiers'. A typed script of the production describes how the scene opens in darkness. A cock crows and two wooden soldiers are seen coming down steps at the back of the stage. Pink limelight is used to suggest the dawn slowly breaking as soldiers come down centre stage, separate and go to their sentry boxes right and left of the stage. Noah's Ark is seen upstage. It opens and another squad of wooden soldiers comes onto the stage and enacts the march. At its conclusion, the soldiers return to the ark which closes. Men and women then enter the stage as do other boys and girls. They wave at the entering King and attendants who have arrived to open the cattle fair. The importance of women and children in the spectacle thus underlines the 'wholistic' approach through which hegemonic discourse achieves communal consent.

As Benedict Anderson (1983) points out, it was 'fraternity' that made possible not so much the killing but the willingness to die for 'such limited imaginings' as nationalism (7). The same might be said with respect to Australians dying for the 'Empire'. The pantomimes, by Williamson and other Australian theatre managers, however, show that we must review the nature of 'fraternity' to include women and children in the ideological construction of imperialist wars as well as in the configuring of nation states. Thus, while the issue of militarism in European Australian history is hugely complex, taken collectively the pantomimes show that its celebratory representation of British militarism was a crucial part of popular entertainment which in turn strongly supported Australia's participation in foreign wars and the framing of a 'new Nation'. Uncannily, they suggest that Australian society had been rehearsing on stage for the big event in 1914 - waiting for the moment when the new nation could truly prove itself in a 'Great War'. Humphrey McQueen (1986) made a similar point when he wrote:

Only a mass sacrifice of individuals for the nation in defence of the Empire could bind together the hitherto diverse but nonetheless complementary strands of the Australian experience. Racism, democracy, nationalism, imperial loyalty, formed ranks to storm the parapets at Gallipoli (83).
Bearing Raymond Williams' argument in mind that dramatic forms should not be read strictly in terms of 'anticipations and reflections' of social and political events, the pantomimes verify the necessity for essentially different kinds of cultural representations to enable the imperialist hegemony to legitimate its ethos and actions in a 'wholistic' sense. Indeed, they illustrate that the imperialistic 'ideological vision' was always kaleidoscopically rearranging its fixed notions of cultural superiority. The notion of a 'transformation scene' might also aptly describe the ideological underpinning of Williamson's pre-1914 pantomime productions as their sense of Anglo-Saxon cultural superiority masked the brutal means by which British militarism achieved its 'acts of supremacy'. I will thus conclude the chapter by considering the importance of post-1882 'transformation scenes' and the role of women in the Firm's 1899 and 1914 war-time pantomime productions.
2.3 The Pantomime as a Spectacle of Patriotic Women: 'utopian' transformation scenes and two war-time productions, 1899 Red Riding Hood and 1914 Cinderella.

The sketch in the Illustrated Australian News of 1 January 1895 of the transformation scene of Williamson and Musgrove's Beauty and the Beast depicts a company of shapely females adorned with ethereal wings. (Plate 30) George Gordon had on this occasion created 'Beauty's Bower' and the winged females were shown in an idyllic leafy setting. The 1893 Sydney version of this scene had opened with Gordon's panorama of noble pictures, representing scenes in Asia, Egypt, North America and Australia, for which Miss [Nellie] Stewart and Miss [Florence] Young, standing near the wings, acted as descriptive chorus, reading a line or two of appropriate verse as each scene was displayed. The final prospect was a great recess of magnificent flowers and silver foliage, with nymphs dispersing here and there, brilliant butterflies waving their wings, and the whole scene apt to its title 'Beauty's Bower' (Daily Telegraph, 27 December 1893).

Nymphs were to be described in even greater detail by the Argus's critic of the Melbourne production when he noted how 'sylph-like figures' hovered in the air with their gauzy butterfly wings and when

the climax is reached, instead of the stage being illuminated by coloured fires as in the old days, the wings of the four volant figures at the rear are lit up by electricity, the effect produced being that of rubies, sapphires, and topazes, with a vivid flame at the heart of each lucient gem (Argus , 24 December 1894).

Changes to the 'transformation scene', according to Veronica Kelly (1988), show the influence of Planche's 'fairy extravaganzas' on the pantomime's internal structure.

The organic plot relationship between opening and harlequinade was severed, and the element of scenic transformation relocated and redefined. In the days of Grimaldi, the 'transformation scene' was the moment where the deity or fairy transformed the characters of the opening into the harlequinade figures. This was effected by means of "big heads" and large loose costumes worn during the opening...At the moment of transformation the overclothes would be whisked down a trap and the heads removed, revealing the harlequinade costumes underneath. Then the comic chase would persist until the dark scene, when the fairy would again transform, this time, the scene itself, into a dazzling ideal world. In the new pantomimes of the 1850s, it was not the characters but the scenery which was transformed, and a different set of performers, frequently dancers, took over the acrobatic comic business from the specialist burlesque singers and comic actors who now sustained the opening (9).

An overview of productions of the 1880s and 90s indicates that the term still referred to a special kind of spectacle in which the scene painter presented virtually any
subject he desired. The subjects were sometimes classically inspired; at other times they had a Christmas theme, depicted wedding scenes or a beautiful pastoral setting simply referred to as 'realms of happiness'. The latter was undoubtedly a legacy of the final reconciliation scene of earlier productions.

The Triumvirate's first productions of *Aladdin* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*, respectively, staged George Gordon's 'Realms Of Happiness' and John Hennings 'Chaos to Light terminating with the Birth of Venus'. G. B. W. Lewis's 1883 *Forty Thieves* staged 'Titania's Bower - The Awakening of the Flowers'; Williamson, Garner and Musgrove's 1884 and 1885 productions of *Cinderella* depicted Gordon's 'Royal Christmas Cards' which then scenically transformed into the 'Forest of Fairy Ferns'; their 1885 and 1886 productions of *Sleeping Beauty* staged Gordon's 'Beauty's Wedding Tour' and their 1889 productions staged Gordon and Brunton's 'Cupid and Psyche' in *Cinderella*, Brunton's 'Home of the Fairies' in *Aladdin* and 'A Glimpse of Fairyland' in the Easter production of *Sinbad*.

Similar subjects are evident in the 1890s in Rignold's *Dick Whittington*, painted by Alfred Clint; Musgrove's 1890 *Cinderella*, by George Gordon, who on that occasion created a 'Grand View of Sydney'; ex-partners Williamson and Garner's 1890 *Aladdin* spectacularly staged Wagner's 'The King of the Nibelungers' by John Brunton; the following year Brunton painted 'War and Peace' for Coppin's *Dick Whittington*; in 1892 Phil Goatcher painted 'The Fairy Queen's Boudoir or The Ring and the Keeper' in *Little Red Riding Hood*; Clint and Vaughan created 'The Nativity of Rotomahana' for Rignold's 1892 *Bluebeard*. Other productions that year saw Brunton paint 'Birth of a New Year' for Coppin's *Babes in the Wood* and George and John Gordon The Old World and the New for Williamson and Musgrove's *All Baba and the Forty Thieves*. Rignold's 1893 *Jack the Giant Killer* reproduced John Brunton's 'Birth of the New Year'; Gunther's 1893 *The Babes* staged 'The Home of the Water Nymph' by Joseph Little. Plate 31 gives us a rare view of the transformation which was staged in Rignold's 1893 production.
1895 seems to have been the last year that the transformation scene was named as such in Sydney and Melbourne productions: Wood's *Robinson Crusoe* staged Kinchela's 'The Home of the Naiads' and Coppin staged W. B. Spong's 'From Russet to Gold' in *Santa Claus and the House that Jack Built*. But in 1896 advertisements and theatre programme/scripts for Williamson and Musgrove's *Djin Djin* did not refer to the term. Thereafter, despite the fact that Williamson included one in his 1900 *Australis*, when Gordon painted 'Birth of Australia', the company's productions indicate that the transformation scene was simply incorporated into the pantomime's spectacular finale. Along with the omission of the 'harlequinade', this points to pantomime's dramatic structure moving further away from its 'folk' origins and coming more and more under the influence of musical comedy.

That the transformation scene was no longer singled out for mention does not mean that productions were becoming less spectacular but rather that such scenic flights of fantasy were staged throughout the entire production. As the staffing and wages records, for instance, of George Musgrove's 1900 *Cinderella* show, the most significant influence of the 'fairy extravaganza' and 'musical comedy' on the pantomime was that productions were performed predominantly by the 'ladies of the chorus' and the 'ballet ladies' while the theatre itself was run by males.

Female performers, costumiers and choreographers worked within a theatrical cultural practice, therefore, which had hierarchies of marginalisation. Furthermore, these reveal how margins are, as Sneja Gunew (1985) notes, both a sanctuary for the powerless and places of authority and coercion (142). Thus the theatre's attraction for women might be read as financially beneficial, status giving and at the same time, paradoxically, politically marginalising. It is clear, for instance, that pantomime boys were very well paid and could make between £25 and £60 per week. Furthermore, while chorus ladies and children were the lowest paid members of the company, it was generally known that they did far better than women and children in other work forces. Florence Young wrote in the *Lone Hand* that 'the average chorus-girl gets a considerably larger salary than the best paid lady-stenographer and about
twice as much as the ordinary shop-assistant' (1 June 1908). The point is proven since her article appeared in a series reporting on women working as nurses, actresses and shop-assistants. The report on nurses reveals that, as probationers, they received between nil and 7/6 a week while 'Sisters' in public hospitals only made between £40 and £60 per annum (1 July 1908, 240). Sales girls only earned 5s to 12s. 6d. per week (1 September 1908) while the chorus girl was 'customarily paid about 15s in her native town; about £1 if she is touring away' (1 May 1908). Therefore, a 'lesser' star of the Williamson, Garner and Musgrove 'Royal Comic Opera Company', Ida Osborne, must be seen as having done well for herself since her wages for the mid-1880s of £232/16/- were comparable with a Head Clerk's salary of between £200 - 300 (Davison 1979,192).

George Musgrove's wages record for the 1900 production of *Cinderella* shows that women's wages compared favourably with their male counterparts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKLY WAGE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Prince (Nellie Stewart)</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>£8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightshade (Stan. Calhane)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella (Miss Elise Cooke)</td>
<td>£15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandini (Miss Emmie Owen)</td>
<td>£25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal (Fairy Godmother)</td>
<td>£5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mons &amp; Madame Darto</td>
<td></td>
<td>£80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude Blarer (E. W. Maule Cole)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilly Blarer (Fred A. Ellis)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobb (Godrey Cass)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herald (Y. Lambcroft)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron Blarer (Chas. Sequin)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfonso (Ritter Riley)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobb (Chas. Berkeley)</td>
<td></td>
<td>£5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus Ladies</td>
<td>£2/10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballet Ladies</td>
<td>£2/10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children - girls</td>
<td>8/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children - boys</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus - gentlemen</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2/13/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td>£3/10/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical Conductor</td>
<td></td>
<td>£20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>£12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Call Box</td>
<td></td>
<td>13/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front of House</td>
<td>??</td>
<td>??</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireman</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2/5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policeman</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightwatchman</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1/13/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dressers</td>
<td>16/-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wardrobe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Beannmout</td>
<td></td>
<td>£3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Manzie</td>
<td></td>
<td>£5</td>
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<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1/6/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Jones</td>
<td>£4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>£1/6/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>£3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm O'Connor</td>
<td>£1/6/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>£8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paintroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Goatcher</td>
<td>£20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>£2/10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenery &amp; props</td>
<td>£1/2/6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlequinade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messrs Ridgeway</td>
<td>£6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Martin</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Stanley</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The wages for the principal actors varied according to 'star' quality and so the pantomime boy Nellie Stewart received £50 per week while the principal girl playing Cinderella got £15. Wages also reflected the 'novelty' of an act and so the Dartos as husband and wife dancing partners received the joint sum of £80 per week.

The cartoon in the *Sydney Mail's* Christmas supplement of 1893 shows two would-be actresses setting out to procure their first theatrical engagement, firstly trying a Theatrical Agency and then a manager who looks remarkably JCW-like. (Plate 32) These obviously well-to-do ladies were forced to seek work because 'papa' was facing bad times during the 1890s Depression. They discover that, not only can't they get a star engagement like Ellen Terry, but that they must begin at the bottom on 'a pound a week in the chorus of a comic opera'. Dissatisfied, they try a manager who agrees to offer 30/- if they 'didn't mind wearing tights for the pantomime'. By now truly despondent, the stage aspirants decide there is no chance for women of 'real talent' in the theatre.

The issues touched on comically here, concerning the place and value of women in theatre, and in particular the pantomime, suggest, as Lesley Ferris (1990) has argued for the classical ballerina, that theatrical apprenticeship for women involved enduring 'hardship and deprivation' for the sake of creating 'an ethereal, dream-like, passive image floating across the stage' (110). *Behind the Scenes; being glimpses of the public and private life of the ballet girl* (1901) describes how the work of the Ballet girl moves from 'Flying Fairy' to Extra to Corp de Ballet and then Coryphee. As the Flying Fairy she was

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**Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'**
"Things are very bad in the City, my dear," papa said; "you must really economise in your milliner's bills."

"Why not go on the stage?" Gertrude said. "Lots of actresses get as much as fifty pounds a week, and when we had those private theatricals last year everybody said you were quite as good as Ellen Terry."

"Some went to a theatricals' agency. "We will take twenty pounds a week to start with," Gertrude said. "I am afraid we have nothing of that kind on our books," the Agent said. "If you can sing I will give you a pound a week in the chorus of a comic opera."

"Just fancy the man's impudence!" Gertrude was furious, but I was rather pickled.

"We'll try another manager this time," she said.

The manager said that if we didn't mind wearing "fights" he would engage us at thirty shillings a week for the Pantomime!" You should have seen Gertrude's face!"
slung to a wire and moved across the stage, with a wreath of glazed calico flowers in her hand to herald in a benign genius, or guide a rightful prince to his love. Or perhaps she has been perched upon an aerial machine to wave a silver yard-measure with a star on the top; but now she is for the first time allowed to touch the earth before an audience. Her pay is at present very little - very little indeed - perhaps a shilling a night; and for this she has to trot backwards and forwards upon her thin legs, between her home and the theatre, sometimes four times a day. Perhaps her father is a supernumerary, and he accompanies her; or she is confined to the care of an older sister Coryphee, or she makes the journey by herself. This goes on for two or three years, and she is then, possibly, regularly apprenticed to a Ballet Master. Her life is here not altogether passed in attitudes, or on the points of her toes. She may be called upon to execute the domestic pas of fetching the beer, or even peeling the potatoes for the Terpsichorean dinner; and her leisure time when she gets any, which is but seldom, is passed in sitting with her feet in a peculiarly agonising pair of stocks, which induce the power of pointing the toes until they form a line with the leg. At last she finds herself pronounced competent to dance with the others; and gradually working her way from the rear ranks to the second, or if not that, immediately behind it, she has fifteen shillings a week - a perfect fortune. If you again saw this child with similar little people at night, they would probably be asleep amongst some of the machinery, having been tied to a floating cloud in the first scene, or danced after a car, and then dismissed, as not wanted until the conclusion. Their night's work only commences when the night is far advanced; and the effects of this artificial existence are usually painfully visible. Their lips are parched and fevered; their cheeks hollow and pale, even in spite of the daub of vermilion hastily applied by the dresser, and their limbs nipped and wasted. To the audience, however, they are smiling elves, who appropriately people the 'Realms of Joy,' to the centre of which blissful region their presence is confined (8).

The article again underlines the importance of women and children, particularly little girls, to the creation of the pantomime's spectacle. But such accounts were also balanced during this time by articles which described how the stage gave 'honest employment' to juvenile performers. *The Theatre of Australasia* (1889) thus noted that:

The opportunity to espouse the cause of suffering infancy is sadly, but amply provided outside the walls of our theatres, where the waifs of the gutters, the wharves and slums of our cities in audible tones of pity cry for help, very often in vain, where education is absolutely absent although Acts of Parliament are placed on the colossal statute book as so many false pretences to provide light and learning for the necessitous, who by the way, are not permitted within the scholastic enclosure because of their tattered garments, naked feet and hunger pinched faces; crowded out as they are by the well-dressed, well-fed and well-cared-for offspring of the respectable citizen, who for economy's sake always votes compulsory, free and secular education. Let the moralist, the legislator, the councillor, the chairman of the Board of Health, and the man of religion turn their attention to this condition of suffering, untutored babhood and youth, that by their individual and combined neglect, are left to seek food and warmth by huddling with crime and filth, with the vicious and the cruel. Thus they may leave the children of the stage in honest employment to be educated and provided for as they are by parental care and managerial supervision, for whom there is required neither police, magisterial, or legislative interference (189).

The conflict between these two accounts of children working within the theatre industry was vehemently present in debates surrounding the English and Australian 'Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bills' between 1889 and 1899. Ironically, the legislation also served to highlight, according to Tracy Davis,
difficulties for the pantomimes because of stipulations preventing children from working between 9.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. and the fact that notice had to be given to police in the local authority at least seven days before a licence was to take effect (Davis 1986, 131). This is certainly evident for Williamson's 1900 production of *Australis* through the Colonial Secretary's documentation of licences issued by the Inspector of Theatres.\(^{20}\)

As Lesley Ferris (1990) has argued for the Romantic ballet, the chorus girl (young woman or girl child) who made up the substance of the pantomime's transformation and patriotic spectacles should be read as a woman participating in a 'voiceless and speechless performing art' which focuses 'almost relentlessly on the female performer and elevates her to a position of mute feminine perfection' (110). The implication to be drawn here is that the 'feminisation' of the pantomime production thus also presented a Romantic image of 'woman' in which

She is 'graceful', 'elegant', 'light', 'furtive', she transforms into a bird singing, a butterfly in flight, a tuft of a flower cup in the April wind. Of course, the Romantic choreographers embedded in their narratives the attributes of the ballerina which developed this idea of woman as ideal object, the floating, perfect, doll-like icon of femininity (Ibid).

In particular, when supplied en masse, the female chorus and the Ladies of the Ballet were, according to Tracy Davis (1989), predominantly a 'spectacle of absent costume' in which 'the ballet skirt and its companion, pink tights, were the sign of the actress, marking a multitude of women who posed rather than danced in pageants of prettiness as objects of beauty and allure' (325). Most significantly, 'the ingeniosiousness of this endlessly reproducible costume and blocking lay in deceiving part of the audience into believing that they were seeing nudity, while assuring other spectators that they were enjoying an utterly decorous entertainment' (326). It is within this context that we must view the images of 'patriotic' women, noting how the overwhelming depiction of women in 'pageants of prettiness' became a vital way of framing eroticism and patriotism within productions.

\(^{20}\) New South Wales Colonial Secretary Papers 5/6576.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
As I have already indicated, 'patriotic women' in late nineteenth-century pantomimes were not represented as the 'warrior' Amazonian women as in earlier productions, or indeed as the 'roaring girls' of seventeenth-century English theatre, even though they were equally scantily dressed. As Julie Wheelwright (1989) makes clear, female soldiers in seventeenth-century English drama were disruptions of 'the ordered scheme that depended on each sex maintaining its proper function; dress and appearance operated as political shorthand' (7). As she explains, this changed over time.

During this period of enormous economic, social and political transition in Britain, the women warriors were symbols of threatening female aggression - another sign of the world gone topsy-turvy. But although they appeared to rebel against women's position in society, these characters were ultimately resigned to it. The inverted women of these dramas accepted marriage as a preferable alternative to prostitution which was considered the only option for sexually independent women. Female soldiers in this context advocated change, not revolution and served to clarify the importance of sexual difference. By satirising or mocking deviants the drama defined norms and by the eighteenth century the female warrior had become a popular, even conventional, heroine (Ibid).

The last 'March of the Amazons' was in Williamson's 1903 Sleeping Beauty. As an adaptation of Walch's 1885 arrangement, it is a reminder that the legendary female warriors were then only occasionally the source of pantomime marches and had been largely absent from productions since 1896. Their elimination as a source of spectacle raises the question of why such a potentially counter-hegemonic role ceased to be used by late nineteenth-century arrangers. I want to argue that the Amazons' replacement by crossed-dressed warriors denied 'her' power to usurp male roles. Indeed, Lynn Garafola (1993) claims that the travesty dancers of French opera ensure that 'real' masculine power remains intact.

In eliminating the dancer, ballet turned out the remaining in-house obstacle to sexual licence. With the decline of the clan, only his lust, that last bastion of power, stood between the dancer and the scheme so artfully contrived by the entrepreneurs of ballet for the millionaire libertines of the audience. For what was the Opera if not their private seraglio? Thanks to the travesty dancer, no male now could destroy the peace of their private harem or their enjoyment of performance as foreplay to possession. In appearance, the feminine androgynous laid claim to another erotic nexus. Tall, imposing, and majestic, she added to the charm of wantonness the challenge of the amazon, that untamed Diana who so fascinated the nineteenth-century imagination (102).

Representations of 'our boys' and 'the boys of the Red, White and Blue' are thus the representation of the soldier's role being unrealised through the chorus/ballet girl's impossible imitation of 'his' real function. As such she must remain 'other' than

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 200
the really powerful woman and 'other' than the soldier and therefore doubly disempowered. As Garafola (1993) argues for ballets in French Opera, then, the pantomime 'boy' and the ladies of the chorus and ballet of the two war-time productions of Red Riding Hood and Cinderella thus 'offer no mediation on the usages of gender, no critical perspective on the sexual politics that ruled their lives, no revelation of the ways masculine and feminine were imaged on the ballet stage' (104).

I believe this is central to showing how eroticised and patriotically-inspired pantomime productions had the ability to 'write worlds'.21 For Gunnar Olsson (1992) the 'mimetic desire' for writing 'worlds' begins with acknowledging that, if 'for Jacques Lacan the unconscious was structured like a language' then for him 'power is structured like a knowledge' (86). So pantomime's utopian female-filled spectacular productions should be read, as Olssen suggests for all geographic mapping, as representing 'lines of power'.

Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, the two 'war-time' pantomimes of 1899 and 1914 best show how the feminised spectacles of the pantomime define national and ethnic boundaries which geographically demarcate a threatened 'mother country' who continuously required protection. As Margaret R. Higonnet (1993) comments in Gendering War Talk, war is principally constructed around two languages, 'the civilian propaganda set against the soldier's truth' (209). As the 1899 and 1914 pantomimes show, the propaganda used in the productions does not bother to reconcile itself with the facts of a 'real' battle which by December 1899 would have been carried back to Australia by men returning from South Africa. As a consequence, the bloodied 'theatres' of war could be cleansed on stage by a 'victory' against 'the Boer', reducing the battle to the chorus's enactment of the tearing down of 'his' flag and the flying of the much loved Union Jack. Thus, the stage presentation ideologically constructed the moral justification for fighting the war in the first place.

The productions strongly suggest that it was the woman's energy, the woman's voice and the woman's body which made GOING to war desirable. Like

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21 Title of Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan, Writing Worlds : discourse, text and metaphor in the representation of landscape (1992).
the soldiers on the field of battle, her 'uniform' of pink tights and tight-fitting military jacket ensures that her desires are one with the Empire: that a patriotic woman together with a fighting man wage war against a common enemy. The binary of the 'active' soldier and the 'passive' yet supportive woman are thus both implicated in the activity of war and the militarism of British Imperialism. The actress in her costume and the soldier on the battlefield were thus both puppets and decisive agents in this enterprise.

The construction of 'patriotic women' and 'fighting men' in the pantomime literally danced around gender archetypes. Red Riding Hood has been captured by the Boer! The 'motherland' is in danger. The female body is both the imaginative embodiment of desire for going to war and the weaker vessel which needs to be protected from its advances. The male body is that which is thrust into war: he is protector of the 'mother' country and rescuer of women. Of course, war propaganda of the type seen in the 1899 and 1914 productions is possible only because censorship is also present to ensure that the 'battle front' and the 'home front' stage a 'united front'. The Colonial Secretary's Papers between 1899 and 1902, for instance, record the interrogation of numerous Australians who sympathised with the struggling Boer farmers of the Transvaal.²²

A review of theatre productions during the Boer War aptly illustrates how the pantomime was part of a continuing effort to marshall troops to go off and fight for the cause. For instance, the Sydney Morning Herald's advertisement for Williamson's production of Youth on 17 March 1900 emphasised that Australian playwright Bernard Espinasse had up-dated the play to incorporate England's presence in the Boer War. The drama included a tableaux showing the 'Departure of the Troops for South Africa from Waterloo Station, London'. The last scene of the play was set in South Africa. Interestingly, the drama was reported as showing the superiority of the Australian forces. The advertisement in the Star of 20 March 1900 stated that 'Nothing more realistic could be wished for than the fight at Du Toit's Farm, in which Maxims and quick-firing guns are brought into operation, and the Boers, beating

²² For example, the Register of Letters Received 5/6532 includes reports re 'disloyal sentiments expressed by Public Servants'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 202
down the defence, break through the sandbag works in their attempt to take the
garrison by storm only to be overwhelmed by the timely arrival of a detachment of the
Australian forces.'

Similarly, Alfred Dampier adapted his 1888 six-act play Jess into a five-
act drama entitled Briton and Boer. Its advertisement of 9 June 1900 announced 'We
Kept The Flag Flying':

Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them,
Naught shall make us rue
If Britain to herself do rest but true.

The popularity of that play can be further gauged by the fact that there had been an
earlier dramatisation of Jess in January 1900 at the Criterion Theatre, Sydney by
Messrs Weir and Ancelon, called 'A Tale of the Transvaal'. This drama also showed
how English forces were reinforced by the 'superior' Australian troops. (Sydney
Morning Herald, 2 January 1900)

Such presentations of full-length plays involving dramatisations of the
Boer War occurred alongside civic concerts held to raise patriotic funds. These
concerts used as their signature tune Rudyard Kipling's poem 'The Absent-Minded
Beggar', put to music by Arthur Sullivan. Arthur Shirley's play by that name was
staged in 1900. The Age printed an Australian version of the song on 11 December
1899 by Joseph Gillott composer of the National Song 'Australia's Cherished Dream'.
'The Absent-Minded Beggar' is based on a soldier called Tommy, who extols the
differences between his life as a real fighting man in khaki and the general public who
are only prepared to 'kill Kruger' with their mouths. The lyrics appeal for financial
support for the girl and family Tommy leaves behind. Richard Fotheringham (1992)
outlines how Shirley's play, along with other Boer War dramas by various theatre
managers, also inextricably linked the worlds of sport and war (120).

Theatre reviews indicate that collecting money for the 'Bushman's
Contingent Fund' occurred during Little Red Riding Hood itself when the pantomime
girl, Dorothy Vane, sang this song. This according to the Age, 26 February 1900,
'brought a deluge of silver to the stage that made it desirable for the members of the

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
orchestra to be equipped with firemen's helmets. J. C. Williamson had the words of the song printed on the inside of the cover of the theatre programme. The 1899 pantomime also showed 'the very latest pictures' of the 'Anglo-American Bio-Tableau South African War Pictures' concurrently with the pantomime.

A letter from Williamson to Premier John See shows that he requested troops view the production prior to their departure for the Transvaal.

Dear Sir,
Re: performance at Her Majesty for the contingent. I wrote to the Premier a few days ago to ascertain whether it would be convenient to make the performance for Monday afternoon 15th (January) instead of Friday 12th. My objectives for desiring the change were that it would bring the performance closer to the day of departure of the troops which had been put back a day, but principally because of the heavy work entailed upon my company in giving matinees on succeeding days, whereas Monday would give them Sundays rest and one intervening day before their Wednesdays double performance. Mr Lyne cordially assented to the change of date and [word blurred] to change accordingly and I trust that Monday will suit your convenience. Might I ask you to supply me with the following information: 1st what will be the total number of the departing contingent. How many officers, non-commission officers and privates also how many married men among the officers, non-commission officers and privates - as the performance is given mainly for the entertainment of the troops I was thinking of inviting the married men to bring their wives with them. I should very much like your opinion as to the arrangement of detail, my idea was to reserve for the contingent the whole of the Family Circle and Gallery - married men and their wives in the Family Circle - single men in the gallery, officers and their wives in Dress Circle (Family Circle and Gallery will accommodate 800 - we have frequently had over 1000). The remainder of the Dress Circle and stalls will be open to the public and with proceeds I propose donation to the Bushman's Contingent Fund. The only absolute expense will be decided, there being no charge for the rent of theatre or lighting or services of my permanent staff. I mention these details that you may see my object is neither profit nor self-advertisement. I will be glad to receive any suggestions from you re the arrangement... Kindly let me have particulars as early as possible for I wish to allot the seats to the officer's wives as the plan is open to the General Public.24

The matter was ultimately referred to Major General G. A. French, Commanding Officer of the New South Wales Military Forces, whose reply advised that four hundred and fifty men, twenty officers, general staff of a hundred and fifty women would attend the production. Pantomime boy, Carrie Moore, remembered the experience in a later interview as one of the most moving events of her acting career. In 'Pantomime Recollections' in the Referee on the 24 December 1913, she recollects the strength of feeling running between the stage and auditorium that night.

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23 The song's wide popularity can been further seen in its use by Williamson's Dramatic Company's theatre advertisements of The Only Way, based on Dickens's Tale of Two Cities, appealing to 'Absent-minded Beggars' to view the production (Sydney Morning Herald, 5 January 1900) Bland Holt was also to stage Arthur Shirley's drama that name in July, 1900.

24 Colonial Secretary Papers 5/2046, 9/1/1900.
Well, one of the most touching that I can recall for the moment is when I was playing boy to Dorothy Vane's Little Red Riding Hood in Sydney when the first contingent was being dispatched to South Africa. I can see it now, even. There was the theatre filled with those brave men going out to fight. Their unbounded enthusiasm and confidence spread to the stage and the other members of the audience, and I sang 'Children of the Empire'. There was a scene introduced where we storm a hill, which the Boers were occupying, and I was in the vanguard. The men on stage were following me, and they had, of course, to fire. They were told to fire high, but somehow the blanks used caught my wig in some way or another and set fire to it. I was in such a nervous state that I hardly noticed it until one of the company rushed up to me and put it out, and Mr. Williamson came running behind the stage in a fearful state. I knew many of the boys going away, and my recollections of them made me almost cry at their departure. It was lovely. Then as a finale they handed me a big boat, an exact replica of the troopship, laden with flowers, and with many messages. That I believe was the most powerful scene I have ever witnessed. But there was a touch of tragedy to it with those men going away and believe me, we girls could hardly sing during the whole of this performance.

A 'call to arms' was also presented in J. C. Williamson Ltd's 1914 production of Cinderella. Interestingly, the ugly sisters for that pantomime were not cross-dressed males. Most notably, Alvera, played by the popular English comedienne Dolly Harmer, near the end of the production came onto the stage dressed in the military uniform of the Women's Corp and addressed the women in the audience:

Here we are again. Now we'll soon be shan't. I suppose you wonder why I am dressed up like this? Well all our boys have gone to the front, and left their girls behind them. I'm one of the girls, one of the lasses - get away you small boys. Now you and I can help our boys at the front, by keeping their battle cry alive. And their battle cry is, 'Are we down hearted' NO - Swank.

Also noteworthy was the fact that she carried a swagger stick and smoked a cigarette, thus signifying a 'new woman', popularly characterised as puffing on 'Woodbines'. Indeed, she could very well be a modern Amazon and one who now had had political enfranchisement for some twelve years. 'Her' power was used in fact to direct 'real' women to support their men in war. It was thus her job to conquer other women's doubts and fears rather than challenge the patriarchal/imperialist order. The popular Music Hall song 'Here We Are\(^{25}\), was referred to at the time as the 'Battle Cry of the British Army'. It was her aim to overturn the fears of the 'downhearted'.

\(^{25}\) Written and composed by Charles Knight and Kenneth Lyle.
Although their words are very good
The lift they seem to miss
For Tommy likes a tricky song
A song that goes like this.

Chorus: Here we are, here we are, here we are again
There's Pat and Mac, and Tommy and Jack and Joe -
When there's trouble brewing
When there's something doing
Are we down hearted? No - Let 'em all come
Here we are, here we are, here we are again
We're fit and well, and feeling as right as rain
Never mind the weather, now then all together
Hullo, hullo, Here we are again -

When Tommy went across the sea
To bear the battle's brunt
Of course he sung this little song while marching to the front
And when he's walking through Berlin
He'll sing the anthem still -
He'll shove a 'Woodbine' on and say
'How are you Uncle Bill?'

Chorus: Here we are etc

And when the boys have finished up
With Herman and with Max
And when the enemy's got it
Where the chicken got the axe
The girls will all be waiting
Midst the cheering and the din
To hear their sweethearts singing
As the ship comes sailing in.

Chorus: Here we are etc.

'Here we are again' had traditionally been the Clown's entrance line in the Harlequinade. *Cinderella* was the first production since 1900 to stage a harlequinade but, rather than suggest a mockery of war, its comic antics confirm that it was no longer 'topical' but merely a nostalgic re-play of an older form. The fact that the production starred Barry Lupino whose pedigree as a pantomimist, according to the 1914 theatre programme, extended back to 1734 when Chevalier Luppino arrived in London and began his theatrical career there, was undoubtedly the reason for the reappearance of 'Joey' the clown. The harlequinade's relative unimportance, however, is underlined by the fact that it was staged only at matinees. Nonetheless, its appearance serves to highlight the manner in which 'spirals of pleasure and power' remain infinitely dynamic within the pantomime production as Music Hall songs are

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26 The Harlequinade was included in the typed manuscript of the production. The copy is held at the Australian National Library.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
transformed into the 'battle cry for the British Army' and the harlequinade acts as a prelude to 'The Grand March of the Allies'.

The role of the performers as recruiting agents in both these war-time pantomimes also further demonstrates the changes to the pantomime's overall structure. Cinderella takes on the musical comedy form, with an opening noticeably bereft of 'fairies' and supernatural demons, which moves straight into a more realistic plot of how Cinderella meets her Prince. Indeed, with the elimination of the 'transformation scene', we see the elimination of the Good Fairy's transformational power. Hence, while the 'moral' struggle between masculine demons and female good fairies of Act 1, Scene 1 of Little Red Riding Hood is suggestive of the Good Fairy and father/Pantaloon's confrontation in earlier productions, the 1914 Cinderella depicts the fairy world 'realistically'. Act 1 Scene 6 in the 'Fairy Boudoir' includes 'Looking Glasses, Powder Puffs, Hairdressers, Manicurists, Ladies' Maids'. The scene shows the transformation of a poor Cinderella into a Princess-like creature through 'real' commercially obtainable products.

Remarkably, the common ground between the two productions is their representation of the 'real' world of the pantomime as a place dominated by male comedians. As a result, we see the Dame usurp many of the Good Fairy's former powers, particularly with regard to influencing the hero and heroine's destiny. For instance, in Act 1, Scene 1 of Little Red Riding Hood, it is the Dame who deals with the fiends when the Baron, the Wolf and the Fox assemble at a secret rendezvous to hatch a plan to kill Red Riding Hood. The Good Fairy manages to intervene only after the Dame, her 'dog' and 'donkey' allow Red Riding Hood to run on into the forest with Boy Blue. It thus becomes clear that the comic focus of the production is the comic duo of the Dame 'Mother Hubbard' (played by Harry Shine) and the Baron Splosh (played by George Lauri) who are the 'clowns' of the productions.

Scene 2 continues to depict the Dame in control, this time of children in 'her' kindergarten, while the Baron continues to control 'his' village. However, while both are judged to be matriarchically and patriarchally inadequate, the Baron is judged for
his greed and not his gender while clearly the Dame is represented as an 'unnatural' woman, i.e. a woman who is trying to have real power. But in an interesting symbolic form of 'coupling', they are paired together to show how the greedy Baron needs to be morally punished by ending up with a 'bad wife': indeed, with a female who emasculates all men. As her widowhood is represented in the production as being due to her having got rid of her first husband, her aggressiveness is represented as 'unwomanly'. This illustrates how male to female cross-dressing, as Peggy Phelan (1993) argues, represents 'the fantasy of exchange between men about women'.

In other words, 'the female role' turns out to be another reinforcement of the primacy of desire between men for men/boys (the male homoerotic), and the inequitable power relationship between the spectator and the performer (the young boy flatters the male spectator's physical and visual prowess). In short, the fetishised image reinforces rather than subverts the structure of the patriarchal unconsciousness (158).

The pantomime's reinforcement of 'patriarchal unconsciousness' works simultaneously through the roles of the Dame and the pantomime boy and girl, as her 'male' advances towards the Baron are set up to be compared to the boy and girl's 'ideal' romance. This ideal is based on the coupling of a passive pantomime girl with the active and 'valiant' boy. The feminised landscape suggested by the travesty dancers of a 'band of Huntsmen' and young female villagers, which frame the boy and girl's first meeting in Act I of both the 1899 and 1914 productions, is therefore used to amplify the active/passive binary of conventional gender roles. The scenes thus depict girls holding back their desire and 'boys' uncertainly pursuing their love interests. Furthermore, the 'boy' Princes, Valiant and Floravia, are doubly disguised by pretending to be Boy Blue and Dandini: 'love' exposes men to enacting a loss of power.

The boy's real authority can only be claimed after a rite of passage in which he is exposed to personal danger; by marrying he can then claim his personal prize, his bride, and his Kingdom. Cinderella's Prince Floravia is told by the court officials, for instance, that marriage is the means by which he will 'step into the place of his illustrious father'. The fact that Cinderella has real women playing 'ugly (New Women) sisters' further demonstrates the unsuitability of a strong woman as the
marriage prize. As the sisters, Dolly Harmer and Gertie Latchford, like the Dame, are depicted from the outset as 'women on the prowl' for a husband. As many men in 1914 were soldiers they are the focus of the sisters' desires. But, in flattering the 'real' male/soldier, they criticise their own 'forward' behaviour.

Alvera: Hullo, how are you! I'm glad to see you again. I've been upset, really I have been upset. I was walking along the road, when a man shouted out to me. 'Hullo Liza, have you fallen off a Christmas tree?' I suppose he thought I was the girl that took the wrong turning. Thank goodness he didn't take me for the girl who lost her character. Ah, but I got even with him. I walked up to him, and looked him straight in the eye, and flauntingly said, like the lady I always am. 'Charlie, go and take a running jump at yourself.' I left him standing there gasping for breath. Ah, but I wonder where I could have lost my sister Thisbe (calls)

Thisbe: You're a nice one you are, leaving me a young and beautiful girl to walk about all by myself. I tell you it isn't safe with the streets full of those bold bad soldiers. Every time one of them comes along I'm frightened...

Alvera: That he'll speak to you?

Thisbe: No, that he won't

Alvera: Hussey!!!!

Thisbe: Cat!!!!

(They quarrel - the Dame then enters)

Dame: Stop squabbling you bad children. I refuse to have the happy, happy home turned into an election meeting.

The Dame and the 'ugly sisters' expose the fact that gender is predominantly framed in the pantomime in terms of power relationships. Their depiction of 'strong women', as Susan Carlson (1991) explains for all women in comedy, was traditionally comic because comedies are in themselves disruptions of the status quo and so 'in the upheaval of role reversals the women characters acquire an uncharacteristic dominance. Women in power, or a group of women in power, are funny because they are so out of the ordinary' (17). However, as the main source of the pantomime's comic business, the Dame also verifies her masculine power in dominating the stage business.

There is a reminder that the early nineteenth-century harlequinade, by contrast, had been a masculine domain, in the comic business between the impoverished Baron of Beauregarde, played by John McArdle, and Billy Buttons his servant, played by Barry Lupino. Lupino employs elements of 'Arlecchino' the
trickster servant as he attempts to get the better of his master. The 'fishing' trick in Act 1, Scene 1 involves elaborate stage business reminiscent of the 'tricks' of early nineteenth-century pantomime. Interestingly, Lupino also attempts to play Harlequin the lover by making advances to Cinderella who, by convention, must now, of course, be in love with the 'boy'.

The comic duos of Harry Shine and George Lauri, Barry Lupino and John McArdle, and the comic trio of Arthur Stigant, Gertie Latchford and Dolly Harmer thus perform the comic business in both traditional and original ways. For instance, in Act 2, Scene 1, 'The Schoolroom', the Dame, in sending Red Riding Hood off to the village to buy 'two shillingsworth of glue' to get her out of Boy Blue's affectionate gaze, takes on the characteristics of a Pantaloon preventing the lovers from being united. This is an interesting adaptation of the Pantaloon role and one I shall explore in Chapter three as vitally important with regard to the Dame's 'misogynist' relationship with young women in her care.

In the 1899 production the Dame succeeds in sending Red Riding Hood off on the make-believe errand and, as a consequence, Red Riding Hood is abducted. The villagers are then mobilised into action by Boy Blue announcing his intention to rescue her: rescuing innocence and waging war are thus metaphorically entwined in a marching song which links these images to the notion of masculine bravery.

We'll all go a-marching, a-marching to the war;  
The bravest of the army we'll put them in the van,  
And let the foe be wary, we'll meet them man to man,  
When we all go a-marching, a-marching to the war.

The baron and the children end the scene with another song entitled 'The Wolf is at the Door'. The language denotes an archetypical struggle of threat and pursuit which the pantomime had been concerned with from its Restoration origins. However, it is significant that (apart from possible ad libbing which took place in the production) the script does not topicalise the impending Boer War but refers archetypically to 'war' in response to another equally generic symbol of threat, the 'wolf at the door'.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue'
The production thus euphorically espoused Anglo-Saxon bravery in the face of an impending enemy. Any negativity towards the war is mocked and judged to be ridiculous. This is noticeable, for instance, through the comic antics of Shine and Lauri as their 'war effort' in Act 2, Scene 2 is compared to that of the 'true' hero Boy Blue/Prince Valiant. The comic is thus not mocking war but the coward who is not prepared to go and fight. There is much business between Shine and Lauri concerning their inappropriate battle dress which in the Dame's case, the Baron noted, was so loud he could 'hear the echo'. The Dame then retaliates that the Baron's clothes could 'puncture a bicycle tyre'. Their anti-heroism is no match for Boy Blue's clear direction and her wearing of a New South Wales Lancer's uniform as she/he sings

When a man or a maid  
Is in need of our aid  
No heart that's courageous can rest  
It's a Briton's proud boast  
That he'll march through a host  
To rescue and free the oppressed.

Immediately after this the wolf's stronghold is attacked by the 'gallant contingent' who pull down the Boer flag and run up the Union Jack. In Bernard Espinasse's patriotic song 'Children of the Empire', Britannia is a mother with a tongue of steel and hence, together with 'Mother Hubbard', she asserts her demand for 'sons' to protect 'daughters' such as 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Thus, as Irene Mathews (1993) notes, "mothering" and "war" have often been twinned in a sort of lethal symbiosis: whether collusive or oppositional, conceptual or practical, life-giving and death-dealing are seen to be connected' (148). Focusing her critique on the Guatemalan civil war, Mathews concluded that its fearsome and genocidal intent was able to be categorised from outside as 'low intensity'; in reality it was 'irretrievably traumatic to the generations that live on at the expense of the blood they share' (169). Similarly, guerilla warfare of the Boer War was able to breed rather callous Australian heroes like Henry 'Breaker' Morant. The pantomime enactment of the storming of the 'Wolf's Stronghold' thus aptly demonstrates the ignorance prevalent at the time which, as Beverley Kingston (1988) noted, allowed Morant to become a hero 'because he was an Australian martyr of imperial war.' But, as she further explains,
there can be no doubt that Australia's participation in the Boer War was in support of the Empire and that a 'frontier mentally and self-imposed inferiority (sic) made it hard for them to resist a fight' (307).

In the rest of the 1899 pantomime the stage business returned to the comic antics of a Trap scene in which the Wolf sets his sights on Mother Hubbard (now a substitute Grandmother figure) and then on Red Riding Hood. The Good Fairy rescues them both and signals a scene change which, though not named as such, amounted to a 'transformation scene' as the Forest setting was transformed into 'Prince Valiant's Palace' and then into 'The Golden Pavilion in the Palace Gardens'. As a final reconciliation scene, this shows the Baron deciding to turn over a new leaf and later re-entering as Father Christmas, the Wolf exiting to get ready for the next adventure and Boy Blue/Prince Valiant and Red Riding Hood marrying. The pantomime thus finished without a hint of 'war' but instead a 'procession of Fairy Stories and Nursery Rhymes' at the close of which 'Boy Blue and Riding Hood appear in a triumphal barge drawn by Cupids.' However, it was at this very moment that the pantomime girl, Dorothy Vane, came forward and sang 'Absent-Minded Beggar' and collected money for the Bushman's Contingent Fund.

The final scene of the 1914 Cinderella was perhaps less spectacular in the 'transformation scene' sense as it focussed on 'The Grand March of the Allies'. It is also clear from the company's typed script that Alvera's recruitment drive was inserted at a later date as it is marked 'to face Page 26' and placed at the beginning of the denouement in Act 2, Scene 4, 'Outside the Baron's House'. This is where the glass slipper is tried by the ugly sisters and Cinderella and Prince Valiant reveals his true identity. The insertion thus indicates that Frank Dix's script would have been written before the outbreak of World War 1 (5 August 1914) and that, with the arrival of war, theatre managers once again made the most of the situation. The Age of 21 December 1914 thus reported:

It seems there is no limit to the range of pantomime, or to the field it may be made to cover. You can have one for juveniles, and you can have one for grown-ups; you can also have a pantomime that is a compromise between the two. If the season is one of mirth and joy and thanksgiving, the pantomime can be made to match; and if it is one
of strife and war and bloodshed, you can have drums and military marches, and fly your national colors off the shoulders of pantomime girls. This is what happens in the great production of Cinderella staged at Her Majesty's Theatre on Saturday night. There are many notes struck in the course of the evening, but probably the most effective - certainly the one that provoked most applause on Saturday - was that produced by the glorified and spectacular 'March of the Allies', at the close. Every contingent was cheered, Russian, French, British and Australian - but the loudest cheer of all came for the 'men' in the uniform of little Belgium. Every man and woman in the audience, seeing the yellow and dark blue of the defenders of Liege - the town that had held the bridge in the face of millions of armed men - half rose out of the seats to applaud.

It is reasonable to assume that the spectacle of women flying the colours of Australia's 'allies' provoked a powerful response from an audience which recognised that it was a 'nation at war'. It would be wrong to underestimate 'her' authority in such a display and that of the metaphorical 'mother country' in positioning bodies on stage in pursuit of specific political ends.

That the 'Great War' was acted out between imperialist European powers and not between the colonies and their colonial masters demonstrates the ability of hegemonic forces to both imaginatively and brutally script their own political intentions. What J. C. Williamson Ltd's 1914 Cinderella shows is that Australian theatre vitally shaped 'popular' responses to this global event. The fact that the 'boys in the red, white and blue' were 'really' girls undoubtedly ensured a fuller response and a social cohesion which enhanced the 'power and progress' of Australia's Anglo-Saxon community on this continent. This would seem to support the conclusions Stuart Macintyre (1986) makes about the 'inverted' gains of women's suffrage.

Most feminists concentrated their efforts on the franchise, believing that the struggle for full citizenship held the key to their emancipation. They did not so much dispute the notion that men and women were different by nature as invert it: the vote was to be the means whereby women extended their private sphere concerns into the public sphere to purify and regenerate national life (111).

Audrey Oldfield (1992) makes a similar point when she explores how women were 'seduced' by the new philosophies of Havelock Ellis, Ellen Key and Karl Pearson into feeling proud of their biology.

The new nation was anxious to increase its white population as a bulwark against the 'hordes of Asia' - this anxiety, in fact, was one of the reasons for its unification. It was also increasingly anxious that the health and vitality of each white human unit should be improved and safeguarded. By means of the theories of eugenics and the philosophies of biological determinism, responsibility for maintaining the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon race by restoring its vigor and increasing its numbers was placed firmly on the shoulders of the women (218).
The Firm's use of pantomime as a 'spectacle of patriotic women' was thus a vital representation of an Australian 'Anglo-Saxonism' which in a geographical and socio-political sense seemed absurdly imitative of 'home'. This should not prevent us from noting that the productions' real power rested in their enactment of cultural supremacy. The mythically English and exotically Oriental settings of the productions supported a 'community' which nostalgically looked towards an idealised Mother England which would succour the 'Australian' Anglo-Saxon Supremacist. Like Williamson's pantomime, four other productions in Sydney and Melbourne in 1914, by theatre managers William Anderson and George Willoughby, staged the 'March of the Allies'. This representation of 'empire' thus provided both the rhetoric and metaphors for the military brutality of imperialist colonisation to be 'transformed' into the 'innocent' adventures of 'boys' and 'girls'. The productions' power as family entertainment, however, was a false innocence. Instead, they showed how 'mothers' gave their sons to war and 'patriarchy' sacrificed men for the 'Motherland'. Such an extra/ordinary partnership of the 'Mother' and 'Father' ensured that the 'sons and daughters of Australia' marched off to die for the Empire.

Then, sons of Australia
March forth to War,
And give to the enemy what they never had before
Show that you can fight, my lads,
And prove to them that you
Are the Sons of Dear Australia
And Boys of the Red, White and Blue. 27

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27 Further images presented in Plates 33, 34 and 35 from Anderson's 1914 Sinbad most interestingly show that Japan was, of course, an ally in 1914. The pantomime's fairytale narrative subsumed by the production's various military spectacle.

Chapter 2: 'The Boys in the Red, White and Blue' 214
1. Group of Harem Ladies.
2. Eight Golden Ballet Ladies.
3. RETA RENAS as "Badoura."
5. March of the Allies (Japan).
The Harem Ballet.
March of the Allies (Russia).

3. Leader of Australia (March of the Allies).
4. HARRY BURGESS as "Thibaud."
5. ISA CROSLEY as "The Old Man of the Sea."
JOHN RALSTON in "Here's to the Day."
March of the Allies (Ireland).

3. March of the Allies, France.


5. EUGENE OSIPOFF (The Demon King).