Constructing Englishness: War, Race, and the Empire in Enid Blyton's Fiction

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Summary

This thesis studies the British children's author Enid Blyton's (1897-1968) writing from 1926 to twenty-first century modified editions of her books and series. I argue that Blyton's twentieth-century fiction constructs a model of English national identity rooted within ideologies of the Empire. By comparing Blyton's original twentieth-century work and modified twenty-first century editions, I demonstrate the retention of imperial and colonial ideologies in revised, cosmetically deracialised editions of Blyton's texts. Blyton's complex construction of national identity responds and adapts to twentieth-century national, political, and imperial developments. This thesis contextualises Blyton's fiction within multiple literary and historical contexts, including twentieth-century juvenile periodicals; the Second World War, war fiction and conflict narratives; imperial adventure fiction and the decline of the British Empire; and twenty-first century analysis of race and whiteness in children's literature. Blyton's construction of national identity is examined primarily through the fiction published in her magazine, *Sunny Stories*. Blyton is first and foremost thought of as a writer of novels and series, and series such as *The Famous Five* (1942-1963), *The Secret Seven* (1949-1963), *Malory Towers* (1946-1951), and *Noddy* (1949-1963) receive the most critical attention in academic studies of Blyton's work. Blyton's magazine *Sunny Stories for Little* Folks (renamed *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* in 1937) is central to this thesis' study of her work. Many of Blyton's most well-known series and books were first serialised in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*, with the magazine a significant factor in the successful construction and promotion of the Blyton brand in the twentieth century.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is all my own work and I have not obtained a degree in this University, or elsewhere, on the basis of this work.

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i. "Brer Rabbit": front cover of second volume of Enid Blyton's *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*, 1926 (by permission of the British Library).

ii. Front cover of Enid Blyton's *The River of Adventure*, 2007, published by Macmillan.

iii. Front cover of Enid Blyton's *The River of Adventure*, 2014, published by Macmillan.

Introduction

In 2021, the charity organisation English Heritage updated their website's biographical information on Enid Blyton to acknowledge the criticism her work has received in relation to the inclusion and portrayal of black characters. The update to Blyton's biography was part of the organisation's widespread reappraisal of individual biographies following the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. Anna Eavis, the Curatorial Director of English Heritage, stated "we need to ensure that the stories of those people already commemorated" through London's Blue Plaque scheme and through statues "are told in full, without embellishment or excuses" ("London's Blue Plaques"). In June 2021, the online biography linked to the Blue Plaque outside Blyton's former home in Chessington (placed there in 1997) was rewritten to include acknowledgement of the "racism" and "xenophobia" identified within Blyton's work. The revised biography referred to Blyton's controversial 1937 publication, *The Little Black Doll*, which tells the story of a black doll whose face is washed white by magic rain. In addition to highlighting the racial issues within Blyton's work, the revised biographical information also commented on her work's general "lack of literary merit" (English Heritage). In 2016, similar criticism of Blyton's work prevented Blyton from receiving a commemorative coin to mark the 50th anniversary of her death: the Royal Mint advisory committee rejected the proposal of a commemorative coin because, according to their committee, Blyton was "a sexist, racist, homophobe, and not a very well regarded writer" (Wood).

Despite the decades-long history of criticism of Blyton's work, the change to Blyton's biography on the English Heritage website provoked a controversial and divisive media and social media response. British right-wing newspapers *The Daily Mail* and the *Express* released headlines declaring “Five get Cancelled! Enid Blyton's work 'racist and xenophobic', says English Heritage” (*Express*), and “Enid Blyton fans slam English Heritage 'insulting' re-appraisal of children's author's work as 'racist and xenophobic'” (*Daily Mail*). Outside of Britain, newspapers in India, Australia, Germany, and the US commented on the announcement: *India Today* published an article which began by introducing Blyton as “the world's most beloved children's author” and viewed the English Heritage controversy as “the latest episode of Britain's divisive culture wars” (Choudhry). On the day of the announcement, “Blyton” trended on Twitter, with the former UK Children’s Laureate Michael Rosen justifying the changes made to the biography by pointing to Blyton’s *The Little Black Doll* [1].

The response to the English Heritage announcement was intensified by the proximity in time between the announcement and the statement from the Dr Seuss estate in the US regarding the ceasing of publication of six of Dr Seuss’s titles due to their offensive depiction of Asian and black characters (*Seussville*). The act of curating these children’s authors’ collections was politicised. The announcement drew accusations of “cancellation” from Republican politicians and right-wing US media, accusations which were mirrored by right-wing UK media following English Heritage’s announcement.

In a conversation with Jeremy Ashbee, the Head Properties Curator of English Heritage, Ashbee explained to me how the media and social media backlash prompted a further re-assessment of Blyton’s profile. According to Ashbee, the organisation did not expect the vociferous reaction elicited by the initial revision. Blyton’s biography on English

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[1] Rosen’s post on Twitter (17 June 2021): “The Little Black Doll is about a black doll hated by its owner and all the other dolls. The doll runs away from the house and the rain washes its face to a pink colour. After this, the other toys and owner welcome the doll back”

Heritage’s website has since been revised, with the reference to *The Little Black Doll* removed, and a moderation of the original update’s criticism. In the revised biography, Blyton’s “formulaic plots and deliberate use of simple language” is highlighted as an aspect of her work which “irked some educators” (*English Heritage*). More importantly, the language previously used to acknowledge the problematic racial and xenophobic sentiments in her work is moderated to, “Others took exception to what they perceived as social snobbery, racism and sexism embedded in Blyton’s storylines” (*English Heritage*). While the original update recognised the “racism, xenophobia” of Blyton’s work, the revised update places doubt on the validity of scholars’ criticisms by including the word ‘perceived’.

As this incident suggests, Blyton retains a powerful hold on English cultural imagination. These accusations of racism are not new, but rather have been heard and directed at Blyton’s books since the 1960s: Lana Jeger published an article in *The Guardian* in 1966 criticising the story of *The Little Black Doll*. Since the 1960s, the gatekeepers of children’s literature – parents, librarians, teachers, critics – have expressed concern over the books’ literary quality, questionable ideologies, and her works’ racist and xenophobic sentiments. During her lifetime, Blyton’s books were accused of racism due to the inclusion of the black Golliwog doll, and the Golliwog character was removed from her books in the 1990s. Despite these concerns over the problematic depiction of non-white characters, Blyton’s work was “reinvented through the lens of adult nostalgia as a form of cultural heritage” in the late twentieth century (Buckingham 5). The issue of race and racism became increasingly significant in the twenty-first century as Blyton’s status as a literary emblem of nostalgic Englishness developed. Blyton has become an increasingly contentious figure within twenty-first century British culture, but as illustrated in the response to English Heritage’s announcement, Blyton remains a beloved author whose books occupy a protected space within individual adults' childhood memories and within England's national culture of childhood.

These recent announcements and responses to the announcements highlight three points of relevance for this thesis: first, the important position Blyton and the Blyton brand occupies within England's cultural heritage; second, the contentiousness of Blyton's position within modern English culture due to her work's portrayal of non-white characters; and third, the narrowed focus on a small number of non-human characters in discussions on race and racism in Blyton's work. This thesis argues that Blyton's twentieth-century children's fiction constructs a model of Englishness that is embedded in ideologies of Empire but is also responsive to twentieth-century national, political, and imperial developments. Through a comparison of Blyton's original twentieth-century work and modified twenty-first century editions, I demonstrate the retention of imperial and colonial racial ideologies in revised, cosmetically deracialised editions of Blyton's texts. Blyton's magazine, *Sunny Stories,* is central to this thesis' examination of Blyton's work, as the magazine clearly demonstrates the evolution of Blyton's construction and re-construction of national identity.

Laura Tosi correctly states that "the relationship between children's literature and national identity is indeed crucial" as it assists in shaping "the way nations think and what they think" (11). Tosi identifies "a growing interest in the representation of nationality in children's literature" (*Fabulous* 10-11). This thesis addresses ideas of nationality and national identity, focusing particularly on evolving ideas of Englishness by looking at an author whose work is closely associated with England and Englishness. Blyton draws upon older models of Englishness for her own construction of national identity, but as Margaret

Meek argues, “every English book produces its own representation of Englishness” (“The Englishness” 89-102, qtd. in Tosi 14). Paul Langford in *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850* (2000) identifies Samuel Whitbread, a British MP, as one of the “spokesmen for the nation” in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century (122). For Whitbread, a true, admirable Englishman possessed the following qualities: “simple manners, sometimes abrupt, but always kind,—the sturdy honesty, sometimes rough, but always consistent,—the shrewd penetration, ever active, but ever candid,—the boldness of spirit, sometimes violent but always steady” (qtd. Langford 122). Collectively, these qualities “have ever been considered as the infallible marks of a genuine Englishman” (Langford 122).

In Blyton’s twentieth-century children’s fiction, these qualities are observable in the English child protagonists whose “boldness of spirit”, steadiness, and “sturdy honesty” are celebrated as qualities befitting ‘genuine’ English children but also future empire builders. The playwright Ronald Harwood recalls his “hunger for Englishness” while growing up in South Africa during the Second World War and how this hunger was satiated by reading Blyton, particularly the *Famous Five* series (Maunder 151). Englishness to Harwood was defined “as an ideal of gentleness, culture, countryside and justice” and “Enid Blyton, more than any other writer… fulfilled much of that definition, those longings for England” (151). Rashna B Singh’s analysis supports the strong association between Blyton and Englishness, stating that “anyone interested in the English concept of character, in terms of an idealised sense of self… would find Blyton’s books highly instructive” (203). Singh, however, also identifies the connection between Englishness and Empire which is fundamental to this thesis’ examination of Blyton’s work. Singh views Blyton’s work as representative of a culture in which imperial values were celebrated and promoted through children’s stories. Englishness and Empire are inextricably linked in Blyton’s work, wherein the ideal qualities of the English character are highlighted mainly through contrasts with non-English, non-white characters.

This thesis – particularly Chapter One - outlines the primary characteristics and values Blyton attributes to 'Englishness'. It traces the primary characteristics and values of Englishness, but rather than seeing these as fixed entities in Blyton's fiction, it argues for a shift in national identity from a distinct sense of Englishness to a broader focus on Britishness and British unity during the Second World War, through to a post-war return to an insular model of Englishness in response to a sense of imperial decline. It examines why and how these shifts occur, examining the socio-political factors which impact Blyton's presentation of national identity. For Blyton, too, her texts follow Joep Leerssen's theory that "representations of others are governed by the implicit a priori presupposition that a nation is most itself in those aspects wherein it is most unlike the others" (O'Sullivan 13). Blyton relies heavily on contrasts between English and non-English characters to construct and subsequently reinforce what she perceives as the ideal qualities of Englishness.

While Blyton's fiction has received criticism for its racist content and consequently been modified to remove overt racism, the more subtle imperial and colonial ideologies informing Blyton's attitude towards race and her belief in the superiority of white Englishness have largely been overlooked. This is partly due to critics' concentration on the figure of the Golliwog and other non-human non-white characters, such as the "Little Black Doll", in discussions of race and racism, and the perceived 'fixing' of the racial problems within Blyton's work through the removal of the Golliwog character. The subtle racial and colonial ideologies are also overlooked because Blyton's work is largely viewed as uncomplicated, escapist and apolitical children's fiction and is generally not deemed worthy of the critical attention granted to other, more literary works of children's literature. When Blyton is chosen as a subject of academic analysis, or included in broader analyses of children's literature, the form of analysis is often psychoanalytical, based on biographical information on Blyton's childhood and relationships with her family. This form of analysis returns the focus to Blyton as an individual, rather than contextualising her writing within important literary forms and genres. This thesis situates and analyses Blyton's writing within the changing national, imperial, and political contexts in which she wrote.

Enid Blyton's Life and Works: A Periodical Writer

Before discussing the scholarship published on Blyton's work, I will provide a brief overview of Blyton's writing career, concentrating particularly on her career as a periodical writer. Blyton is first and foremost thought of as a writer of children's novels and series, and series such as *The Famous Five*, *The Secret Seven*, *Malory Towers,* and *Noddy* receive the most critical attention in academic studies of Blyton's work. Blyton's magazine *Sunny Stories for Little* Folks, later renamed *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories*, comprises most of the primary material examined in this thesis. Many of Blyton's most well-known series and books were first serialised in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*, with the magazine a significant factor in the successful construction and promotion of the Blyton brand in the twentieth century. According to her biographer Barbara Stoney, the magazine was read by "hundreds of thousands of children" (118). Through the magazine Blyton formulated a community of loyal readers – both national and international – to whom she disseminated her beliefs in the inherent altruism of the Empire and superiority of the English nation. Blyton's own magazine, *Sunny Stories*, is the focus of this thesis, but other magazines and periodicals also contributed to Blyton's success: Blyton's work was first published in a magazine, *Nash's*

Magazine, during the First World War: in 1917, the magazine accepted and published three of Blyton's poems (Stoney 31). In 1922, Blyton published her first book, *Child Whispers*. The book comprised a collection of short poems written by Blyton for the children in her school, and she explains in the preface that she wrote these poems because she found a "lack of suitable poems of the types I wanted" (7). We see Blyton's prioritisation of the child reader in her very first published book, as she explains in the preface that poems for children "must be from the child's point of view and not from the 'grown-up's", which is "a very different thing" (7). In 1923, Blyton began writing a weekly column for the magazine *Teachers' World*, which helped to establish Blyton as an educationalist as well as an author of entertaining fiction. *Child Whispers* was followed by *The Enid Blyton Book of Fairies* in 1924, Blyton's first book of collected short stories. In 1926, she began editing *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*, a magazine published by George Newnes. Until 1935, the magazine only credited Blyton as the editor, although she wrote each of the stories contained in the magazine. The thirty-two-page magazine typically contained six-to-eight short stories; an introductory letter written by Blyton in which she shared information about her home life, her family, and new publications; advertisements for Blyton's books; a competition for readers; and a page dedicated to readers' submitted letters. Readers of *Sunny Stories* were encouraged to submit poems, puzzles, and riddles to the magazine, with one reader submitted piece published in each issue. The first years of the magazine were written from Elfin Cottage, the house which Blyton and her husband Hugh Pollock moved to in early 1926 (Stoney 60). From 1926 to October 1927, the magazine was comprised mainly of retellings of stories, with a small number of Blyton's own created stories published alongside fairy tales, myths and legends. From the outset, the magazine contained advertisements for Blyton's earliest published books, including *The Enid Blyton Book of Bunnies* (1925), *The Bird Book* (1926), *The Enid Blyton Book of Brownies* (1926). Other Newnes publications and magazines were advertised, such as *The 'Crusoe' Annual*, but the focus remained heavily on the promotion of Blyton's books.

As the magazine developed from a periodical dedicated to retellings to a periodical dedicated to Blyton's original work, the magazine became more personal, and Blyton's distinctive voice emerged. From 1928, each edition contained an introductory letter informing readers of recent events at her home (first at Elfin Cottage, then at Old Thatch and finally from Green Hedges) and included information about her two daughters Gillian and Imogen. With this transition in 1927 from adaptations and retellings to a focus on Blyton's own, original stories, the magazine becomes less focused on global tales and international cultures and instead becomes more insular and more focused on stories set within the confines of Britain. By the mid-1930s, Blyton's book sales were high, with sales of one book, *Letters from Bob* - a collection of letters from Blyton's dog - exceeding ten thousand within the first six days of publication (Stoney 73). With Blyton's growing success and the increasing familiarity with the Enid Blyton brand, the magazine was retitled *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* in 1937 and became a weekly rather than fortnightly publication. It remained a weekly magazine until April 1942, but due to paper shortages, it was forced to become a fortnightly publication again during the Second World War. In 1953, Blyton parted ways with George Newnes *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* and started *Enid Blyton's Magazine* with the Evans Brothers as the magazine's publishers. Throughout the 1950s, Blyton exhibited signs of failing health, and in September 1959, the last issue of the magazine was published, entitled "A Dog Called Timmy". Following her death in 1968, the centrality and importance of the magazine to the Blyton brand diminished. This thesis outlines the significance of *Sunny Stories* to Blyton's development of a global readership and a globally successful brand.

Due to the centrality of the *Sunny Stories* magazine to this thesis, I incorporate scholarship on children's periodicals, particularly periodicals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This includes information on the age, gender, and class demographics of twentieth-century magazines and periodicals. Using this information, I situate Blyton's *Sunny Stories* magazine in the twentieth-century juvenile periodical industry. The thesis' focus on Blyton's magazine made archival research necessary, as the magazine has not been subsequently re-issued or digitised. Issues of the *Sunny Stories* magazine are housed at both the British Library in London and the Seven Stories Centre in Newcastle. The British Library contains each issue of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* published between 1926 and 1936, and issues of *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* published between 1936 and 1953. Although not part of my study, the library also includes issues of Blyton's post-*Seven Stories* magazine entitled *Enid Blyton's Magazine*, which began in 1953 and ended in 1959. The Seven Stories Centre archive contains a less complete collection of Blyton's magazine, with several issues missing from the collection. The archive is immensely valuable in other ways, as it contains early editions of Blyton's novels, but the British Library was a far more reliable archive for Blyton's magazines.

Criticism to Date

The *Sunny Stories* magazine is central to this thesis' examination of the Second World War, the Empire, and race in Blyton's work. While Blyton's books and series have received academic attention from scholars including David Rudd, Owen Dudley Edwards, Philip Gillett, Nicholas Tucker, David Buckingham, and Rashna B. Singh, the magazine is an overlooked but significant component of Blyton's writing career. Owen Dudley Edwards and David Rudd refer sporadically to the magazine in their research, but a comprehensive analysis of the development of the magazine from the interwar years, through to the Second World War and the post-war period is absent from Blyton scholarship.

In scholarship on Blyton's novels and series, the approaches adopted by critics and researchers fall broadly into three categories: first, biographical/psychoanalytical; second, language and literacy-focused, where Blyton's simplistic narrative style is praised for its functionality in increasing literacy and encouraging children to read; and third, studies which acknowledge Blyton's cultural importance and contribution to British children's literature but defend her work against accusations of racism and xenophobia. The psychoanalytical, biography-based approach found within academia, coupled with the consideration of Blyton's books as valuable due to their simplicity, has contributed to the general perception of Blyton's books as escapist and apolitical. Certain scholars who have written extensively on Blyton combine a variety of approaches: for instance, Rudd draws upon biographical details to conduct psychoanalytical readings of Blyton's work while also illustrating the significant position Blyton occupies within British children's literature.

Psychoanalytical studies of Blyton's fiction dominate scholarship on Blyton. These types of studies draw heavily on biographical information, particularly biographical information on Blyton's childhood. Blyton's eventful life and global success have inspired several biographies and a BBC biopic in 2009. The most recent biography was published in December 2021 and is part of Palgrave Macmillan's "Literary Lives" series, which includes books on Virginia Woolf, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Rudyard Kipling. The biography is written by Andrew Maunder who states that one of the book's objectives is to draw readers' attention to the diversity of forms and genres in which Blyton wrote. Maunder identifies a problem pertinent to this thesis, whereby Blyton is “rarely treated as a serious writer” in discussions and scholarship “because there is an assumption that she is too popular to be good” (12).

The first, and still the most influential biography was written by Barbara Stoney shortly after Blyton’s death in 1968. *Enid Blyton: The Biography* (1974) includes details of Blyton’s relationship with her parents; psychological assessments of the author’s state of mind; physical, biological information about Blyton’s difficulty in conceiving children; and information on Blyton’s unusual writing process, which involves a disconnect from her conscious mind. Stoney’s biography continues to influence the type of methodological and theoretical approaches adopted in research of Blyton’s work, with psychoanalytical readings based on biographical information common within Blyton scholarship.

Information on Blyton’s childhood, particularly her relationship with her father, and memories of her as a mother - recounted by her daughters Gillian and Imogen - in Stoney’s biography has contributed strongly to a preference for psychoanalytical readings of Blyton’s writing. In an article published in *The New Statesman* in 1959, Blyton wrote “I do not write as I know some authors are forced to do, ‘to express some side of myself repressed in ordinary life’”, but many scholars studying Blyton seek to uncover the repressed desires expressed in Blyton’s fiction. However, in academic scholarship, David Rudd, Peter Hunt, Owen Dudley Edwards, Clive Bloom and Timothy Lustig all engage, to varying extents, in this form of biography-based, psychoanalytical reading of Blyton’s work. According to Hunt, “Blyton’s personal background provides a potent explication of the insistence on the happy family group” in series such as *The Famous Five* (“How not to read” 238). A popular topic to discuss is Blyton's failure to mature past childhood, explained by the discovery of her "undeveloped uterus" and her problems conceiving her first child (Stoney 70). In Bloom's *Bestsellers*, Blyton's "attitude to domestic affairs" illustrated by the titling of "her homes by silly pet names such as Elfin Cottage" is obvious proof, Bloom believes, of the retention of a childish nature (141). For Bloom, the creation of fictional "ideal" family homes can be interpreted as Blyton's subconscious yearning for the home she "lost when her parents split up", and furthermore, her created fictional worlds provided a means of escape for Blyton when she "tired of looking after her children" (*Bestsellers* 141-142). Blyton's supposed use of her fictional worlds to escape the responsibilities of her own life has increased the perception of her work as disconnected from reality. In 2000, David Rudd published *Enid Blyton and the Mystery of Children's Literature*, which remains the most extensive study to date on Blyton's work. Rudd explores "the enduring popularity of Enid Blyton's work" and examines why her books "continue to fascinate in our multicultural world" (3). Rudd employs a psychoanalytical approach to analysis of several Blyton series, concentrating primarily on *The Famous Five*, *Malory Towers* and the Noddy books. In his research, Rudd combines Freudian and Lacanian theories with biographical information from Stoney's biography to provide insights into Blyton's writing: for example, a reluctance to permit death into her stories is attributed to Blyton's father's abandonment of the family, explained by Rudd as a termination of the man "who had effectively 'storied' her existence" (176). This in turn is connected with Blyton's absence at the funerals of both her parents, and the fictional prolonging of her pet dog Bobs' life even after his death in real life (177-178).

More recently, an article by Timothy Lustig published in 2014 provided a psychoanalytical reading of Blyton's retelling of Arthurian narratives in *The Knights of the*

Round Table, with the article focusing specifically on the story of Geraint and Enid. In Chapter One, "Constructing National Identity through Folk Narratives in *Sunny Stories"*, I analyse Blyton's retelling of this story within the context of national cultural heritage, Englishness, and adaptation methods. Lustig's article is a psychoanalytical study of the tale, which uses biographical information from Stoney's biography to offer conjectures on the "personal significance" of the tale for Enid (89). The theory of "personal significance" stems from the fact that the female protagonist of the Arthurian legend shares the same name as Blyton, with Lustig arguing that Alfred Lord Tennyson's stories of 'Enid' were chosen by Blyton as they gave her an "opportunity to enhance, in fiction, her sense of herself as an attractive woman" (93). Lustig proceeds from this hypothesis to argue that "other figures in the story – Enid's father, her mother, and her husband Geraint – have parallels in Blyton's life" (89). The loving father and daughter relationship of Yniol and Enid is, Lustig argues, a resurrection of Blyton's own early relationship with her father, the father "who nursed his sickly infant daughter through a cold November night in 1897 and, in doing so, 'undoubtedly' saved her life" (95). The paralleling continues, with Geraint identified as Blyton's husband, Hugh Pollock, who "four years into her marriage, Blyton probably still thought of her husband, if only occasionally, as a knight in armour" (98). The article demonstrates a common form of psychoanalytical research used in analysis of Blyton's work.

Another common theme within Blyton scholarship and which is evident in Lustig's article is the focusing on biological information and the linking of Blyton's medical issues with a supposed childlike nature (Tucker 192). Literary criticism of Blyton is guilty of deploying psychoanalysis "to identify the child in the author" (Lesnik-Oberstein 308). Blyton's ability to communicate to child readers "at their own, unexalted level" is ascribed to her being in possession of an undeveloped, childlike mind (Tucker 192). Lustig finds meaning in the fact that *The Knights of the Round Table* was serialised in *The Teacher's World* in the same year that Blyton "who had not conceived after 4 years of marriage, consulted a gynaecologist" (89). The gynaecologist, Lustig deems relevant to explain, informed Blyton "that she had the uterus of a 'girl of 12 or 13'" (97). The article is illustrative of the type of gendered, sexist criticism of Blyton's work that frequently appears in scholarship on the author. Lustig concludes his analysis of the Arthurian narrative by stating that "In the light of Tennyson's closing vision of those little Enids and Geraints to be, it seems sad that the real Enid did not breastfeed her children and, as they grew up, limited her contact with them to an hour playing Snakes and Ladders in the evening" (99). Although offering useful information relating to the source texts used by Blyton in her retellings of Arthurian legends, Lustig's focus on personal and biological detail, and his criticism of the author's parenting style, is both unnecessary and sexist.

The second category of scholarship focuses on the usefulness of Blyton's books in terms of developing literacy and encouraging children to read. The language of Blyton's books is a divisive aspect of the author's work, with fans praising the texts' readability while some academics criticise the narratives' lack of complexity and imagination. Accusations of "authorial laziness", due to the repetition of words and phrases are often directed towards Blyton, and her work is criticised for its lack of literary qualities (Hollindale 89). Aidan Chambers found great fault in Blyton's "linguistically impoverished style", which, as Buckingham explains, echoed the complaints of librarians:

> the reasons for banning Blyton were expressed primarily in terms of the apparently objective grounds of literary quality. While some librarians expressed

> concern about the danger of ‘addiction’, the main objection was that Blyton was just a poor writer: her plots were contrived and predictable, her characterization was weak, and her language was restricted and unimaginative. Rather than offering the depth and richness of great literature, Blyton’s work was merely formulaic trash. (6-7)

For scholars such as Chambers, the simplicity of Blyton’s language is a problem as it stifles child readers’ linguistic development. For Nicholas Tucker and Sheila Ray, the language of Blyton’s books is praised for its accessibility and comprehensibility, with Blyton “able to wed her particular childish vision to a writing style that remained consistently child-friendly” (*Celebration* xii). A common line of argument used in defence of Blyton’s work, and which was heard again during the recent English Heritage controversy, relates to the functionality of Blyton’s fiction and her books’ usefulness in developing literacy. Its function as such has been considered a redeeming factor of Blyton’s work for decades, with even the harshest of critics admitting to the positive impact Blyton’s books have made on improving reluctant readers’ reading habits. Blyton succeeded in “getting the masses of children reading in a way that any teacher or Minister of Education today could only dream about” (Tucker, *Celebration* viii). As Hunt correctly identifies, the literary world has only permitted positive discussion of Blyton’s books in the context of education; when subjected to literary analysis, the results are overwhelmingly negative (“How Not to Read” 239). Sheila Ray, one of the earliest critics of Blyton’s work, concludes an essay on the positioning of Blyton within the twenty-first century literary marketplace by writing:

> …real readers do grow out of her books, and if those for whom leisure reading will never be an important activity [they] at least acquire decent reading skills through enjoyment of *The Secret Seven* and *Famous Five*… (Tucker 56)

The third category of scholarship includes scholars such as David Rudd, Owen Dudley Edwards, Sheila Ray, Peter Hunt, and biographers including Andrew Maunder who argue for the cultural and/or literary significance of Blyton's work. These scholars refute the idea that Blyton's prolific output, popularity, and narrative style makes her an unsuitable subject for critical analysis of her work. Sheila Ray's *The Blyton Phenomenon: The Controversy Surrounding the World's Most Successful Children's Writer*, published in 1982, describes the author as "phenomenal" because "she has come to occupy an unassailable position in the history of books for children" (206). While *The Blyton Phenomenon* recognises the important contribution Blyton's books have made to children's literature, Ray's defence and praise of Blyton's work often centres on the texts' educational value in developing literacy: Ray concludes a discussion on Blyton's fantasy series by stating "that her books provide useful reading experiences for children whose reading skills are relatively undeveloped" (151). In *Enid Blyton and the Mystery of Children's Literature*, Rudd takes a different approach to Blyton's simplistic language and narrative style. Rudd conducts a textual analysis of three of Blyton's most popular series, *Noddy*, *The Famous Five,* and *Malory Towers* but first explains, however, that Blyton's work is unsuitable for a purely literary framework of analysis as her style is that of an oral storyteller rather than a literary writer. His research explains how her "simple, straightforward" language, frequent repetition of words and phrases, and use of "vague filler words" to fill the silence whilst contemplating the direction of the tale's plot are characteristic of oral storytelling (160). Blyton herself supported this recontextualisation, preferring the term "storyteller" to "writer" in reference to her construction of stories (Rudd 155). Rudd, therefore, first recontextualises Blyton's writing style as essentially non-literary, but then demonstrates the value in applying literary theories and methodologies to her series.

Other scholars focus less on the non-literariness of Blyton's language, preferring to concentrate on the content of her stories and her texts' similarities with other twentieth-century British children's texts. In an essay entitled "Enid Blyton as Great Literature", Peter Hunt argues that scholars should approach Blyton's work "without prejudice" and "read her seriously", for "perhaps" in analysing Blyton's texts "a good deal might be unlocked" (31-32). Hunt's recognition of the value of Blyton's work is not based on its educational, functional value, but based on her work's literary value. Hunt first states that "a literary text is generally supposed to be stimulating, absorbing, to be mind-expanding, to change lives, to be influential, to represent the culture, and (perhaps) to be profound" and follows these criteria by asking readers, "which of those would you deny to Blyton?" (32). Singh and Owen Dudley Edwards also consider Blyton's output as important and valuable to their studies of specific forms and genres within children's literature. In her research, Singh examines the imperialist propaganda contained in nineteenth and twentieth-century British children's literature and analyses the reflection of "national character" in individual child protagonists (60). "Resilience, raw courage, daring, endurance, hardiness, duty, loyalty, and sacrifice" were the qualities attributed to the "white, English especially male child" (60-61). Singh demonstrates the reflection of these English qualities in Blyton's protagonists, and states: "anyone interested in the English concept of character, in terms of an idealised sense of self… would find Blyton's books highly instructive" (203). Edwards, likewise, includes Blyton's fiction in his research on a specific area within children's literature scholarship: children's fiction of the Second World War. Edwards compares Blyton's wartime publications with other children's writers of the late 1930s and 1940s, and although there are substantial gaps within Edwards' examination of Blyton, he nevertheless introduces a new perspective on Blyton as a wartime writer.

Throughout this thesis, my theoretical framework is based on textual analysis rather than biographical or psychoanalytical analysis of Blyton's work. The primary focus of the thesis is to examine Blyton's construction of national identity, specifically a construction of Englishness that is grounded within ideologies of Empire. As such, scholarship on colonial children's literature and the influence of the Empire on children's literature is necessary to include. As Blyton's construction of Englishness relies heavily on contrasts between her white English protagonists and non-white, non-English characters, contemporary scholarship on race, critical race theory, and critical white studies help illuminate Blyton's adherence to imperial racial ideologies. As with race and whiteness, Blyton's sense of Englishness is fluid rather than static and fixed; it changes and adapts according to time and geographical context. I selected magazine issues, stand-alone books and series from Blyton's early writing in the 1920s through to the mid-1950s which illustrate this fluidity in terms of national identity construction.

The application of critical race theory and critical white studies to Blyton's work elucidates the pervasiveness of racism in her texts and the fundamentality of whiteness in her construction of Englishness. The critical race theory movement began in the 1970s and "is a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power" (Delgado and Stegancic 3). Scholars of critical race theory hold that race and races "correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents". Furthermore, scholars argue that "racism is ordinary, normal, and embedded in society and, moreover, that changes in relationships among the races (which include both improvements and turns for the worse) reflect the interest of dominant groups, rather than idealism, altruism, or the rule of law" (Delgado and Stegancic 16). Whiteness studies "emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s" and followed critical race theory's arguments on the social construction of race but focused more explicitly on the "socially constructed nature of whiteness" (Doane 6).

In addition to the incorporation of scholarship on race and whiteness, I incorporate scholarship on twentieth- century juvenile periodicals and wartime magazines. The thesis sees Blyton as the "necessarily complex and culturally central writer that she is" (Hunt "Enid Blyton" 35) and it challenges the common perception of her work as apolitical and escapist. The thesis, therefore, follows previous scholars' research, including Kimberley Reynolds' and Farah Mendlesohn's, on the relationship between British fantasy children's fiction and the social, political, and national contexts in which they were produced. Hunt, Rudd, Ray, and Singh's understanding of the author as a figure of immense cultural importance and as an author worthy of academic study is further proven by this thesis' positioning of the author within several significant literary and historical contexts: first, within twentieth-century periodical publication; second, within England's folk narrative tradition; third, within the context of the Second World War and war writing; and fourth, within the context of colonial children's literature and imperial adventure fiction. Although my study of Blyton's work differs from the approaches employed by Rudd, in that neither psychoanalytical readings nor engagement with the primary readership is part of the thesis' theoretical framework, Rudd's recontextualisation of Blyton as a storyteller is highly relevant to my analysis of Blyton's adaption and retelling of national and international folk narratives. Rudd's recontextualisation of Blyton's language style lays the groundwork for my examination of the author's engagement with England's folk narrative tradition and her construction of a canon of English folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends for young child readers. Furthermore, the uncomplicated language of Blyton's work is not viewed as a problem in this thesis but viewed as a style of writing which perfectly facilitated the dissemination of her stories to a wide global audience and to a broad age-range of readers.

In this thesis, I incorporate elements of Rudd's, Singh's, and Edwards' scholarship in a focused study on Blyton's construction of national identity. Singh identifies the primary characteristics of Englishness reflected in Blyton's fiction but the nuances contained within Blyton's construction of national identity are overlooked. This thesis develops Singh's analysis to demonstrate how Blyton's construction of national character evolves and changes as new challenges arise for England and for the Empire. Blyton's construction of national identity is predicated on a belief in the innate superiority of England and English national character, but rather than a static construction, it is a construction of national identity that adapts in response to twentieth-century national and imperial developments.

Whiteness is fundamental to Blyton's construction of Englishness. Non-white, non-English characters are used as contrasts against which white Englishness is constructed and defined. Several scholars, including Rudd, Ray and Buckingham, endeavour to explain the continuing popularity of Blyton's work in the twenty-first century, with Rudd examining the elements of Blyton's work which complicate Blyton's legacy in modern British culture. Rudd identifies race and racism as central "to any discussion on Blyton" and both Rudd and Edwards include discussions on non-white characters in Blyton's texts (Enid Blyton 153). Rudd, however, like the majority of critics on Blyton, concentrates primarily on the issues arising from Blyton's inclusion of non-human non-white characters, particularly the figure of the Golliwog. Rudd's reader-response methods of analysis are relied upon to defend

Blyton's texts from accusations of racism, and Edwards' examination of Blyton's non-white characters is similarly defensive: Edwards excuses Blyton's use of racial stereotypes in her creation of characters. The thesis includes the Golliwog in its evaluation of the portrayal of non-white characters, but the black doll is a minor figure in the thesis. My work examines the pervasive racial ideologies which dictate white and non-white characters' hierarchical positions within Blyton's fictional societies. The Golliwog is included in this assessment of racial power structures, but my analysis focuses predominantly on non-white human characters in Blyton's realistic adventure texts.

Methodology and Structure

In addition to employing biographical and psychoanalytical forms of analysis in his examination of Blyton's texts, Rudd relies upon reader-response theories in his analysis and estimation of Blyton's collection. The reader-response approach employed by Rudd places far greater emphasis on "the activity of reading" and the child reader, "rather than on the author or the structures of the text" (Johnston 134). Reader-response theory, as outlined by Perry Nodelman in *The Pleasures of Children's Literature*, and supported fervently by Peter Hollindale in *Signs of Childness*, considers a text to merely be "something with the potential to come into existence": requiring the engagement of readers for it to become activated (Nodelman 17). Furthering this notion of activation, Hollindale asserts that in order to activate a children's text, a child reader, specifically, is required. Adult readers and critics can merely "read children's literature as a body of literary texts" (32). Rudd is sceptical of critics, especially critics of Blyton, who "make their pronouncements with no thought of consulting the primary readership" (6). Therefore, Rudd's chosen methodology involves interviews and surveys with child readers of Blyton's books. In his essay, "The

Irrelevance of Children to the Children's Book Reviewer", Alderson critiques the reliance on interviewees in scholarly studies, believing that the critic is "bound to receive opinions that are immature and often inarticulate" (54-55). Hunt is also unsure of the reliability and veracity of interviewees' responses, as he believes children "develop the skill to say what they are supposed to say, and may well assume that their private understandings are in some way wrong" (*Criticism* 88).

Rudd's reader-response approach prioritises the twenty-first century child reader's interpretation of the text, whereas the objective of this thesis is to situate Blyton's texts within their twentieth-century historical, political, and imperial contexts to better understand the texts' nationalistic construction of Englishness. Therefore, rather than adopting the reader-response approach Rudd employs, the thesis is aligned with the theoretical approaches of Matthew Grenby, Kimberley Reynolds, and Lesnik-Oberstein's research, in which the child reader is not considered a resource in determining a text's meaning or significance. For these scholars, textual analysis takes precedence over reader-response theories, and as Reynolds states at the beginning of *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction*, a critical study from this perspective is about "children's literature as literature, not how to use books with children, or children as readers" (1). Building from the fundamental belief that "a large part of any book is written not by its author but by the world the author lives in", the thesis seeks to gain a deeper understanding of Blyton's works by examining the historical, social and political context in which the texts were produced (Hollindale 153).

This thesis is a chronological examination of Blyton's work from the inception of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* in 1926 to contemporary, revised editions of Blyton's work in the twenty-first century. Rather than a biographical approach, therefore, it is instead an assessment that sets the development of her work against evolving political, imperial, and cultural developments in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I chose to analyse Blyton's work chronologically and situate the thematic and stylistic developments that occur within it in the socio-political contexts in which they emerged because such an approach allows for analysis of her work's engagement with national and political crises, and with the changing state of the Empire. The thesis contributes to socio-historical studies of children's fiction, and scholarship on the representation of national identity in children's fiction: Lindsay Myers' research on the politics of Italian children's fantasy (2011), Emer O'Sullivan and Andrea Immel's work *Imagining Sameness and Difference in Children's Literature* (2017), and Christopher Kelen and Bjorn Sundmark's *The Nation in Children's Literature* (2013) are examples of works which demonstrate the value in analysing children's texts from a political, national, and socio-historical perspective. Blyton's construction of English national identity is examined in four contexts: through the retelling of folk narratives in the early years of the *Sunny Stories* magazine; in her magazine and books published during the Second World War; in her post-war imperial adventure fiction; and finally in the twenty-first century, as a literary and cultural representative of Britain's colonial legacy. Due to the vast number of books, series, and magazine volumes published by Blyton throughout her writing career, the texts chosen for examination are short stories, novels, and series published at crucial points in England and the Empire's history. The forms and genres examined in the thesis vary from fantasy secondary world short stories to realistic imperial adventure series, and I argue that these forms and genres were chosen intentionally by Blyton to respond to specific national and imperial moments of crisis.

The thesis begins in the interwar years with an examination of the folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends Blyton retold and published in *Sunny Stories* in 1926 and 1927. Retelling English folk narratives helped establish Blyton as an English brand, a brand engaged with England's national literary and cultural heritage. Blyton's characters, fictional worlds and the adaptations that emerged from her original writing have become part of Britain's cultural heritage, particularly the heritage of British children and British childhood. The concept of cultural heritage is examined in relation to children and childhood in Kate Darian-Smith and Carla Pascoe's work, Children, Childhood and Cultural Heritage, where they argue that "the examination of the cultural heritage of children has been relatively limited" (2). According to Darian-Smith and Pascoe, "the cultural heritage of children and childhood is complex and varied, incorporating material objects such as toys, intangible heritage such as songs and games and the spatial heritage of the buildings, environments and landscapes that children inhabit" (2). Children's literature and media are undoubtedly also part of the cultural heritage of children, and in Britain, Blyton's books are undoubtedly part of the cultural heritage of British children.

The Anglicisation of non-English tales, along with Blyton's retelling of English legends and celebration of exemplary characters from England's cultural and literary heritage marks the beginning of Blyton's nationalistic writing for children. The thesis then progresses to Blyton's publication of short stories, novels, and series during the Second World War: I analyse the independent short stories published within *Sunny Stories* during the Second World War; the serialisation of the wartime text *The Adventurous Four* between 1940 and 1941; and the wartime text *The Children of Kidillin* (1940), which was published under Blyton's pseudonym, Mary Pollock. The short stories and novels published during the war demonstrate Blyton's focus on British national unity, as opposed to a specific focus on English nationalism. Blyton recognised the importance of a united front against Britain's enemies, and consequently elevated non-English British characters to a temporary higher status. The publication of the *Adventure* series towards the end of the Second World War and the post-war period signals a return to a construction of Englishness as distinct and as intellectually superior to all other nations and races, including Scottish and Welsh characters. The post-war period was a time of significant imperial change, and Blyton's fictional response to the decline of the Empire was a revival of earlier, nineteenth century forms of imperial adventure tales for a post-war Britain. Finally, Blyton's construction of an Englishness entrenched in imperial and colonial ideologies is examined in the context of modern British culture and Britain's post-Brexit political climate.

A textual, literary-historical approach to the study of Blyton's work shifts the focus from a study of Blyton's subconscious, and a study of contemporary child readers' responses, to an examination of her fiction as engaging with multiple nationalist literary traditions. Furthermore, a textual, literary-historical approach facilitates analysis of Blyton as a wartime writer and facilitates analysis of the colonial and imperial ideologies underpinning Blyton's fiction. An approach which prioritises the contemporary child reader, or an approach which strives for insights into Blyton's childlike mind or family issues risks misses the important contribution Blyton's work made to multiple genres and forms of children's fiction. Children's periodicals remain an understudied field within academia: in 2013, Robert Kirkpatrick published a study on boys' periodicals, an area of children's publishing he refers to as "a comparatively neglected field" (vii). *Sunny Stories* provides valuable insight into twentieth-century British juvenile periodical publication, and insight into the type of reading material created for young wartime readers. Blyton's *Sunny Stories* catered for a readership that was younger than the majority of magazines studied in juvenile periodical scholarship. Kirsten Drotner's *English Children and Their Magazines*, Robert Kirkpatrick's *From the Penny Dreadful to the Ha'penny Dreadfuller: A Bibliographical History of the British Boys' Periodical 1762-1950*, and Kristine Moruzi's article on "Children's Periodicals" focus on juvenile periodicals for older children and advanced readers. Furthermore, the content of *Sunny Stories* contradicts assessments of wartime periodicals for young children as primarily providers of distracting entertainment.

An important part of this thesis is the evaluation of modified, twenty-first century editions of Blyton's work, in which portrayals of non-white characters are edited to better align the books with the ideologies of modern British society. These modifications are made to ensure the Blyton brand retains its popularity and position of cultural importance within modern Britain. Since 2000, David Steege, Clare Bradford and Philip Nel have published research analysing the changes made to twentieth-century British children's authors' work to mitigate the colonial overtones of their writing. The consensus amongst these scholars is that despite edits and changes, the colonial and racial ideologies underpinning Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Hugh Lofting's *Doctor Dolittle* series, and P.L. Travers' *Mary Poppins* are maintained in revised editions of these authors' texts. The re-assessment of twentieth-century children's books was intensified by the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests in the US and in Britain, which incited a broad cultural re-examination of the artefacts and objects commemorating Britain's colonial legacy[2]. As stated earlier in the introduction, the BLM movement prompted a revision of Blyton's biography on the English Heritage website, which reignited the debate on Blyton's status within contemporary British culture. I argue that twenty-first century, modified, cosmetically race-less editions of

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[2] For example, a statue of Edward Colston, a seventeenth-century slave trader, was removed by protesters in Bristol, England. Campaigners called for the removal of the British imperialist Cecil Rhodes' statue at Oxford University college, England. Their petition was rejected by the university.

Blyton's work preserve the texts' original construction of Englishness as intrinsically white. In the twenty-first century, despite the alterations made to Blyton's texts, the Enid Blyton brand continues to present and celebrate a twentieth-century vision of Englishness which is predicated on colonial and imperial beliefs in England's racial, intellectual, moral, and social supremacy.

In Chapter One, "Constructing National Identity through Folk Narratives in *Sunny Stories*", Blyton is positioned as a significant figure within both Britain's folk narrative tradition, and England's nationalist literary traditions. In retelling and publishing folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends in *Sunny Stories*, Blyton followed an established method of adapting national folk narratives to help construct a sense of national identity. Blyton engaged with England's cultural and literary heritage to construct and reinforce the values considered to epitomise Englishness: the legendary stories of Robin Hood, of Saint George of Merry England, and King Arthur are retold in a simplified format by Blyton in a nationalistic celebration of English values and virtues. Blyton, however, not only retold English-origin tales, but Anglicised non-English tales, and created her own fairy and folk-tale inspired fantasy texts. In adapting and retelling non-English tales, Blyton emulated the imperial approach of two earlier British folklorists, Andrew Lang (1844-1912) and Joseph Jacobs (1854-1916).

Chapters Two and Three examine Blyton's fictional response to periods of national and imperial crises, and examine the genres and forms chosen by Blyton to respond to these moments of significance in Britain and the Empire's history. The texts examined in Chapters Three and Four collectively demonstrate an awareness and an engagement with reality that contradicts assessments of Blyton's work as largely escapist and apolitical.

In Chapter Two, “Wartime Blyton and British National Unity”, the contextualisation of Blyton as a periodical writer is combined with a contextualisation of the author as a wartime writer. The chapter illustrates Blyton’s multifarious response to the Second World War through an examination of the mimetic and non-mimetic texts she published during the war years. In stories published within the magazine, Blyton exhibits a clear concern for the security of Britain’s borders, and the safety and wellbeing of children during the war. The fiction Blyton published during the war years addressed the prospect of invasion and Britain’s place in the war either directly in realist texts or indirectly in fantasy texts. Through these realist and non-realist short stories and serialised texts published within the magazine, Blyton attempted to assuage readers’ fears of invasion by focusing on the perceived inherent superiority of the British nation.

Chapter Three, “Englishness, Adventure, and an Empire in Decline” focuses on Blyton’s re-working of the nineteenth-century imperial adventure literary tradition in response to post-Second World War imperial decline. The primary texts of this chapter are: *The Faraway Tree* (1938-1946); *The Secret Mountain* (1941) and the post-war *Adventure* series (1944-1955). These texts, in particular the post-war *Adventure* series, reflect a national desire for the continuation of the Empire, coupled with the realisation that the Empire was drawing to an end. As with Blyton’s wartime publications, the post-war imperial adventure texts illustrate the extent to which Blyton’s fiction engages with the complexities of twentieth-century national and imperial crises.

The final chapter, “Whiteness and Race: Blyton in the Twenty-First Century” moves from Blyton’s original work in the twentieth century to her posthumously revised texts in circulation within the twenty-first century children’s literary marketplace. Chapter Four combines analysis of short stories published in *Sunny Stories* with analysis of the post-war, imperial *Adventure* series. These texts feature non-white characters, both human and non-human, and through analysis of these texts, I demonstrate the centrality of whiteness to Blyton's construction of national identity and the retention of this fundamental component of English national identity in modern, revised editions of Blyton's work. This chapter moves beyond discussions of race and racism centred on a narrow selection of non-human, non-white characters to a discussion of race, whiteness and racism intrinsically connected to imperial ideologies and colonial racial hierarchies. Furthermore, edited and deracialised versions of Blyton's books are presented and sold to consumers as Blyton's authentic, original texts. This chapter highlights the problems with publishers' lack of transparency in relation to textual and visual edits to Blyton's works.

In this thesis, Blyton is positioned as a culturally significant, immensely influential author whose works enrich our understanding of twentieth-century children's imperial adventure fiction; colonial children's literature; juvenile periodical culture; fairy tale and fantasy literature; children's war fiction; and the underexplored area of whiteness in children's literature. Through studying Blyton's work within these multiple literary and historical contexts, the thesis demonstrates the ideological complexity of Blyton's writing.

Although this thesis diverts from previous reader-response approaches to Blyton's work, it is important to emphasise the enduring popularity and success of the Blyton brand within the twenty-first century. Blyton's books continue to sell over 3.5 million copies each year (Hirji). The model of Englishness Blyton constructs in her fiction continues to be disseminated, read, and enjoyed by twenty-first century child readers, and it is a construction built upon colonial beliefs in the supremacy of white Englishness.

In January 2022, the British children's and young adult author Jacqueline Wilson announced a new rewriting of Blyton's series *The Faraway Tree*, which was criticised in *The Daily Mail* as a "woke.. gender equality" version (Gant) and similarly criticised in the *Express* for the new rewrite's "gender neutrality" and "political correctness" (Abbott). The announcement of Wilson's rewrite and the media reports responding to the announcement further highlights the brand's ability to generate controversies. Wilson's reworking of *The Faraway Tree* world mirrors Blyton's reworking of folk narratives in the 1920s – which is the focus of the first chapter - and further aligns Blyton's writing with storytelling and folk narrative traditions.

Chapter One: Constructing National Identity through Folk Narratives in *Sunny Stories*

This chapter positions Blyton as a significant contributor to England's canon of folk narratives by firstly analysing her retellings of English myths, legends, and folk tales and secondly, by outlining Blyton's augmentation of this canon through creating her own English-based, folk narrative-inspired stories. Both the retold folk narratives – including tales of Arthurian Knights, Robin Hood, and St George of Merry England - and original stories analysed in this chapter demonstrate the values and characteristics Blyton firmly associated with England and Englishness: chivalry, bravery, moral rectitude, and a sense of order emerging from an adherence to social hierarchies. The stories published in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* form the basis of Blyton's construction of Englishness.

This chapter places Blyton within the context of nineteenth and early twentieth-century cultural nationalism with Blyton's publication of national folk narratives in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* compared directly to other British and European folklorists' use of national stories to establish and celebrate distinct national identities. In Germany, Ireland, Finland, and Denmark, folklorists and writers collected and published collections of native folk and fairy tales for nationalistic purposes. In Britain, William Thoms, Sir Henry Cole, and Anna Eliza Bray similarly worked to establish a native collection of English folk and fairy tales. Due to their collections of tales for children, the work of British folklorists Andrew Lang (1844-1912) and Joseph Jacobs (1854-1916) is particularly important to this chapter's analysis of Blyton's retellings of folk narratives for child readers. Blyton's retellings are furthermore aligned with Lang and Jacobs' collections due to all three writers' imperial approach –

choosing other nations' tales and appropriating these for English child readers - to the development of folk narratives for an English child readership.

Blyton's narrative style has been criticised and derided by scholars such as Aidan Chambers, praised for its accessibility and usefulness in developing literacy by Barbara Stoney and Nicholas Tucker, and recontextualised as belonging to an oral storytelling tradition by David Rudd. In the early years of Blyton's writing career, and the first years of the magazine *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*, Blyton chose to retell, adapt, and publish folk tales, fairy tales, myths, and legends in a simplified, oral storytelling style. The connection Rudd established between Blyton's narrative style and oral storytelling traditions provides the foundation for this chapter's analysis of her work in the context of folk narratives. Rudd's recontextualisation of Blyton's language and narrative style is partly conducted to defend Blyton's work from the derision of literary scholars.

Blyton's collection of retellings expanded upon the work of Lang and Jacobs, whose eclectic collections of folk and fairy tales were comprised of stories from England's cultural heritage, from Welsh and Scottish traditions, but also tales from Britain's colonies and beyond the British Empire. Cultural heritage functions as "both a symbol of the cultural identity of a self-identified group, be it a nation or a people" and "an essential element in the construction of that group's identity" (Blake 84). Blyton uses narratives from England and Britain's cultural heritage for both purposes: first, as a means to distinguish Englishness from other nationalities and identities, and second, as a vital component in her construction of an idealised form of English national identity. Cultural heritage, according to R.S. Peckham, is "always present-centred" and this argument is reinforced by Brian Graham and Peter Howard's definition of heritage as "the ways in which very selective past material artefacts, natural landscapes, mythologies, memories and traditions become cultural, political and economic resources for the present" (Darian-Smith and Pascoe 3). Blyton selected stories from England's stock of folk tales, myths and legends to not only retell, but to modernise and make relevant to her contemporary *Sunny Stories* readers. Blyton's objective was not simply to preserve stories by publishing them in her magazine, but to modernise England's cultural heritage for a twentieth-century young readership.

From the mid-1920s, Blyton began constructing her own canon of domestic and domesticated English folk narratives, inserting her work into England's folk narrative collection. Blyton's imperial mindset is reflected in the choice of tales she rewrote and presented to young readers in her early writing career. Blyton did not confine her selection to within England, or even within Britain, but like Lang and Jacobs, selected tales from a vast range of nations and cultures to modify and Anglicise. Blyton modified the language and content of European, African-American, Asian and Middle-Eastern fairy tales, folk tales, myths, and legends to sound more English and to reflect more strongly the values of Englishness.

To further bolster England's collection of tales, Blyton also wrote kunstmärchen or "art tales". These are tales which draw from conventions and motifs of traditional märchen: a term to describe "folk and fairy tales of various kinds" (Teverson *Fairy Tale* 31). Described by Farah Mendlesohn and Michael Levy as a "fairy adventure" story, this chapter illustrates how *The Faraway Tree* series (1938-1946) draws heavily from the narrative conventions of the folk and fairy tale tradition and can therefore be categorised as kunstmärchen (92). Blyton directly links this created kunstmärchen to traditional folk and fairy tales through including characters from English folk tales, fairy tales, and nursery tales. The lives of English fairy tale, folk tale, and nursery rhyme characters are intertwined with Blyton's created protagonists, which functions to connect *The Faraway Tree* series and its protagonists to England's cultural heritage. Blyton's work, therefore, contributes to England's canon of tales through the adoption and continuation of Lang and Jacobs' imperial approach; through the retelling of native English folk narratives; and through the creation of her own, original, English-based folk narrative-inspired stories.

Definitions

Throughout this chapter, I refer to the different types of folk narratives retold by Blyton: I begin with the folk tales and fairy tales adapted and retold in *Sunny Stories*, then discuss Blyton's adaptation of legends and myths. Following the analysis of Blyton's retold tales, I examine Blyton's original fantasy and secondary world texts, detailing the parallels between Blyton's fantasy writing and folk and fairy tale forms. A brief explanation of the distinctions between these forms – folk tale, fairy tale, myth, legend, and fantasy - is therefore necessary.

Maria Nikolajeva writes that "drawing clear-cut borders between myth, folktale, fairy tale, literary fairy tale, high or heroic fantasy…is impossible and not always necessary" ("Fairy Tale" 138). With children's literature in particular, the dividing lines between children's fantasy texts and fairy tales can be difficult to delineate. Peter Hunt writes that "the fairy- and folk-tale is… an interesting demonstration of the kinds of confusion that surround children's literature in general" (*Introduction* 11), and Blyton's series *The Faraway Tree*, which is analysed later in this chapter, perfectly illustrates the blurring of lines between fairy tale, folk tale, and children's fantasy. Although referring to the difficulty in "drawing clear-cut borders" between the various types of narratives, Nikolajeva writes that it is possible to outline certain “basic generic” distinctions between the forms (“Fairy Tale” 138).

In discussing Blyton’s retellings in *Sunny Stories*, folk tales, fairy tales, myths, and legends are grouped under the larger category of ‘folk narrative’, a grouping which draws upon Dimitra Fimi and Andrew Teverson’s research. Folk narratives are defined by Fimi as encompassing myths, legends, and folktales (*Celtic Myth* 5). Folktales are “prose narratives which are regarded as fiction”, while myths and legends contain elements of truth: myths “are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past” and are “often part of the religious beliefs of the culture that tells them, since they explain how the world was created” (Fimi 5). Legends, unlike myths, “are not usually sacred narratives”, but focus on “heroic human beings who may originate in historical figures, but whose actions have accrued supernatural or wondrous elements via the passage of time” (5). Teverson explains that the basis for the division between folktales, myths, and legends is Wilhelm and Jacob Grimms’ publications of works dedicated to each form of folk narrative: the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812–15), *Deutsche Sagen*, a collection of German legends (1816–18), and *Deutsche Mythologie*, a collection of national myths (1835) (15). In Katharine M. Briggs’ *Dictionary of British Folk-Tales in the English Language*, fairy tales and nursery tales are classified as subgenres of folk narratives. This classification of nursery tales as folk narratives is relevant for *The Faraway Tree* series, in which fairy tale, folk tale, and nursery rhyme characters share adventures with the three child protagonists. Teverson, likewise, categorises fairy tales as “a form of folk narrative”, and explains that:

> Because the fairy tale is widely believed to have emerged, at some point in its long, complex and often untraceable history, from the mass of fictional forms

> invented, enjoyed and disseminated by the 'folk', it is generally classified as a sub-genre of folk narrative (*Fairy Tale* 10).

Teverson and Briggs' definition varies from other scholars, including Laura Tosi and Jack Zipes, who place fairy tales in a separate category to folk tales. In Tosi's study of English and Italian fantasy, she explains that the folk tale has its origins in an oral tradition with its "roots in archaic society" while both fairy tales and fantasy are "products of modern times" (Nikolajeva 138) and belong to a literary tradition (Tosi *Fabulous* 62). The literary fairy tale, as it first emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, modified the content and language of the folktale for a different class of audience: an educated, bourgeoisie readership. An expression of the desires and ambitions of the lower-class folk was replaced with lessons in morality in the literary fairy tale, which were targeted towards a privileged, upper-class readership. As Teverson argues, however, the fairy tale's origins lie within folk traditions and can therefore be categorised within the larger group of folk narratives. The confusion surrounding terms has lead scholars of folklore to adopt the term 'märchen', as the term allows for greater accuracy and "offers greater opportunity for further discriminations" (Teverson *Fairy Tale* 31). Using prefixes with 'märchen', literary fairy tales which have their roots in traditional stories are labelled 'buchmärchen' (book tales). The other type of literary fairy tale, such as those written by Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde, are labelled 'kunstmärchen' (art tales) and these are tales which have either substantially "re-worked" a traditional märchen, or tales which have been invented "to resemble traditional tales" (Teverson 31). In this chapter, I refer to the traditional 'märchen' Blyton retells as 'folk tales' or 'fairy tales', as these terms, as Teverson states, are the labels that are most widely used and understood. However, I use the term ‘kunstmärchen’ to analyse Blyton’s invented stories which incorporate the characteristics, motifs, and characters of traditional tales.

Although both belong to the larger category of folk narratives, there are important differences between the folk and fairy tale, with the most significant being the necessary presence of magic: “the magical, in the form of metamorphic transformations, loquacious animals, enchanting spells and improbable feats, is a necessary and ubiquitous precondition” of the fairy tale form (Teverson 29). Folk tales do not necessarily need magical elements, and can be “reasonably mimetic”, but fairy tales “depict magical or marvellous events or phenomena as a valid part of human experience” (29). While discussing the differences between the folk and fairy tale, Teverson draws attention to the problem with using the term “fairy tale”. In his book *Fairy Tale*, he highlights the problems in terms of inaccuracy, and in *The Fairy Tale World*, he draws attention to the term’s Euro-centricity. Usage of the term ‘fairy tale’ entails a homogenisation of “the world’s wonder tales according to a Euro-American model” (*The Fairy Tale World* 11). Andrew Lang’s coloured fairy books are used as examples of this homogenisation of international wonder tales, whereby tales originating from “Aboriginal Australians, Ancient Egyptians, the Basutos of South Africa, Brazilians, Germans, the Icelandic, Indians, Laps, Native Americans, and Persians” are published under the title *The Brown Fairy Book*” (7). Moreover, Teverson argues that these tales are placed in a hierarchy, with “Western European traditions” representative of “modernity” while “native” traditions “reveal to Europe the ‘savage’ past it has left behind” (7). The practice of assembling, modifying, and publishing international tales for a British audience is therefore linked to colonialism, which is pertinent to this chapter's discussion of Blyton, Lang, and Jacobs' imperial approach to publishing folk narratives.

Critical Scholarship

In *Enid Blyton and the Mystery of Children's Literature,* Rudd recontextualised Blyton's writing as a form of oral storytelling, focusing on the characteristics of her work that align with a storytelling tradition such as "the animism, the clumsy constructions" and her strong "authorial presence" (*Enid Blyton* 156). In an oral storytelling tradition, it is normal, common practice to "draw on the culture's stock of legends, stories and characters, and to rework them in new contexts" and writes that it is "not surprising… that Blyton uses nursery rhyme, fairy-tale, myth and legend as her wellspring" (159). Rudd mentions Blyton's refashioning of other stories and compares her to the "Mother Goose of folktale tradition" (155). However, due to the broad scope of Rudd's research and the impossibility of including all of Blyton's written material in a single book, Blyton's active participation in the retelling and reworking of folk and fairy tales in the early years of the magazine *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* is excluded from Rudd's study (155). Other scholars provide brief analyses of Blyton's retelling of folk narratives: Timothy Lustig discusses Blyton's adaptation of Arthurian legends for young child readers, but this is a psychoanalytical analysis of Blyton's adaptation, rather than an analysis focusing on Blyton's significant contribution to England's folk narrative tradition.

The absence of critical analysis on Blyton's engagement with England's folk narrative tradition is partly due to the absence of analysis on the magazine *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*. As stated in the introduction, Blyton is primarily considered a writer of novels and series, with brief references to her work as an editor and contributor to children's magazines. This chapter emphasises the importance of Blyton's periodical writing to her career, with analysis of *Sunny Stories* enriching our knowledge of her nationalistic writing for children and her engagement with England's literary and cultural heritage.

From its inception in 1926, *Sunny Stories* sought to accommodate both boys' and girls' reading preferences: the magazine contained a mixture of adventure tales based on male mythological heroes, such as King Arthur and Robin Hood, and European fairy tales with female protagonists, such as "Sleeping Beauty" and "Cinderella". After 1927, when the magazine stopped retelling folk narratives, Blyton continued to appeal to male and female child readers by creating gender-balanced groups of male and female protagonists. Therefore*, Sunny Stories for Little Folks* appealed to a mixed-gender readership, which is significant as the magazine bridged the gender divide entrenched in Britain's twentieth-century juvenile periodical industry. In her chapter on "Children's Periodicals", Moruzi argues that "despite editors' attempts to define their readership based on gender, children read a variety of material that crossed gender lines" (300). Moruzi references a survey conducted in 1884 on children's reading practices which "suggested that girls were reading a wide range of material – whether it was intended for them or not" (300). Young readers may have read fiction intended for the opposite gender, but Blyton's magazine actively targeted female and male readers. While "girls and boys often read the same magazines" in the nineteenth century, "gendered reading became even more strictly demarcated as the century progressed" (Moruzi 301). Moving into the twentieth century and the period between the First and Second World War, Drotner states that "no interwar publishers attempted to bridge the gender gap that had become firmly established in juvenile literature" (*English Children* 201). According to Moruzi, certain publishers in the nineteenth century did attempt to create magazines "targeted at both boys and girls": *The Chatterbox*, which ran from 1866 to 1953, was the most successful of the mixed-gendered magazines, with the other two examples Moruzi references – *Companion for Youth* (1858-61) and *Good Words for the Young* (1868-1872) in circulation for only three and four years respectively.

Sunny Stories for Little Folks appealed to a wide demographic, both in terms of gender and age. As the magazine developed, Blyton began to include comic strips with minimal text that appealed to young children with limited reading ability while including more complex, serialised stories that appealed to older child readers. Blyton began dividing stories based on age in the 1930s and 1940s, but in the early years of *Sunny Stories*, Blyton accommodated a broad range of child readers through publishing short stories written in uncomplicated language. In retelling national and international folk narratives, Blyton prioritised accessibility through condensing the stories she chose to retell and simplifying the language of these selected folk narratives.

Blyton's use of fairy tales and folk narratives to promote a sense of national identity and reflect the virtues and values of her nation is part of an established tradition of collecting and publishing folk and fairy tales for nationalistic purposes. Jennifer Schacker argues that "the roots of folklore study have generally been traced to the quest for national identity and cultural purity that began in the late eighteenth century" (2). In the nineteenth century "the collection and preservation of folk and fairy tales in Europe was part of a process of establishing the cultural longevity and ethnic durability of specific national groups" (Teverson *The Fairy Tale World* 5). Chiara Bonacchi states, "certain ideas and ideals about heritage appropriated by nationalists have a tendency to recur in formulaic and almost cyclic ways, even though they might be differently framed depending on time, place and social context" (*Heritage and Nationalism* 35-36). Folklore and folk narratives – an important part of nations' cultural heritage - are also frequently appropriated and utilised by nationalists: scholarship on European folklore and fairy tale collections have outlined the importance of these collections to "the development of national identities" (4). In Europe, the folklore of Norway, Denmark, and Germany was instrumental in promoting a sense of national identity for Norwegian, Danish and German people. Folk and fairy tales were revived and used to "bind nations" together (Levy and Mendlesohn 80). The German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder "pushed for the deliberate recording of folklore as a means of validating German culture and documenting the spirit and traditions of the German people" (Knuth 6). In Germany, the work of the Grimm Brothers in preserving and publishing folk tales is of particular interest, as the brothers published modified collections of their tales for children. In 1812, the Grimm Brothers published their first volume of Hausmärchen – of folk and fairy tales - and in this volume, "the Grimms, consciously or unconsciously, stressed those peculiar traits which have since come to be known as important elements of the German national character" (Snyder 214). Although the Grimms' collection of tales contains "what may be called universal factors of personality, qualities which are typical of many peoples from all parts of the world", Snyder argues that the brothers' collections also display qualities specific to the German character and furthermore, qualities associated with modern nationalism: the *Kinder und Hausmärchen* illustrates "evidence of the existence of such relatively uniform and striking attitudes as respect for order, obedience, discipline, authoritarianism, militarism, glorification of violence, and fear of and contempt for the stranger" (215). In the twentieth century, the tales were used to instil in child readers the nationalistic values and ideologies of Nazi Germany, with a "large part of Nazi literature designed for children… merely a modernized version of the Grimms' tales, with emphasis upon the idealization of fighting, glorification of power, reckless courage… and militarism reinforced with mysticism” (221).

In the nineteenth century, other “nationalistically motivated folklore enthusiasts” throughout Europe followed the Grimm Brothers lead, “creating tale collections modelled after the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*” (Schacker 2-3). In Finland, Elias Lonnroth “re-worked ancient songs into a poem, the ‘Kalevala’” which became the Finnish national epic; in Denmark, Nikolai Grundtvig “used saga, epic, and ballad literature to stimulate a sense of Danish national identity” (Knuth 6). Ireland also saw the revival and use of folklore in the consolidation of Irish and British national identities: Thomas Crofton Croker published *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* in 1825[1]. In the late nineteenth century in Ireland, W.B. Yeats was reviving and publishing the nation’s folklore and fairy tales for consciously political purposes; perhaps in a more conscious manner than the Grimm Brothers in Germany. Yeats’s publication of *Fairy and Folk Tales of Ireland* in 1888 contributed to “the search for the hidden Ireland” that had already begun with the Irish literary revival (Kinahan 255). According to Yeats, “the recent revival of Irish literature” was “very largely a folk-lore revival, an awakening of interest in the wisdom and ways of the poor” (Kinahan 256). For Yeats, “reconnecting to the Irish past - through rehabilitation of native mythology – was the antidote to threats posed by British colonialism” (Schell 20). The nation’s folklore was also made accessible to young readers during the cultural revival of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Myths and legends of the Tuatha Dé Danann and warrior heroes such as Cúchulainn and Fionn MacCumhaill were rewritten and published for children. These stories and heroes were presented as “manifestations of national distinctiveness” (Ní Bhroin). It was hoped that a connection with the nation’s literary heritage, with its myths, folklore and folktales, would contribute to the formation of a national consciousness and bolster a sense of Irish national identity, in opposition to Britain’s imperialist culture (Russell 2).

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[1] The Brothers Grimm translated Croker’s collection into German in 1826 (*Britannica*).

British Folklore Context: Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs

In Britain, a similar revival of the nation’s literary heritage took place in the early 1900s, but as Schacker argues, “the efforts of the Grimms and their followers to locate, record, and publish nationally distinctive Märchen within their respective homelands were only partially mirrored in England” (3). The reduced effort in Britain was due to England’s position at the core of a global Empire: an insular form of English nationalism would clash with the ambitions of the Empire. While other European collectors were working on recording and preserving national tales in the early nineteenth century, England at this time had “no political need for a national collection of folk narratives” (Teverson “Identity, Nation” 12-13). However, towards the end of the nineteenth century, following the Boer war in South Africa and forming the Indian National Congress in 1885, “the Empire suddenly seemed vulnerable” (Teverson 13). Furthermore, Britain itself seemed less secure given the increased “expressions of ethnic and cultural nationalism” in Ireland and “the rediscovery of Celtic culture and history in Wales and Scotland” (13). Faced with potential crises of union and Empire, the English “began to ask themselves… who would they be without Britain and the Empire? Who exactly are the English?” (Teverson 14). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Rebecca Knuth argues that middle-class Britons began to reject imperialism, and looked inward, rather than out towards the Empire, for an affirmation of their national identity (Knuth 86-87). Use of the term “English” rather than

"British" during this period was seen to "reflect a shift in the national psyche, away from empire and expansion, towards introspection and the nation" (Bird *Class, Leisure* 5). In response to these questions of national identity, Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs published collections of folk tales and fairy tales, collections which either celebrated England's cultural heritage or in Lang's case, positioned England at the centre of an interconnected empire. While the work of a number of folklorists, including William Thoms, Sir Henry Cole, and Anna Eliza Bray is pertinent to a discussion on the establishment of a canon of folk and fairy tales, Lang and Jacobs were the two most prolific and influential figures of British folklore in the context of children's literature, as they both published extensively for young readers. Lang's first coloured fairy book, *The Blue Fairy Book*, was published in 1889 and Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales* was published in 1890. Teverson writes that these collections are "arguably, the two most influential and enduring contributions to the canon of fairy-tale collection to emerge in Britain in the nineteenth century" (7). In an article analysing the historical and political context in which Lang and Jacobs' fairy tale collections were published, Teverson writes that both folklorists were responding "to the same set of cultural and political problems that became manifest in Britain towards the end of the nineteenth century: the problem of the increasing fragility of the British Empire and of the simultaneous threat to Britain posed by Irish, Scottish and Welsh separatist movements" (7).

Unlike other British folklorists, and to the consternation of some folklorists, including Georg Laurence Gomme - the president of the Folk-Lore Society - Lang and Jacobs collected, edited, and published folk tales in collections intended and designed specifically for children. The academic folklore community criticised their decision to modify and publish folk and fairy tales in a format appealing to children, who considered the recording and collecting of folklore to be a scholarly endeavour unbefitting a children's book or a child audience. At the Folk-Lore Society's annual address in 1890, Gomme admonished Lang and Jacobs for devaluing fairy tales "by representing them to children" and disagreed with their methods of "disseminating the society's ideas to a new generation" (Ostry *Social* 141). In his preface to *The Yellow Fairy Book* (1894), Lang responded to Gomme's diatribe, defending his and Jacobs' work: he and "Mr. Jacobs…did not see any harm" in printing "so many fairy tales, with pictures" and publishing "them in red and blue covers" and "were ready to put themselves on their country, and be tried by a jury of children. And, indeed, they still see no harm in what they have done…" (ix).

Jacobs' interest in collecting and publishing fairy tale anthologies derived from a fear of the nation's folklore being superseded by the immensely popular European fairy tales. According to Ostry, the Grimm Brothers in Germany "inspired English writers to collect and tell their own fairy tales as a way of developing a cultural identity" (14). Jacobs' work was incited by the popularity of the Grimm Brothers' tales and he adopted their methods in establishing a collection of native folklore and fairy tales in Britain. While the Brothers' work served as inspiration for Jacobs, the German tales' popularity amongst English readers also caused "great consternation" for the British folklorist (Tatar 57). Edgar Taylor had translated and published the Grimms' tales in English in 1823, retitled as *German Popular Stories*, at an auspicious time when England's "children's market was expanding rapidly" (Tatar 57). In publishing collections of English fairy tales, Jacobs was attempting to counteract the proliferation and prominence of non-English folk and fairy tales – mainly German and French tales - within the English children's literary market. With the publication of *English Fairy Tales*, Jacobs made clear his nationalistic objectives in preserving and publishing national tales. In notes and references to *English Fairy Tales*, Jacobs worried about how much "the genius of Charles Perrault captivated English and Scottish children" (239): he worried that “Cinderella and Puss in Boots and their companions” seemed to be “supplanting native lore” by ousting national figures such as “Childe Rowland and Mr Fox and Catskin” (Tatar 57; Jacobs 239). Jacobs explains his main objective in the preface to English Fairy Tales: “to give a book of English fairy tales which English children will listen to” (x). Jacobs was intent on developing a canon of English tales and was determined to prove the existence of a wealth of native lore residing within rural England. Jacobs was fulfilling the wish expressed by William Thoms in 1846: Thoms hoped that “some ‘future Grimm would arise in England to reconstruct the ancient heathen mythology of Britain’ as the Grimms had done in Germany” (Ostry 14). In his preface to the succeeding volume, *More English Fairy Tales* (1894), Jacobs believes his objectives have been achieved, writing that his first volume has “established itself as a kind of English Grimm” (v).

Although entitled *English Fairy Tales* and *More English Fairy Tales*, both of Jacobs’ collections are an assortment of “nursery tales, cautionary tales, condensed chapbooks, tales of fairy abduction” and ten actual fairy tales (Teverson “Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs” 8). Another significant discrepancy between the title and the content of the collections relates to the nationality of the included tales: Jacobs’ collection of native English tales includes narratives from England, Scotland, Ireland, America, and Australia (Teverson 7). In the Notes and References section to *More English Fairy Tales*, Jacobs asserts that “the scope of the English folk-tale should include all those current among the folk in English, no matter where spoken” (236): he does not distinguish between individual nations, but rather gathers stories from England, Britain and the Empire and publishes them under the all-encompassing umbrella term of “English Fairy Tales”. In his preface to *Celtic Fairy Tales* (1892), Jacobs writes of the “difficulty” in collecting stories for his previous volume *English Fairy Tales* in comparison to the wealth of material available to him in compiling *Celtic Fairy*

Tales (vii). This difficulty explains Jacobs' need to expand the criteria to include English-language tales rather than focus exclusively on native English tales. Jacobs' acknowledgement of the scarcity of English folk and fairy tales contrasts with his earlier assertions about the wealth of native lore available in England. The statement also highlights the need for further work to be conducted if England is to have its own canon of domestic tales. Jacobs' collections are, as Teverson states, "a silent alignment of the other members of Britain and its settler colonies… behind England" for the purposes of creating a national fairy tale collection (7). Although Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales* and *More English Fairy Tales* appears antithetical to Lang's diverse, international collections of coloured fairy books, both British folklorists rely on an imperial approach to constructing collections of tales for English child readers.

Compared to the nationalistic use of folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends in Ireland and Germany, for example, Jacobs, Lang, and later Blyton worked beyond national borders, selecting narratives from other countries for inclusion in their collections. Jacobs' national collections of English fairy tales are in reality collections of tales from the British Empire: this approach aligns Jacobs' work with Lang's, who sought to "bring domesticated versions of the narratives of the world to Britain" (Teverson 7). Teverson argues that Lang responded to late nineteenth-century concerns for the strength and unity of the Empire by creating "a symbolic commonwealth of nations" through the publication of collections of folk and fairy tales from Britain, British colonies, and beyond the British Empire (16). In his preface to *The Orange Fairy Book* (1906), Lang lists "French, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, Gaelic, Icelandic, Cherokee, African, Indian, Australian, Slavonic, Eskimo" as some of the countries and cultures included in his collections, illustrating the broad geographical and cultural scope of his coloured fairy books (vi). Björn Sundmark writes that "with the expansion of the

British Empire, the demand for tales from different parts of the world grew enormously", and Lang's coloured fairy books helped to satiate the desire of British readers for tales from beyond Britain's borders (8). Lang did not present the tales he selected from within the Empire, and beyond the boundaries of the Empire, in their most accurate and authentic form, but rather edited and sanitised the tales in preparation for their presentation to British readers. In his preface to *The Brown Fairy Book*, published in 1904, Lang explains the editorial process of translating non-English tales: Leonora Blanche Alleyne (Lang's wife and a translator) "does not give them [the tales] exactly as they are told by all sorts of outlandish natives, but makes them up in the hope white people will like them, skipping the pieces which they will not like" (3). Lang continued to domesticate non-English tales in the early 1900s, with the final-coloured fairy book, *The Lilac Fairy Book*, published in 1910. In an article on Lang entitled "Collecting the Empire", Sara Hines argues that the coloured fairy books

> effectually allow British readers to collect, possess, and display the empire through ownership of 'outlandish native stories'. They may contain stories of other places, other peoples, and other cultures, but the stories have been collected, translated, and edited specifically so that white people will like them and are meant to be read from the safety and security of the British home. (54)

The stories, furthermore, are collected, translated, and modified within Britain, "the centre of Empire" (Teverson 16). British readers, therefore, possessed anthologies of non-national tales, or as Jennifer Schacker terms them "imported narrative traditions", in an Anglicised format (*National Dreams* 2). Translated and "transnationalized" popular imported tales, according to Schacker, "emerged as a form of cultural and historical adventure, a space in which to encounter and then reflect upon national identities and differences" (Schacker 2). In using the language of exploration, Schacker draws comparisons between this method of seeking out, finding, and collecting tales with the concept of imperial adventure: the folklorist adventures into unknown, savage and unfamiliar folklore of a particular culture, then chooses elements of the culture to bring home and present – in a sanitised format – to domestic audiences.

Regarding these folklorists' methodologies and ethos in their approach to adaptation, editorial liberties were taken by both Lang and Jacobs in the publication of their fairy tale anthologies for children. For both collectors, the British child's reading experience and their enjoyment of the stories took precedence over the textual preservation of the recorded tales. Fairy tales originating from outside England were Anglicised by both Lang and Jacobs for the benefit and convenience of English readers. In Jacobs' collection of European tales in 1916, entitled *Europa's Fairy Book*, he makes it clear in the Preface that he has altered the language of these stories so they are in the style of "the English story-teller", despite claiming his objective is to retell the stories "in such a way as to bring out the original form from which all the variants" derive and "restore the original substance of the European Folk-Tales" (*Europa's Fairy Tales* vii).

Blyton's Retelling of Folk and Fairy Tales: English, and Anglicised Tales

Blyton's work in publishing retellings of folk and fairy tales in *Sunny Stories* and creating original fairy stories is a continuation and an expansion of the work conducted by Lang and Jacobs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Blyton follows Lang and Jacobs's approach to collection and modification, choosing tales from outside England and Britain for inclusion in *Sunny Stories*. Although her collection of national and international tales is eclectic, Blyton ensures that the admirable values and virtuous natures of the protagonists of English tales are both emphasised and celebrated. This celebration of Englishness through the retelling of folk narratives mirrors Jacobs' initial nationalistic ambitions for his publication of *English Fairy Tales* and *More English Fairy Tales*. One of the ways in which Blyton achieves this celebration of Englishness is by elevating the protagonists of English and British-origin tales above the heroes and protagonists of other nations' folk narratives.

The first issue of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* was published in 1926, during the interwar period. Knuth argues that during the interwar period, "an inward-looking form of Englishness prevailed", which contrasted against the "imperialistic" mindset of pre-World War One Britain (Knuth 139). According to Knuth, the interwar period saw a similar rejection of Britain's "imperialistic" mindset that Britons experienced earlier in the century following the defeat of British troops in South Africa during the Boer War (1899-1902). While Blyton's retellings of folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends elevate and praise the values of Englishness, the retellings are by no means a rejection of the Empire or of British imperialism. The amalgamation of English and non-English tales in *Sunny Stories* is an early reflection of Blyton's support for the objectives and ideologies of Britain's imperial mission. Other nations and cultures' tales can be 'improved' through modification, as other, non-English characters in Blyton's later adventure texts are 'improved' through their interaction with English protagonists.

Significantly, each of the stories in the first volume of Sunny Stories also appears in Lang's *The Blue Fairy Book*, the first of the coloured fairy books series. Furthermore, one of the two literary texts retold by Blyton in *Sunny Stories* is Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

A “bowdlerised version” of *Gulliver’s Travels* is included in Lang’s *Blue Fairy Book*, for which Lang received criticism for having a literary text amongst a collection of “European and Oriental fairy tales” (Sundmark 4). This close mirroring of tale selection illustrates that Lang’s coloured fairy books were influential sources for Blyton’s work. The English tale “Dick Whittington” (which is generally referred to as a folk tale or a fairy tale, but is in fact a legend, as the story is based on a real person) appears in the first volume, along with “Goldenhair and the Three Bears”, which, at Blyton’s time of writing, was attributed to the English poet Robert Southey[2]. Alongside the English tales are retellings of “Cinderella”, “The Sleeping Beauty”, and “Aladdin”. While there are many similarities in Lang, Jacobs and Blyton’s approach to adaptations and storytelling - particularly the prioritisation of the English child reader over textual authenticity - an analysis of the differences between the authors’ approaches reveals a reduced level of concern on Blyton’s part for the cultural and national origins of the retold tales, and a focus on child readers younger than those targeted by either Lang or Jacobs. Although presented as collections of folk and fairy tales for children, Lang and Jacobs’ books are inaccessible to young child readers due to the density of the text and the frequent complexity of the language. Blyton’s *Sunny Stories* are simplified versions of folk narratives retold in a language style that is accessible to her young readership. Therefore, although Blyton draws inspiration from Lang’s selection of texts, the two authors’ approach to adaptations differs considerably: Lang’s style is ornate, with the stories told in great detail and in an often complex style accessible only to readers of advanced reading ability. In contrast, Blyton’s retellings are written in a much simpler style due to the younger demographic of the magazine. The distinct differences in style and approach to retellings is illustrated in a comparison of both versions of *Gulliver's Travels*. In the following passage, Lang describes the charge brought against Gulliver for refusing to obey the Emperor of Liliput:

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[2] An earlier version of the story was discovered in 1951 in the Toronto Public Library, written by Eleanor Mure, which complicated the tale’s perceived English origins.

> First, that you, having brought the imperial fleet of Blefuscu into the royal port, were commanded by his Majesty to seize all the other ships, and put to death all the Bigendian exiles, and also all the people of the empire who would not immediately consent to break their eggs at the smaller end. And that, like a false traitor to his Most Serene Majesty, you excused yourself from the service on pretence of unwillingness to force the consciences and destroy the liberties and lives of an innocent people. (*Blue Fairy Book*)

Whereas in Blyton's version, the charge against Gulliver is communicated as follows:

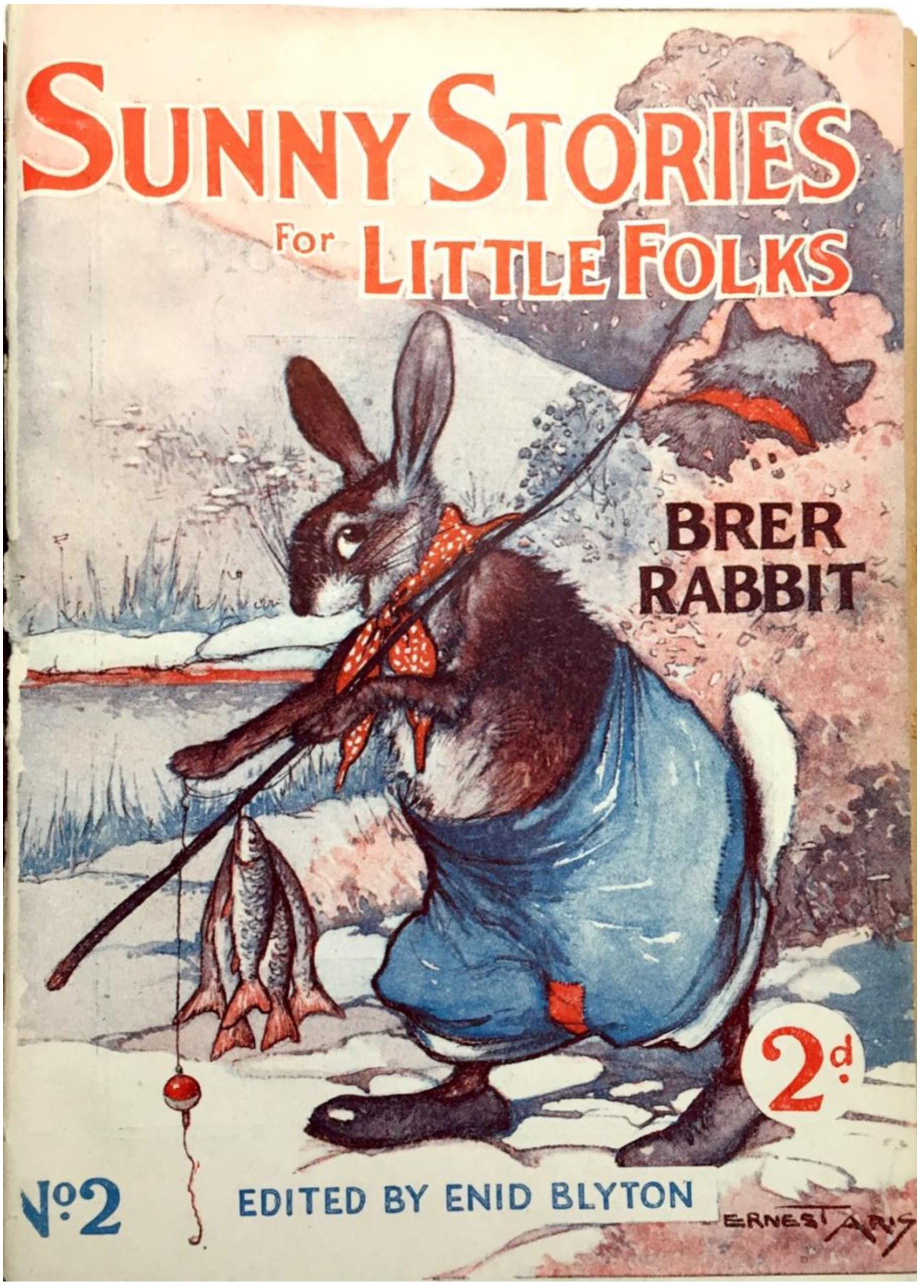
> First of all it says that you are a traitor to the King… The second charge is that you have disobeyed the King… The third charge is that you are going to Blefusen. (V 4, 25-26)

Lang's version excludes younger readers, while Blyton's simplified version increases the accessibility of Swift's adventure story. The appeal of Swift's adventure tale to Blyton is clear. The story is one of imperial adventure, where the protagonist explores and discovers strange lands and extraordinary inhabitants. Blyton would use these tropes of imperial adventure in writing the *Adventure* series, the *Secret* series, and in writing the fantasy series *The Faraway Tree*.

Both Jacobs and Lang modified the language of their selected stories, with Jacobs explaining in his preface to *Europa's Fairy Book* (1916) that the "the manner in which I have told” the European folk and fairy stories of the collection is “that of the English story-teller” (viii). Blyton, likewise, Anglicises the language, dialogue, and narrative voice of non-English tales. In Anglicising the language, the story is re-located to an English setting. For example, Blyton retells the Grimm Brothers’ “Rumpelstiltskin”, replacing the guessed names of the character from “Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar” (*Household Stories*) to familiar English names: Arthur, John, Peter, Paul, William and James (V 7, 31). Blyton, likewise, enhances the Englishness of “Cinderella”, transforming the tale into a contemporary English story. An Anglicised retelling of “The Cinder-Maid” is included in Jacobs’ *Europa’s Fairy Book*, with Jacobs emphasising the folk origins of the tale: “The noble's daughter was set to do all the drudgery of the house, to attend the kitchen fire, and had naught to sleep on but the heap of cinders raked out in the scullery; and that is why they called her Cinder-Maid” (3). A decade later, Blyton published “Cinderella” in the first volume of *Sunny Stories*. Blyton, like Jacobs, Anglicises the language but uses a contemporary English language style for the dialogue, resulting in a modern Anglicised version of a classic tale. When Cinderella is visited by her fairy godmother and asked if she would like to attend the ball, Cinderella replies “’Oh, godmother! I should simply love it!... But how can I? I’ve no dress, no carriage, no nothing!’ ‘Fiddlesticks!’ said the godmother. ‘You can have anything you want!’” (13). “Cinderella” is reframed as a modern English story, and with “The Sleeping Beauty”, we again see Blyton’s revision of a classic European fairy tale for a contemporary English readership. In her retelling of “The Sleeping Beauty”, published in the first volume of *Sunny Stories*, Blyton again appropriates a classic fairy tale for a modern, twentieth-century English child audience. Through modernising the tone and language of the tale, Blyton makes the protagonists more familiar to her young *Sunny Stories* readers. Blyton updates the archaic tale, inserting references to birthday parties and familiar childhood games: Sleeping Beauty "had a great party and invited all her friends", and it is while "playing hide-and-seek" that the protagonist finds the fateful spinning wheel (V 1, 26). Lang's version of "The Sleeping Beauty" in *The Blue Fairy Book* is retold using formal language, which contributes to the tale's antiquated tone. Lang's retelling begins: "There were formerly a king and a queen, who were so sorry that they had no children; so sorry that it cannot be expressed. They went to all the waters in the world; vows, pilgrimages, all ways were tried, and all to no purpose" (*Blue* 54). In contrast, Blyton's simplification of the language and modernisation of the content combines with an Anglicisation of the narrative voice and dialogue to transform the tale into a contemporary English retelling.

Blyton's version of Goldilocks, titled "Goldenhair and the Three Bears" shares the conversational, English oral storytelling style of Jacobs' "The Story of the Three Bears". Published in *English Fairy Tales* (1890) Jacobs' version uses the Scottish word "wee" to mean "small", but as Jacobs explains in the Preface, tales found in "Lowland Scotch" are included in the collection as he considers "Lowland Scotch… as simply a dialect of English" (*English* ix). The dialogue and narrative voice, therefore, are a combination of English and Scottish idioms, words, and phrases: "Somebody has been at my porridge, and has eaten it all up!' said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice" (96). The dialogue of Blyton's "Goldenhair" is distinctly English, with Blyton's Goldenhair speaking in a contemporary, young English child's conversational style: "Daddy, what fun! Do let me go and call on them!" (V 1, 5). Blyton modernises the tale, retelling the story as a contemporary English narrative. Furthermore, Blyton personalises the dialogue of the tale: she uses italics, capital letters, and repetition ("never, *never*, NEVER") in "Goldenhair", which are distinctive characteristics of Blyton's writing style.

Blyton’s combined method of appropriating, Anglicising, and modernising folk and fairy tales is most clearly seen in her retellings of the “Brer Rabbit” tales. Blyton fully assimilates the tales of “Brer Rabbit” into her canon of domestic and domesticated English folk narratives. The African tales are removed from their original geographical and cultural context and reframed as English. Consequently, the cleverness and quick-thinking of the eponymous protagonist are now qualities exhibited by an English protagonist. “Brer Rabbit” first makes an appearance in the second volume of *Sunny Stories,* published in 1926. Originating in African folklore and later transmitted by African slaves to the New World, the tales were popularised in the US by Joel Chandler Harris. Harris’ tales, according to Rudyard Kipling, “ran like wild fire” through English public schools (Brasch 82). Harris’ versions of the tales are written in the dialect of the Deep South, in an African-American vernacular. In Blyton’s rewriting of the tales, the dialect is completely omitted, with the narrative instead retold in British-English. Furthermore, the Brer Rabbit tales are published in *Sunny Stories* without acknowledgement or explanation of their national or cultural roots. The following is an excerpt from Harris’ “The Wonderful Tar Baby Story”, where Brer Rabbit is tricked by Brer Fox with a creature made of “turkentime” (turpentine): “I'm gwine ter larn you how ter talk ter 'spectubble folks ef hit's de las' ack,’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. ‘Ef you don't take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I'm gwine ter bus' you wide open, sezee” (*Uncle Remus*). In Blyton’s “The Wonderful Tar-Baby”, Brer Rabbit tells the “turpentine” creatures: “I’ll soon teach you how to speak to polite folk like me!... If you don’t take off that old hat of yours and say ‘How do you do?’ like a gentleman, I’ll hit you” (V 2, 7).


SUNNY STORIES
For LITTLE FOLKS
BRER RABBIT
2d
No 2
EDITED BY ENID BLYTON
ERNEST ARIS

First Appearance of Brer Rabbit in Sunny Stories for Little Folks, 1926

Blyton also retells Harris' "Mr Wolf Makes a Failure" with similar, substantial changes to the dialect in which the characters speak. Brer Rabbit, trying to trick Brer Fox, says:

“’Nobody 'roun' fer ter look atter Brer Fox - not even Brer Tukkey Buzzard ain't come ter de funer'l,’ sezee. ‘I hope Brer Fox ain't dead, but I speck he is’” (35). The passage is rewritten by Blyton to present the speaker as English: “Dear, dear, dear…here’s a to-do, to be sure! Nobody here to look after old Brer Fox… I wish Brer Fox wasn’t dead, but I’m very much afraid he is!” (V 2, 24-26). The African American folktales are recontextualised and remodelled as English. Blyton continued to find success with these “cleaned up” versions of the folktales throughout her career, publishing eight *Brer Rabbit* books between 1948 and 1958. After 1927, Blyton no longer published retellings of folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends in *Sunny Stories*, but she continued to adapt and publish tales of Brer Rabbit in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* and *Enid Blyton’s Magazine*, with 30 volumes of the magazine featuring the eponymous character on the title page between 1926 and 1952. Through continuing to publish “Brer Rabbit” tales in the magazine, Blyton assimilated the African origin tales into her canon of English stories.

Blyton’s Anglicisation and appropriation of the “Brer Rabbit” tales is consolidated by the absence of information in the magazine relating to the tales’ nationality and the tales’ folklore origins. Lang and Jacobs include the source material for individual stories, stating the nation and culture from which the story originates. Under each adaptation of folk and fairy tales, and in the prefaces of each of his coloured fairy books, Lang provides information on the countries and cultures from which the tales originated. Compared to Lang and Jacobs’ collections of fairy tales, Blyton exhibits far less concern for the cultural and national origins of tales retold in *Sunny Stories*. With the volume of *Sunny Stories* entitled “Tales from Other Lands”, Blyton provides this national and cultural information. The majority of the tales Blyton retells are published without details regarding the source. This omission is possibly due to the young demographic of Blyton’s *Sunny Stories* compared to Lang’s coloured fairy books and Jacobs' collections of fairy tales. Furthermore, by omitting geographical, national, and cultural information, Blyton enhances her chosen tales' non-specificity. A lack of specificity regarding location and time is a common characteristic of the folk and fairy tale tradition. Due to the lack of a specific geographical location and set time period, folk and fairy tales qualify as utopias, as the original meaning of utopia is "no place"; a place of no geographical location or specific time period (Ostry 5). Ostry writes that "Faery" is "strongly associated with utopia, the non-existent good place" and the two most common phrases found in fairy tales – "once upon a time" and "happily ever after" – both "show utopian qualities" as they convey both a vagueness of location and time. While the omittance of background information increases the texts' universality, it also increases the likelihood of tales being interpreted as Blyton's own creations, especially as Blyton did intersperse retellings of folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends with her own original stories. Failing to include source information could be interpreted as conforming to a convention of folk and fairy tales, but in Blyton's case, her failure to acknowledge the source material is further evidence of Blyton's imperial approach to the assimilation of non-English tales into a collection of English folk narratives.

In addition to enhancing the Englishness of tales through Anglicising the language, Blyton adapts and modifies the content of tales to reflect English values and morals more strongly. In a letter to a librarian in 1949, Blyton reflected on the responsibilities bestowed upon writers of children's books: "I am not out only to tell stories…I am out to inculcate decent thinking, loyalty, honesty, kindliness, and all the things that children should be taught" (Stoney 195). The qualities and characteristics Blyton deems most valuable do not merely "reflect her own preferences, values, or inclinations" but are instead "part of a coherent construction that comprises various elements of the ideology of an entire nation"

(Singh 207). These virtues and values are clearly seen in the celebrated figures of Britain and England's cultural heritage, particularly Arthur, Arthurian knights, and Robin Hood. In her analysis of Blyton's fiction in *Goodly is our Heritage*, Singh writes of the "strong sense of moral rectitude" that "the British claimed as their birthright" and how this sense of moral superiority is clearly present in Blyton's created protagonists (240). Blyton's retold English and non-English folk and fairy tales exhibit a strong sense of moral rightness and an eagerness to improve others' moral characters. Furthermore, the folk and fairy tales that fail to impart the morals and values Blyton considers important are changed to conform to Blyton's English value system.

Blyton's concern for the moral state of her readers resulted in a high percentage of her published stories addressing themes of redemption and reform, concluding with the communication of a clear moral lesson. "Goldenhair and the Three Bears" and "Cinderella" are revised to align with Blyton's writing ethos: "Goldenhair" is a tale of disobedience with a clear moral lesson about the consequences of defying rules and warnings. With these stories, Blyton sought to improve the moral character of readers, and she rewrote stories to eradicate any possible ambiguity concerning the moral messages communicated in tales. The stepsisters' moral improvement is prioritised in Blyton's retelling of "Cinderella", with the sisters receiving the following advice from the fairy godmother: "Be good and kind… then you will lose those ugly faces and be sweet-looking instead! (V 1, 17). Blyton's version of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" resembles Flora Annie Steel's 1918 version of "The Story of the Three Bears" in that the behaviour and insubordination of the protagonist is a focal point of the tale: "If she had been a well-brought-up little girl she would have waited till the Bears came home" (*English Fairy Tales*). Steel's version ends ambiguously, with Goldilocks' fate unknown to the narrator: "whether she broke her neck in the fall, or ran into the wood and was lost there, or found her way out of the wood and got whipped for being a bad girl and playing truant, no one can say" (*English Fairy Tales*). The ending resembles both Jacobs and Lang's conclusions to the tale, but in both of their versions, the protagonist is a "little old woman", not a little girl:

> Out the little old Woman jumped; and whether she broke her neck in the fall; or ran into the wood and was lost there; or found her way out of the wood, and was taken up by the constable and sent to the House of Correction for a vagrant as she was, I cannot tell. (Jacobs *English Fairy Tales*)

For "Goldenhair and the Three Bears", Blyton provides a clear, conclusive ending that functions to strengthen the moral message of the cautionary tale. Goldenhair's father and mother "whipped her and sent her to bed for the rest of the day just to make sure" that she is "never… disobedient again" (11). Blyton's proclivity for narrator interjections that reaffirm the story's moral message and highlight an individual's moral improvement is evident in this first volume of *Sunny Stories*. Blyton's version of "Goldenhair" concludes with the protagonist telling her parents that she will "never, *never*, NEVER be disobedient again!" (11), and the narrator informing the reader "you'll be glad to hear she never was disobedient again, but grew up into quite a nice little girl" (11).

With "Goldenhair" and "Cinderella", Blyton places greater emphasis on the moral lessons of the stories. With other retellings, it becomes necessary for Blyton to alter the trajectory of the storyline or alter the conclusion in order for the tale to impart the lesson she wishes to convey. The endings of the Russian tale of Baba-Yaga and Hans Christian Andersen's literary fairy tale "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" are changed to emphasise the importance of forgiveness and to celebrate heroism positively. The story of the Baba-Yaga, titled “Little Marya and the Witch”, is published in a volume of *Sunny Stories* dedicated to non-English folk and fairy tales. Therefore, the tale’s country of origin is provided: Blyton identifies it as a “Russian tale” (V 14). W.R.S Ralston translated the story of Baba-Yaga and other Russian tales into English in the mid-nineteenth century and published the collection in *Russian Fairy Tales*. Lang published a tale about the Baba Yaga in *The Red Fairy Book* (1890) and Lang credits Ralston as the text’s source. Blyton chooses a different tale about the Russian witch to retell, but Ralston’s *Russian Fairy Tales* is the presumed source text. The story's events are initiated by the character of the stepmother, who is selfish and jealous and orders her young stepdaughter to visit the dangerous witch in the forest, the Baba Yaga. Ralston’s version of “The Baba Yaga” ends with severe punishment: the young protagonist’s father discovers his wife’s evil deed, and “he became wroth with his wife, and shot her” (Ralston 152). The tale promotes punishment and consequence over forgiveness or reformation. However, in Blyton’s version, the ending is altered to allow for character remorse and to promote the possibility of moral improvement: the woodman who rescues Marya admonishes the stepmother, who finally repents and admits “I have done wrong” (V 14, 19). The stepmother asks her husband and Marya to “forgive me” and promises that she “will be good to you now” (19). As with “Goldenhair and the Three Bears”, the story culminates in a confession of wrongdoing and a promise to behave differently. With “Goldenhair”, “Cinderella”, and “Little Marya”, Blyton chooses endings that avoid severe punishment but instead encourage forgiveness and promote the notion of reformation.

The fate of villains is overturned in Blyton’s retellings of other nations’ folk and fairy tales, signifying a reluctance on Blyton’s part to present death as a justified punishment for wickedness and wrongdoing. As with the Russian tale of the Baba-Yaga, Blyton’s version of the German fairy tale “Rumpelstiltskin” is modified to avoid a gruesome, violent ending. The

Grimm Brothers' version ends with the death of Rumpelstiltskin: he "stamped with his right foot so hard that it went into the ground above his knee; then he seized his left foot with both his hands in such a fury that he split in two" (Grimm *Household Stories*). Blyton's retelling enhances the playfulness of the tale, and she remains conscious of the young age of the intended reader throughout the retelling. Rather than end with death, Blyton creates a more playful ending, with Rumpelstiltskin twirling "his tail so hard that it came right off and lay on the floor. He picked it up, popped in into the basket, and jumped clean out of the window" (V 7, 32). Blyton ends the tale with the narrator implying the real existence of the story's characters: a type of conclusion frequently used by Blyton in her own original writing. Here, the narrator emphasises the humour of the tale by telling the reader: "it is said that he still goes round trying to find someone to sew his tail on again for him!" (32). As stated previously, Blyton changes the names mentioned in the tale from "Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar" (Grimm *Household Stories*) to familiar English names: Arthur, John, Peter, Paul, William and James (V 7, 31). Blyton transforms the tale from a dark German fairy tale into a light-hearted, Anglicised, humorous tale with an ending Blyton considers more appropriate for child readers.

In Blyton's version of Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" (1838), the fate of the heroic protagonist is rewritten to avoid a mournful celebration of a brave soldier's death. Andrew Lang published a version of the fairy tale in *The Yellow Fairy Book* (1894) with minor changes to the text. One noteworthy edit in Lang's version is the enhanced militaristic tone of the tin soldier's chant, in which the soldier's fearlessness is emphasised. The original chant in Andersen's version is: "Wild adventure, mortal danger, Be thy portion, valiant stranger" (*Hans Andersen's* 75) and this is modified to "Forward, forward, soldier bold! Death's before thee, grim and cold!" (*Yellow* 311). Lang's version follows the narrative trajectory of Andersen’s original, with the soldier falling into a dangerous adventure and eventually returning home to his owner and to the “pretty dancing maiden” who the soldier wishes to make his wife (Andersen 76). In Andersen’s tale and Lang’s retelling, the story ends tragically, with the soldier thrown into a fire by one of the children in the nursery. As the tin soldier dies, he remains courageous and steadfast: he “stood firm as ever, with his bayonet on his shoulder” (Andersen 77). While the soldier dies, a gust of wind catches the “Dancer”, and “she flew straight into the stove to the Tin Soldier, flashed up in a flame, and was gone!” (77).

Andersen’s original tale celebrates military virtues and the unwavering bravery of soldiers. Singh identifies military virtues as fundamental to English national character, which comprises “courage, cooperation, discipline, a strong sense of duty, endurance, responsibility, resolve, resourcefulness” (203). For Blyton, the tin soldier's courage, resolve, and steadfastness are highly admirable qualities. Her version of the tale retains Andersen’s admiration for calmness and courage in the face of mortal danger:

> But at that very moment he was snapped up by a great fish! Oh, how dark it was in that fish’s body! And so narrow too. But the brave tin soldier lay unmoved there, never showing for a moment how very much afraid he was. (31)

The behaviour of the tin soldier is echoed in portrayals of other protagonists of Blyton’s own work, including in the wartime story *The Adventurous Four* where a protagonist’s refusal to show fear in the face of danger is celebrated and admired by other characters and by the narrator of the text. However, Blyton’s fearless, usually male, protagonists are typically rewarded and praised for their bravery. Blyton decides to rewrite the Danish literary fairy tale, partly because she is conscious of the young age of her *Sunny Stories*' readers which makes Blyton reluctant to end the tale with the protagonist's death. Blyton's decision to rewrite the tale is also partly motivated by the historical context: "The Hardy Tin Soldier" is retold in *Sunny Stories* in 1927, less than a decade after the end of the First World War. The notion of a soldier returning home, marrying the woman he loves and living happily ever after is an understandable preferable conclusion to an English, post-Great War retelling of Andersen's tale. Blyton's ending sees the stoicism and bravery of the toy soldier rewarded, rather than mournfully admired in Andersen's original. When the tin soldier arrives home in Blyton's version, the child owner rewards him for being "a real hero" by placing him "in the castle with the little dancing doll!" (V 23, 32). The heroism exhibited by the soldier, a militaristic value associated with English national character, cannot be undermined by the toy soldier's death. Instead of the death of both toys, the narrator concludes the tale by telling the reader that "I shouldn't be a bit surprised to hear that all the toys are bidden to go to a wedding soon, for if ever a pair were suited to each other I am sure it is the little lady and the brave tin soldier!" (32). Blyton modifies Andersen's tragic ending to fit a more conventional fairy tale form, with the hero rewarded for his actions and the tale concluding with a marriage. Blyton's alternative ending positively reinforces Andersen's original tale's military virtues, transforming the tale's conclusion from a mournful lament for a soldier's death to a positive celebration of the English qualities of 'pluckiness' and resilience.

In her autobiography, Blyton describes her dislike of the German cautionary tales of Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter* (1845), a book with descriptions of graphic punishments which she banished from her bookshelf. Descriptions of violence and death are preserved, however, in Blyton's retellings of Middle Eastern folk and fairy tales. The decision to preserve death and violence serves to distinguish these folk and fairy tales from the sanitised, European tales retold in *Sunny Stories*. The non-English, non-European tales are Othered through the retention of graphic descriptions of violent acts, which mirrors the use of violence in Blyton's later adventure text, *The River of Adventure*, to distinguish between the 'civilised' English protagonists and the cruelty of the text's Middle Eastern characters. The first volume of the magazine includes a retelling of "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp", a tale which is also included in Lang's *Blue Fairy Book*. In Blyton's Anglicised version, the characters speak in an English vernacular, with phrases such as "Good-day to you, dear nephew!" (18) and "This is very queer" (19) closely mirroring the English style of dialogue found in Anglicised retellings of the "Brer Rabbit" tales (V 1). In addition to this retelling of "Aladdin", two volumes of *Sunny Stories* are dedicated to retellings of Middle Eastern folk tales from *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*: "Sindbad the Sailor" and "The King of the Black Isles". "Sindbad the Sailor" is a series of voyages recounting the adventures and discoveries of the restless and intrepid Sindbad. On Sindbad's third voyage, he encounters a cannibalistic giant who selects one of Sindbad's crewmates to kill and eat each day. The giant chooses the captain of Sinbad's ship for a meal. Blyton describes the killing of the captain as follows: he "stuck a spit through him, lighted a fire, and roasted him" (21). To prevent the monster from killing the remaining crew, the men take burning hot spits and "thrust them all into his one eye at once" (V 22, 5). In the fourth voyage recounted in *Sunny Stories* of Sindbad's adventures, Sindbad is forced once again to commit murder, this time killing an old man who refuses to relinquish his grasp on Sindbad: "I killed the creature with a stone, and left him there" (V 5, 31). The retention of violence and death scenes in "Sindbad the Sailor" and "The King of the Black Isles" is unusual for Blyton, as the source text, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* is a collection of folk tales. Generally, Blyton removes or modifies scenes of violence and death in her retellings of folk and fairy tales.

Therefore, although the language is modified to sound more English, Blyton ensures a distinction remains between English/European tales and the folk and fairy tales of the Middle East through the preservation of violence.

The chapter has focused so far on Blyton's adaptations of folk tales and fairy tales which mostly originate from outside of England and outside of Britain. Retellings of myths and legends were also published in *Sunny Stories*, and legendary tales provided Blyton with far more national material to work with than folk and fairy tales. Blyton published collections of myths and legends in books as well as dedicating volumes of *Sunny Stories* to national and international legends and myths. These collections of myths and legends include *The Knights of the Round Table, Tales of Robin Hood*, and *Tales of Ancient Greece*, which were all published in 1930. Many of the tales retold in these books were adapted and published earlier, in Blyton's magazine *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*. The earlier magazine versions are focused on in this chapter because national and international tales are juxtaposed in the magazine. This juxtaposition results in Blyton's enhancement of the good, heroic, moral natures of English knights and legends: the protagonists are more brutal, more violent in the 1930 published collections. In the magazine, retellings of English legends are published alongside retellings of legends and myths from other nations and other cultures: Blyton was careful to ensure that the English protagonists were clearly elevated above their non-English legendary counterparts.

Blyton does not hesitate to modify and Anglicise other nations and other cultures' folk and fairy tales, but demonstrates a reluctance to alter the myths and legends of other cultures. For example, Blyton dedicated several volumes of *Sunny Stories* to adaptations and retellings of stories from Greek and Norse mythology. The tale of King Midas; Thor in

Giantland; Perseus and the Gorgon; and Jason, the acquirer of the golden fleece, are adapted and simplified for Blyton's young readership. According to Stoney, Blyton read and loved mythology as a child, particularly Norse mythology (*Enid Blyton* 17). Blyton preserves the original names of Gods, Kings, and characters within these tales despite their complex spelling and pronunciation. For example, in "Jason and the Golden Fleece", Blyton preserves the original spellings of "Æson" and "Æsculapius" (V 27, 5), rather than simplify or Anglicise the names as she did with the names in the German fairy tale "Rumpelstiltskin". In contrast to the changed ending of Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier", Blyton does not alter the fate of Phaeton in "The Boy Who Tried to Drive the Sun-Horses". Phaeton is the son of the Greek sun-god, Apollo, who dies after he requests to drive the chariot of sun-horses for one day. The child of the sun-god is drowned in the original story and is not rescued in Blyton's retelling, unlike the brave tin soldier in Blyton's version of Andersen's fairy tale. As with names and the deaths of protagonists, the violence of the original stories also goes untouched: Perseus in "Perseus, the Gorgon Slayer" is celebrated as a hero after he "quickly and silently cut off the head of… the Medusa" (V 22, 14).

Likewise, Blyton does not attempt to Anglicise the language, dialogue, or content of the story of Hiawatha, the fifteenth century legendary chief of the Native American Onondaga tribe. Blyton's tale "Hiawatha, the Red Indian" is retold from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855). Similarly with Greek names and words, Blyton retains placenames, words and phrases from Longfellow's version, such as "Minne-wawa", "Mudway-aushka" and "Gitche Gumee", rather than Anglicising the non-English words and names (V 8, 5). There are similarities in the portrayal of Hiawatha and the English legends of Robin Hood and the Arthurian knights: the heroes of each of these legends and myths represent moral goodness, and the triumph of good over evil. However, Blyton describes

Hiawatha's chant as "his wild war-song" (27), which mimics Blyton's later description of the African child Mafumu performing "a kind of war-dance" in *The Secret Mountain* (137). The description of Hiawatha as "wild" distinguishes him from the reserved and dignified protagonists and knights of Blyton's retellings of Robin Hood and King Arthur. Blyton's reluctance to edit other nations' myths and legends is arguably due to the relationship between myths, legends, and historical facts and religious beliefs. Legends are told as a form of history, which is true of the Native American legend of Hiawatha (Thompson "Indian Legend" 128). Due to the historical component of stories such as "Hiawatha" and the religious elements of Greek and Norse mythology, Blyton adopts a neutral, detached tone in her retellings of these types of folk narratives illustrating a respect for other nations' legends and mythological heritage.

To a far greater extent than the protagonists of non-English tales, the heroes and knights of Blyton's retold English myths and legends are celebrated for their inherently virtuous natures and innate moral goodness. While Blyton demonstrates respect for other nations' legendary heroes and mythological figures, they are surpassed by English and British legends' intelligence, compassion, and moral virtuousness. Bonacchi, in *Heritage and Nationalism*, discusses the use of heroes in several nationalistic movements in Europe and the United States, including the reference of ancient Roman and medieval heroes in the discourse of Britain's Brexit campaigns. "Heroism", Bonacchi states, "constitutes an important component of nationalism: it acts simultaneously to drive collective aspirations and actions and to stimulate an individualistic desire for eternal consecration in a collective memory" (36). Furthermore, "In so doing, it expresses a shared heritage and consciousness, as well as the celebration of singularity" (38). Blyton adapted tales of heroes, including Robin Hood, King Arthur, and Saint George of Merry England, to celebrate England and Britain’s rich cultural heritage and to provide models of exemplary Englishness for her young readers to admire and emulate.

Blyton’s retelling of British legends recalls other nations’ celebration of legendary and mythical characters to promote a sense of national identity: in Ireland, for example, Standish O’Grady (1846-1928), retold adventure stories based around the legend of Cú Chulainn, the warrior hero. O’Grady also published retellings of Fionn Mac Cumhaill’s adventures with the Fianna, an elite, powerful “band of warrior hunters who protected Ireland from foreign invaders” (Ní Bhroin 13). In Blyton’s original stories of adventure, the young male protagonists emulate the characteristics and values exhibited by the knights and heroes of England’s cultural and literary heritage. Thematically, the tales share similarities with Blyton’s mid-twentieth century *Adventure* series and wartime stories, with the battle between moral goodness and evil functioning as the central source of conflict and the subsequent punishment and defeat of villainy acting as the objective of the stories’ protagonists. Therefore, the retellings contained in *Sunny Stories* are precursors to Blyton’s own patriotic, nationalistic tales of adventure written for Second World War and post-war English child readers, such as *The Adventurous Four* (1940-1941) and *The Children of Kidillin* (1940).

Despite the tales being of Welsh origin, the Arthurian legends were adopted into the canon of English national mythology in the nineteenth century, with the Victorians claiming King Arthur as “a national hero” (Knuth 15). Victorian literature celebrated Arthur as the embodiment of English virtues and values: “he was merciful, brave, pure, humble, loyal, and true” (Knuth 15). In Barczewski’s study of myth and national identity, she examines this appropriation of King Arthur into English mythology and includes the description of *Le Morte d’Arthur* from the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as “truly *the* epic of the English mind as the *Iliad* is the epic of the Greek mind" (114). Malory's work, Barczewski states, "was regarded as being a specifically *English* cultural product", as opposed to a product belonging to a broader British cultural heritage (114). According to Barbara Tepa Lupack, there was an "explosion" of adaptations of Malory's *King Arthur* for young readers during the nineteenth century. Arthurian tales continued to be reworked, rewritten and published for children throughout the twentieth-century: the tales were thought to appeal especially to boys and came to be categorised specifically as boys' literature (*Adapting* 12). Blyton's book *The Knights of the Round Table* (1930) and the *Sunny Stories* volumes "The Kitchen-Boy Knight" and "The Adventures of Prince Geraint" are twentieth-century contributions to the Arthurian genre tradition, published to appeal to both boys and girls.

In Blyton's version of the Arthurian legend of Gareth and Lynette, the inclusion of the Welsh placename "Caerlon" – a placename which is not included in Andrew Lang's adaptation – illustrates an awareness of the tales' Welsh origin (V 15, 15). However, Blyton's reliance on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* as a source text for her Arthurian adaptations grounds her retellings in the English tradition. Furthermore, Blyton's "The Kitchen-Boy Knight", which tells the story of Gareth at King Arthur's court, is followed shortly afterwards with "Una and the Red Cross Knight", a simplified version of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. According to Knuth, Spenser "celebrated Queen Elizabeth I" in *The Faerie Queene* "associating her dynasty, the Tudors with Arthurian virtues" (15). Blyton's retelling of *The Faerie Queene* primarily focuses on Una and Sir Gareth, but Arthur appears in the story and is described as the "best beloved of all the Fairy Queen's court" (V 17, 26). The character of Arthur connects the tale of "The Kitchen Boy-Knight" with Blyton's retelling of the *Faerie Queene*, entitled "Una and the Red Cross Knight". And, as "Una and the Red Cross Knight" is specifically about England and Saint George, this connection through Arthur consequently enhances the Englishness of Blyton's Arthurian legends.

In his analysis of Blyton's version of Prince Geraint and Enid, Timothy Lustig is unsure which version of *Morte d'Arthur* Blyton used in writing *The Knights of the Round Table*: "it is possible she used the two-volume edition issued as part of J. M. Dent's Everyman's Library series in 1906" (90). According to Beverly Taylor and Elisabeth Brewer, "this was the most widely known version of the *Morte* in the early decades of the twentieth century" (90). Lupack praises Blyton's *The Knights of the Round Table* as a "competent retelling, with a characteristic authoritarianism and relish for punishments" (*Adapting* 26). While the violence of the source texts is sanitised in the versions published in *Sunny Stories*, violence and murder are nevertheless presented as justified and necessary in Blyton's magazine retellings. In the stories of Arthur and Arthurian knights that Blyton chooses to retell, the legendary heroes protect and uphold the virtues and morals of their nation and society. Blyton's Arthurian knights are extraordinarily skilled in battle, but they are also chivalrous, honourable, loyal, intelligent and virtuous. This balanced portrayal of English heroes contrasts with the legends of other nations and cultures, whose physical strength, wildness, and capacity for violence Blyton emphasises. For the heroic knights of the tales, violence and battle is often unavoidable in order to protect vulnerable characters, yet Blyton's retellings minimise the English protagonists' acts of violence, and counterbalance descriptions of the protagonists' violence with detailed descriptions of their kindness and chivalry. The English heroes are depicted as gentle and merciful, using violence only when absolutely necessary.

The *Sunny Stories* volume titled "The Kitchen-Boy Knight" (1927) focuses on Sir Gareth and his desire to become one of King Arthur's knights of the Round Table. Andrew Lang retells the story of Sir Gareth in *The Book of Romance,* but it is Mary MacGregor's *Stories of King Arthur's Knights told to the Children* (1907) that bears the stronger resemblance to Blyton's version in *Sunny Stories*. MacGregor's version, like Blyton's, simplifies the language of the Arthurian tale for young readers. Compared to Lang's version, or Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, both MacGregor and Blyton's versions diminish the violence and aggression of the knights' actions. Blyton repeatedly mitigates the violence and deadliness of Gareth's actions: the fate of Gareth's opponents is left ambiguous, or the opponent's death is distanced from Gareth's actions. For example, Gareth's first battle is against three thieves, and in both Lang and MacGregor's versions, the thieves are unambiguously killed by Gareth. In Blyton's version, Gareth strikes the first thief "down with his sword", but the blow is not deadly as the thief "lay moaning on the ground" (V 15, 20). Gareth then "rode for the second and third" thief and "wounded them so that they made a loud outcry, and ran away, dragging their companion with them" (20). Similarly, Gareth's victims of his second battle are not killed by Gareth's hand, as they are in Lang and MacGregor's versions: Gareth hits his opponent "so hard on his helmet that he fell off his horse into the river. The current carried him away…" (23). Whereas in Lang and MacGregor's editions, the knight is immediately "drowned in the river" as a consequence of Gareth's blow (Lang *Book of Romance*). Blyton mitigates the violence of the tale to moderate the perception of Gareth as a killer. Significantly, the episode of the three thieves is recounted differently in *The Knights of the Round Table*, the book of Arthurian tales Blyton published in 1930, but which were first serialised in *The Teacher's World* (the educational magazine Blyton regularly contributed to) in 1928. In this version, Gareth is undeniably the direct cause of the three thieves' deaths: "Gareth rode straight into them, and struck the first one dead, and then the second. Then he turned upon the third and slew him also. The others fled, but Gareth rode after them and smote them down" (56). The violence and brutality of Malory's original is preserved in the serialised version of *The Teacher's World* but moderated in the *Sunny Stories* magazine. The retellings of Arthurian tales appear in juxtaposition with other nations' and other cultures' folk narratives in *Sunny Stories*, which explains the differences in approach. Blyton strove to distinguish between the heroes of English tales and the heroes of Middle Eastern, European, and Native American tales in her eclectic collection of tales in *Sunny Stories*. A clear distinction between national heroes is established by moderating the violence perpetrated by English heroes but preserving the brutality of other, non-English heroes.

Blyton's nationalistic celebration of Englishness continues with a volume of *Sunny Stories* dedicated to the retelling of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590). "Una and the Red Cross Knight", as noted earlier, is a simplified retelling of Spenser's epic poem, in which the heroism of England's patron saint, Saint George, is celebrated. In Blyton's retelling of *The Faerie Queene*, Saint George is presented as a powerful and courageous legend of English history. Spenser's epic poem is the original source text, but the similarities between Blyton's retelling and Jeanie Lang's version in *Stories from the Faerie Queene told to the Children* (1905) indicates this text as a secondary source. Jeanie Lang (Andrew Lang's sister-in-law) explains in the preface to *Stories from the Faerie Queene* that the book is a shortened version of Spenser's text, intended as an introduction for young child readers who are not yet "old enough to read for yourself *The Faerie Queen* that Edmund Spenser wrote" (Lang). Rather than the poetic form of Spenser's original, Jeanie Lang and Blyton's versions are written in prose. Both Lang and Blyton begin with a typical fairy tale opening:

"Once upon a time, in a country not far from Fairyland, there lived a king and queen and their daughter, whose name was Una" (Lang 2). Blyton's *Sunny Stories* version begins thus: "Once upon a time, there lived a King and Queen in a country not very far from Fairyland" (V 17, 5). In contrast with Lang's adaptation, Blyton consciously preserves the names of characters from Spenser's original, maintaining a stronger connection to the original text compared to Lang's. The decision to retain names, such as "Archimago", "Sylvanus" and "Satyrane", is consistent with Blyton's approach to retelling myths and legends: the language of the text is simplified, but the content is largely unchanged.

Saint George, the Red Cross Knight, is described as "a young, handsome knight" who, like Arthur and Robin Hood, embodies the values and virtues of Englishness: he is a courageous warrior, chivalrous and devout (V 17, 6). Besides great physical strength and skill, George possesses the emotional, benevolent characteristics of an English hero: George is "gentle as well as strong", and like Robin Hood, he learns "how to be generous and merciful, instead of selfish or revengeful" (26). In Jeanie Lang's *Stories from the Faerie Queene*, George's killing of various knights is described in detail, but Blyton reduces the level of detail to moderate the conception of George – the revered patron saint of England - as a violent killer. In Lang's version, the "Red Cross Knight" strikes Sans-foy and "his sword went through the steel helmet right into the knight's head, and he fell dead" (*Stories* 19). Blyton reduces the graphicness in her version, with George striking Sans-foy "such a powerful blow on his head that he fell off his horse and died" (19). A fierce battle between George and the dragon concludes the tale, with Blyton permitting a greater level of graphic detail in the description of this battle compared to George's battles with other knights. With human opponents, Blyton is careful to prevent the reader's interpretation of George as a murderer, but Blyton uses George's battle against the dragon to celebrate the legendary knight's physical power and strength: the narrator describes George thrusting “his sword right through its mouth and down its wicked throat” (31). Following the battle, the narrator informs the reader of George’s canonisation in a patriotic conclusion celebrating the exemplary legend of English mythology. Blyton also explains the immortalisation of George’s red cross on the flag of the United Kingdom: “so true and good a Knight did he become that he was made a saint – and we know him now as Saint George – Saint George of Merry England, whose red cross is on our Union Jack” (32). It is significant that Blyton links the red cross to the Union Jack, rather than to England's flag in a story that focuses on the patron saint of England. The connection implies the integration of the entire United Kingdom into the national mythology of England, which strongly mirrors Jacobs’ amalgamation of Britain “under the unifying banner of Englishness” (Teverson 7). With the Welsh-origin legend of Arthur, English authors appropriated the legend into the national mythology of England. Here, the mythology of England is expanded to encompass the United Kingdom; Wales included. In Blyton’s retellings of Arthurian legends, England lies at the centre of British mythology.

In “Una and the Red Cross Knight”, detailed descriptions of the battle between George and the dragon are permitted in Blyton’s retelling of Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*, as the battle is central to the legend of Saint George. Furthermore, George’s slaying of the dragon symbolises the saint’s triumph of good over evil and serves to heighten the admiration for the powerful English hero. In a retelling of the Arthurian story of Enid and Geraint, Blyton includes descriptions of violent battles with other knights, as violence and descriptions of Geraint’s physical prowess function as indicators of Geraint’s masculinity. In Blyton’s later published work, emasculated male characters and effeminate male characters are criticised and mocked. For example, in *The Circus of Adventure*, the effeminate

European Gus is contrasted against the masculine English protagonists. Blyton's ideal male characters are physically and emotionally strong, and in Blyton's version of the story of Geraint and Enid, violence and physical power signify Geraint's return to an ideal form of masculinity. The story of Prince Geraint is not included in Andrew Lang's *Tales of King Arthur and the Round Table* but is included in Mary MacGregor's *Stories of King Arthur's Knights*, published in 1907. In her preface to *Stories of King Arthur's Knights*, MacGregor explains to readers that "many times, since Sir Thomas Malory wrote his book, have these stories been told again to old and young, but perhaps never before have they been told to the children so simply as in this little book" (v). However, it is Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* rather than MacGregor's children's version which Blyton's version most strongly resembles. As with Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, Blyton retains the characters' names from Tennyson's *Idylls*, referring to "Edyrn, son of Nudd" and the "Earl of Doorm" in her *Sunny Stories* version. Expressions are replicated exactly from Tennyson's *Idylls*, including the curse: "A thousand pips eat up your Sparrow-hawk!" illustrating a conscious referencing of Tennyson's text (V 31, 9). This particular retelling of an Arthurian story contains more violence than either "The Kitchen-Boy Knight" or "Una and the Red Cross Knight", which is in part due to the greater reliance on Tennyson's version of "Geraint and Enid" rather than the adapted children's version of Mary MacGregor's, and due also to the tale's association between violence and masculinity. In a chapter entitled "Geraint is no True Knight", Geraint is portrayed as foolish, paranoid, and untrusting of his wife. The knight begins to spend all his time with Enid, forgoing tournaments and other knightly activities, and the title of the chapter implies a loss of Geraint's masculinity (21). With "Una and the Red Cross Knight" and "The Kitchen-Boy Knight", we see an emphasis on the knights' physical strength and prowess but also a focus on their kindness, gentleness and chivalry. This mildness of character combines with a modification of the violence of the source texts used for “Una” and “The Kitchen-Boy” to ensure the reader receives a positive, balanced impression of the tales’ heroes. There is a contrasting approach to descriptions of violence and descriptions of the protagonist in “The Adventures of Prince Geraint”: within the chapter “Geraint is no True Knight”, deadly encounters with thieves are used to signal a return of Geraint’s masculinity. The narrator relates how Geraint “with a great thrust”, drives his spear “right through the middle bandit’s chest, and killed him” (26). He then “slashed” the other two men (26). Shortly afterwards, Geraint battles an Earl, and Blyton relays the battle in far more vivid detail than is used in “Una” or “The Kitchen-Boy Knight”: Geraint “with one mighty stroke… hewed the earl’s head off, so that it rolled upon the floor” (31). Blyton’s contrasting approaches to violence depend on the objectives of the tale: here, Geraint’s restored masculinity is illustrated by his active participation in battle. Geraint’s temporary wounded ego and disinterest in battle are unbefitting of an Arthurian knight: through violence, Geraint becomes, once more, a powerful and masculine true English knight.

Robin Hood is first introduced to *Sunny Stories* in 1926, with Blyton retelling the legend in a conversational storytelling style: interjections such as “you see” and “now one day” create the impression of an oral storyteller (V 18, 17-19). Narrator interjections are common in Blyton’s writing, and other descriptions of actions closely resemble Blyton’s distinctive narrative voice: “All the men were most excited. It was great fun dressing up in old clothes, and making themselves look different” (V 18, 11). Blyton's simple, straightforward language results in a version of the English legend that is accessible and comprehensible to young children. Furthermore, Blyton’s version magnifies the story’s elements of fun and trickery, which enhances the story’s appeal for the magazine’s young readers.

Robin is described as “tall and handsome”; “so strong and so skilful”, with his intelligence and altruism emphasised: Robin is the “cleverest of all the company” (V 3, 6-8). In “Robin Hood and his Merry Men”, the virtues of sportsmanship and fair play are exemplified by Robin, particularly when he challenges Little John to a fight for refusing to obey him. The two men aggressively fight each other, with Robin giving “the stranger such a whack that it seemed as if his bones would crack” (V 3, 11). Little John is a strong opponent and eventually wins. Robin is gracious in defeat, acknowledging Little John’s greater strength and ability, telling him, “It was a good fight… You are a brave fellow, and won the fight fairly. Shake hands, and be friends, will you?” (12). Blyton dedicates another issue of *Sunny Stories* to Robin Hood in early 1927: “Robin Hood Again” further emphasises Robin and his Merry Men’s altruism, kindness and moral goodness. Robin’s character is contrasted against the selfish Bishop, who Robin admonishes for taking money “from poor people who can ill afford it” and using it “to enrich people like yourself” (V 18, 31-32). Blyton imbues her own characters with the characteristics and values of English legends such as Robin Hood: the character’s admirable sense of justice and “scrupulous fairness” are mirrored by Blyton’s young protagonists in texts such as *The Adventurous Four* and the *Adventure* series, wherein they feel compelled to intervene in situations they consider unfair or unjust (Singh 218). Blyton, therefore, perpetuates the ideals and values of Englishness embodied by Robin Hood by creating new, just and brave twentieth-century young male protagonists.

Beyond a celebration of the heroism and chivalry of individual English legends, and concurrently a celebration of English national identity, the societies and Kingdoms to which the heroes belong represent an ideal English world which is harmonious and ordered due to the hierarchical structure of the societies and the benevolence of its rulers (Beck “Making of English”). Furthermore**,** a sense of nationalism, and fealty to one’s ruler is evident in Blyton’s retellings of English tales, strengthened by the perception of the English rulers as rightful Kings. This sense of patriotism and the presentation of an advanced, structured society is absent from adaptations of other nations' myths and legends. As with the kingdoms of King Arthur and King Richard, tales from *The Arabian Nights* and Greek mythology have a ruling class comprised of Kings, Princes, and Sultans. Societies in other, non-English tales are also structured hierarchically: tales adapted from *The Arabian Nights* feature Kings, Princes, Sultans, and a hierarchy determined by class and race. However, the sense of order, along with the devotion evident in English tales to one's leader, is lacking in Blyton's other, non-English retold tales. Patriotism and national pride is particularly evident in the retelling of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and the legend of Saint George. King Richard in retellings of Robin Hood, and King Arthur in the story of Sir Gareth, are portrayed as wise, strong, and benevolent rulers of carefully structured societies. The kingdoms of Arthur and Richard represent a "model of British citizenship that positions individuals as loyal subjects" within a "monarchical society" (Beck 63). In an article on Alfred Bestall's Rupert Bear books, John Beck applies Basil Bernstein's study of "classification and framing" to the fictional, idyllic English society of Bestall's texts: "role definitions", Bernsten writes "and their relative power are unambiguous and are accepted unconsciously as part of a 'natural' ordering of social relations" (54). Blyton perpetuates the myth of Arthur as a divinely ordained King: his power and position is unquestioned in her retellings. With other knights and characters, their position in the social hierarchy is determined by class, family, and 'breeding', and members of royal families are immediately recognised for their inherent superiority. Gareth of "The Kitchen-Boy Knight" is the son of the King and Queen of Orkney, but when he arrives at King Arthur's court, he is disguised as a "kitchen-boy", dressed "in poor, rough peasant clothes" (V 15, 8). Gareth does not disclose his true identity to Arthur, but Arthur recognises the boy’s nobility, telling his knights to “treat the tallest of them well… for I think he comes of good parents” (11). Lancelot criticises Sir Kay for disparaging Gareth, telling him that “you may know a well-bred hound or horse when you see one, but you cannot tell a well-born man, it seems!” (11). Gareth, as a “well-bred” man, finds it difficult to blend in with the other “kitchen-boys”, for “the men were dirty and rude” and “had no manners at table” (12). Gareth eventually occupies his rightful position in society by becoming a knight of King Arthur’s court. Gareth tells Lancelot his true identity as a Prince, to which Lancelot replies: “I knew you were noble all the while” (17). The fictional societies of Blyton’s original works are similarly hierarchically ordered, with characters accepting their position within the hierarchy as natural and fixed.

Although the society of Robin Hood differs from Arthur’s kingdom, in that the characters of Robin Hood are outlaws and appear anti-authoritarian due to their constant conflict with the Sheriff and the Bishop, Blyton emphasises the society’s hierarchical, ordered structure. Blyton, furthermore, underlines Robin’s loyalty to the King and the monarchy. Although corruption is rife amongst the lower echelons of authority, the England of Robin Hood is still portrayed by Blyton as a “place of tranquillity and moral order, governed by wise, benevolent authority figures” (Beck 48). Sherwood Forest itself represents a harmonious microcosm of an ordered, benevolently ruled society: following their fight, Robin invites Little John to join his band of Merry Men, to which Little John replies: “I will serve you well and faithfully!” echoing Robin’s own expression of fealty to King Richard. Even though they dwell in the forest, the society of Robin Hood and his Merry Men is hierarchical and ordered, with one’s position determined by strength and skill. Little John, due to his power and strength, becomes “Robin Hood’s second in command” (14). Robin Hood’s men are devoted to Robin, showing their leader a level of respect that impresses even King Richard: Robin's "hundred and more men… each bent his knee to Robin", which the King is almost envious of: "They treat their master like a King… and are, indeed, more humble in his presence than my men are in mine" (28). However, Robin and his Merry Men recognise their ultimate loyalty to the King. The story's beginning recounts the attack on Robin's father's lands which leaves the hero heartbroken and vengeful. He decides that rather than seek revenge, as "it will give me back none of the things I have lost", he swears another oath: "I will honour God and the King.. I will help the weak and fight the strong" (6-7). Robin's loyalty is proven when he encounters King Richard: Robin thinks him "a tall, handsome man" (26), with the narrator later explaining Robin's devotion to the King, informing the reader that "he was loyal, and loved him, and so did all his men" (25). King Richard enlists Robin and his Merry Men into his service, and they eagerly swear allegiance to him. Similar sentiments of monarchical loyalty are regularly found in Blyton's original work, including in the *Adventure* series (Kiki the parrot's repeated "God save the King" outbursts), along with similar anti-authoritarian attitudes towards minor figures of authority, such as policemen. However, as with Robin Hood, the child protagonists of Blyton's work are ultimately devoted to England and the British monarchy, illustrated in *The Circus of Adventure* by the protagonists' horror at the prospect of a monarch being overthrown by a usurper.

Blyton's retellings of national legends represent idealised models of English national character and English society. The patriarchal, hierarchical societies inhabited by virtuous male characters are first celebrated in retellings published in *Sunny Stories*, and later replicated in Blyton's original books and series.

Blyton's Creation of New English Fairy Tales

This chapter has so far examined Blyton's Anglicisation of non-English tales, simplification of English folk narratives and fairy tales, and adaptations of national and international myths and legends. However, Blyton's contribution to the canon of English tales goes beyond the retelling and publication of folk narratives, as the author also created new English-based stories inspired by and closely resembling folk narratives. The majority of Blyton's original fairy and fantasy stories draw from the conventions of the folk and fairy tale tradition, but a story published in a 1927 volume of *Sunny Stories*, entitled "Crispin, the Giant Slayer", appears inspired by Blyton's knowledge of mythological and legendary stories; particularly the Arthurian legend of Excalibur. The name of the protagonist, Crispin, possibly comes from Saint Crispin, the patron saint of shoemakers whose feast day is referenced in Shakespeare's *Henry V* (Chapman 3 [3]). Blyton's Crispin is the neglected youngest brother of four sons (Dru, Gruffin, Rolland and Crispin) who is initially overshadowed by his older brothers until he discovers a long-lost sword which he appears destined to own. The sword originally belonged to his great-great-grandfather who was a "famous giant-killer", and like Excalibur, an inscription is written upon the sword which reads: "I am Ranadu, slayer of giants. To him who is of brave heart I will be a good servant. The coward I will defeat. Beware" (V 30, 10). Crispin sets off on a series of adventures to "kill the monsters who fill people with terror" (11), and like the knights of the Arthurian legends, Crispin rescues vulnerable princesses through his slaying of fantastical monsters. Like the folk and fairy tales Blyton retells, the story ends with a clear moral message: in this case, a lesson about forgiveness and kindness. The short tale concludes with Crispin declaring, “I shall go adventuring again, with my good sword Ranadu”, and the narrator states, “And he kept his word, as you will hear another day” (32). Blyton’s conclusion implies a level of truth to Crispin’s adventures, which strengthens the tale’s resemblance to stories of brave and powerful legendary warriors. But Crispin’s legendary-like adventures are confined to this one *Sunny Stories* tale. It is the folk and fairy tale tradition, rather than mythological and legendary tales, which Blyton draws upon for inspiration in writing her own original stories: we see this incorporation of folk and fairy tale conventions most strongly in *The Faraway Tree* series.

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[3] "This day is called the feast of Crispian: / He that outlives this day, and comes safe home, / Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named, / And rouse him at the name of Crispian. / He that shall live this day, and see old age, Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars. / And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'" (Shakespeare)

Jacobs admitted his difficulty finding native English folk and fairy tales to publish in *English Fairy Tales* and *More English Fairy Tales* in his preface to *Celtic Fairy Tales* (vii). This scarcity of native tales motivated Jacobs to expand the scope of his collection to English-language tales and tales from within the British Empire. The lack of native tales also motivated Blyton to take an imperial approach to the development of a canon of English tales, with the tales of Brer Rabbit representative of this appropriation of other nations’ narratives through the Anglicisation of language. As well as retelling tales, however, Blyton’s original writing significantly contributed to England’s collection of native fairy tales. *The Enid Blyton Book of Fairies*, published in 1924, is one of Blyton’s earliest published works and contains moral, cautionary tales which recall the didacticism of Charles Perrault’s fairy tales. Mendlesohn and Levy write in *Children’s Fantasy Literature: An Introduction* that in the early twentieth century, “the fairy story, as usually understood, was wearing out, but it was to have a last and highly successful outing in the work of Enid Blyton” (92). Although typically referred to as a fantasy series, Levy and Mendlesohn refer to *The Faraway Tree* series as reinvigorating “the fairy adventure” and they compare the series to P.L Travers’ *Mary*

Poppins for its similar intermingling of fairy story and fantasy elements (92). Levy and Mendlesohn, in referring to the texts as fairy stories and fairy adventures, tentatively identify *The Faraway Tree*'s connection with fairy tales. Still, their discussion does not clearly explain what the term 'fairy story' or 'fairy adventure' means in relation to Blyton's series. *The Faraway Tree* is a trilogy of texts in which three protagonists repeatedly cross boundaries between the primary world and a secondary fantasy world. The primary and secondary world structure explains why the texts are commonly categorised as fantasy, but the three texts draw heavily from folk and fairy tale traditions. *The Faraway Tree* texts are best categorised as kunstmärchen, as 'art tales', as the texts are invented narratives "designed to resemble traditional tales in some respects but… [are] in fact entirely original" (Teverson (*Fairy Tale* 31). By writing kunstmärchen, Blyton consciously connected her writing to a form closely associated with folk and fairy tales. By doing so, she inserted her work into England's canon of folk narratives. Blyton incorporated conventional characteristics of folk and fairy tales into the series and through including characters from English folklore, fairy tales and nursery rhymes, she firmly established a connection between her original twentieth-century series and England's cultural and literary heritage. As these forms of narratives – märchen, folk tales, fairy tales – are closely associated with ideas of nationalism, Blyton's work becomes further aligned with nationalistic literary traditions.

In 1959, Blyton wrote an article for the *New Statesman* on the qualities of a good children's writer, stating, "story-tellers are born, not made – one can learn to write, but one can never learn to be a story-teller" (*New Statesman*). According to Rudd, Blyton "preferred the term 'storyteller' to writer", and in her writing, adhered to the norms of an oral storytelling tradition (Rudd *Enid Blyton* 155). The tradition of oral storytelling is a shared medium, with storytellers borrowing from a stock of folktale and folklore characters, motifs and themes, and reworking selected content into “new contexts” (Rudd 159). With *The Faraway Tree* trilogy, Blyton borrowed elements from fairy tales, folklore, and nursery rhymes in the creation of new stories. The three texts of *The Faraway Tree* series – *The Enchanted Wood*, *The Magic Faraway Tree* and *The Folk of the Faraway Tree* – were serialised in *Enid Blyton’s Sunny Stories* from 1938 to 1946. Throughout the three texts, Blyton establishes a direct connection between *The Faraway Tree* and English folk tales, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and English childhood culture in general. Characters from fairy tales and from nursery rhymes appear throughout the series, becoming part of the plot of *The Faraway Tree* and interacting with the English child protagonists. Due to this incorporation of folk and fairy tale characters, the series is a continuation of Blyton’s practice of adapting and retelling well-known folk and fairy tales. These nursery rhyme, folk tale, and fairy tale characters are borrowed from English-origin tales, strengthening the relationship between the *Faraway* series and the cultural heritage of England.

As with her retellings of national and international tales in *Sunny Stories*, Blyton modifies the narrative arc of the folk tale, fairy tale and nursery rhyme characters that appear in *The Faraway Tree*. “Goldenhair and the Three Bears” was the first tale published in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* in 1926, and the story is incorporated into the first title of the *Faraway Tree* series: *The Enchanted Wood*. The retelling in *Sunny Stories* is modified to teach the importance of obedience and the potential consequences of disobeying parents. In *The Enchanted Wood*, Blyton provides readers with a sequel to the story of Goldilocks, with the young girl now living with the three bears, becoming almost a mother-figure to the bears. Within this sequel, Jo, the male child protagonist of the series, re-enacts the actions of Goldilocks in the original story when he discovers the bears’ cottage, eats their porridge, and falls asleep in the youngest bear’s bed (*Enchanted* 70-71). Blyton completely reworks the tale and inserts her own fictional child protagonists into the English fairy tale, directly connecting the English fairy tale with her own text.

In *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*, the child protagonists visit “The Land of Nursery Rhyme”, and there meet Little Tommy Tucker, Jack and Jill, Little Jack Horner, Johnny Stout and Johnny Thin (who put the cat down the well), Little Polly Flinders, and Little Miss Muffet (62), all of whom are figures from English nursery rhymes (Opie *Nursery Rhymes*). With the fairy tale characters of Goldilocks and Jack (of the Beanstalk), Blyton provides the reader with an imagined update on the lives of fairy and folk tale characters. In contrast, the nursery rhyme characters are currently living through the actions of the nursery rhyme: the *Faraway* protagonists witness Polly Flinders sitting “among the cinders / Warming her pretty little toes” until “her mother came and caught her” (Opie 354). Several folk and fairy tale protagonists and villains - including the soldier of Andersen’s “The Steadfast Tin Soldier”, the Grimm Brothers’ “Rumpelstiltskin” and the stepmother in the tale of “Baba Yaga” – have a different outcome in Blyton’s *Sunny Stories* to the fates they suffer in the original versions. Likewise, the narrative trajectories and outcomes of nursery rhyme characters are changed by Blyton in the *Faraway Tree* series to prevent injury and death and to resolve character conflicts. The constant conflict between Little Miss Muffet and the spider is resolved in *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*: Miss Muffet assumes a maternal role in her relationship with her former tormentor. The spider is cared for by the female protagonist, who praises him for being “a good spider” (79). Blyton transforms both Miss Muffet and Goldilocks into mother-figures, despite the characters’ young age. This type of domestic, motherly female child character is not uncommon in Blyton’s writing, with the female protagonists of other Blyton series also occupying the role of carer (Anne of *The Famous Five*, for example). Here, Blyton imposes this role on fairy tale and nursery rhyme female protagonists, but interestingly, it is this assumption of a maternal role that grants the female characters power: the three bears are reliant on Goldilocks, and the spider is disarmed by Miss Muffet's care, attention, and motherly commands.

Blyton's child protagonists directly intervene to redirect the trajectory of the nursery rhymes in the series *The Faraway Tree*. Blyton's aversion to unhappy endings - as illustrated in her retelling of "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" - is again illustrated when Jack and Jill are rescued from falling down the hill: "Don't quarrel, Jack and Jill,' begged Bessie. 'You know you'll only fall down and hurt yourselves. Jill, let me take the handle of the pail… Then for once in a way you will get to the bottom of the hill in safety, without falling down" (69). The child protagonists directly participate in the story and impact the conclusion of the nursery rhyme: they become part of the traditional English rhymes. The English fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk" is similarly integrated into the plot of *The Folk of the Faraway Tree,* the third title in the series. The tale is included in Andrew Lang's *The Red Fairy Book* and in Joseph Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales*, a text with which *The Faraway Tree* is aligned due to its inclusion of exclusively English tales. Jacobs' version of "Jack and the Beanstalk" ends as follows: "Jack and his mother became very rich, and he married a great princess" (67). As with Goldilocks, Blyton imagines a life for Jack beyond the happy ever after ending of the fairy tale. Jack now lives in "Bean-Stalk Castle" with the Princess, where he entertains guests and prefers not to visit Giantland anymore as "the giants were a bit of a nuisance last year, always shouting rude things down the Bean-Stalk to me" (*Folk* 43). The child protagonists visit Jack's castle and ask him to grow a beanstalk to reach Giantland and rescue their lost companion (*Folk* 43). In the fantasy series, the lives of English fairy tale characters are extended and intertwined with the lives and adventures of the new protagonists of Blyton's creation.

The trilogy is set in the rural English countryside, in a pre-industrial environment that criticises urban life's customs and culture. While on the train from their city home, the three protagonists "pressed their noses to the window and watched the dirty houses and the tall chimneys race by. How they hated the town! How lovely it would be to be in the clean country, with flowers growing everywhere, and birds singing in the hedges!" (*Enchanted* 7). In demonstrating disdain for modern, urban culture, Blyton exhibits similar concerns over industrialisation and urbanisation that Jacobs expressed in the late nineteenth century: in addition to his worry for the welfare of the English folk tale, Jacobs expressed concern in the Notes and References section of *English Fairy Tales* for the disintegration of "our provincial life" due to the flourishing of "railways and the telegraph" (229). Preserving and publishing national folk tales was a way to counteract the modernisation of British culture and the detrimental effects modern society and industrialisation were perceived to be having on traditional English ways of life and on traditional English values. Blyton shares this anxiety for the loss of traditional England, but rather than replicating Jacobs' method of preserving this romanticised vision of England by collecting and publishing national tales, Blyton creates new fantasy and fairy stories set in a pre-industrial English rural landscape. As with the Grimm Brothers in Germany, Blyton presents a view of the 'folk' as embodying the true, authentic form of Englishness, a form of true Englishness which only dwells in the isolated, unspoiled and rural spaces of England. In addition to the protagonists expressing their disdain of the busy, modern town and their longing for the countryside, in *The Magic Faraway Tree* and *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*, two troublesome urban children visit the main protagonists in their isolated rural environment. The city children's characters begin to improve through their immersion in the English countryside and their disconnection from urban modernity. Connie is described as "awfully stuck-up", spoilt, and curious (*Folk* 13).

Both her mother and the protagonists' mother agree that prolonged interaction with the three "good and well-behaved" three protagonists in a rural, natural environment will positively affect Connie's character (13). In this way, Blyton's feelings towards the countryside are aligned with Colonel Robert Baden-Powell's, the celebrated national hero and founder of the Scouting movement, who asserted that "outdoor living counteracted the toxic effects of urban life" (Knuth 67).

In addition to supplementing the national collection of English-based fairy tales and fairy stories, *The Faraway Tree* promotes the same qualities and values of Englishness emphasised in Blyton's retellings of English legends: Blyton emphasises the protagonists' moral goodness, their kindness, and generosity throughout the trilogy. As with Robin Hood, the protagonists feel compelled to intervene in situations of injustice, and the child protagonists feel responsible for the protection of secondary world characters, characters who are often portrayed as weaker than the English children. The protagonists' admirable, honourable characters are established at the very beginning of the series: the children see a gnome stealing from a group of brownies and quickly overcome their shock of seeing brownies for the first time to alert the group to the thief: "Jo jumped up. He was not going to watch people being robbed without saying something! He shouted loudly: 'Stop thief!'" (*Enchanted* 16). The British, Singh writes, "cherished the qualities that were bred in battle", and Singh considers military virtues as "the bedrock of Blyton's conception of character" (203). The protagonists of *The Faraway Tree* repeatedly demonstrate these military virtues of courageousness, discipline, "a strong sense of duty", and sense of responsibility when the Tree comes under repeated attacks from other, secondary world characters and villains (203). Furthermore, the *Faraway Tree* texts reflect the nationalistic use of the fairy tale form to reinforce the ideological necessity of protecting spatial borders from intrusion. Scott

Harshbarger, in an essay on utopian thinking in the Third Reich, discusses the conception of certain groups of people as “predators and parasites” and as ultimately “the problem” in an otherwise idyllic society (“Grimm” 495). Harshbarger, along with Jack Zipes and Snyder, analyses the correlation between the Grimm Brothers’ fairy tales and the ideologies of Nazi Germany: the figure of the stepmother in the tale of “Hansel and Gretel”, for example, reinforces the notion of a society infiltrated and contaminated by a dangerous outsider. In order to achieve a utopian society, the stepmother, the outsider, must be removed. In *Faraway*, using violence against the outsider – against villainous secondary world characters - and any unmerciful means necessary to banish the foreign threat is considered acceptable and depicted joyfully, almost as a game or a sport.

The parasitical trolls can also be understood as antithetical to the ‘folk’ values of the *Faraway* world: they symbolise the industrial and materialistic society encroaching upon and threatening to destroy the pastoral, traditional folk culture and environment of traditional England. Peter Mandler argues in “Against Englishness” that the concept of ‘Englishness is “not a true estimate of national character, an enduring national essence” but rather “a historical construct that was developed towards the end of the nineteenth century by the 'dominant classes' in British society in order to tame or thwart the tendencies of their day towards modernism, urbanism and democracy” (155). We can see this view of an ‘authentic’ Englishness – an Englishness that is firmly grounded within traditional, rural England – in Blyton’s own work, particularly in *The Faraway Tree* series. The protagonists’ urban cousins, along with the army of Red Goblins and the materialistic trolls destroying the roots of the Faraway Tree in order to claim the treasure underneath, symbolise this tension and conflict between the rural, folk life of the protagonists and the encroaching, threatening values of modern England.

The second and third books of *The Faraway Tree* trilogy were serialised during the Second World War, and the texts are analysed within the context of the war in Chapter Two. The texts' emphasis on the protection of borders, the dangers of an invasion, and the dehumanisation of outsiders is understandable given the context in which the chapters were written. The first title of *The Faraway Tree* series was serialised in *Sunny Stories* in 1938, and published in book form in 1939, the year marking the beginning of the Second World War. In 1942 the second title of the series, *The Magic Faraway Tree*, was serialised in the magazine. Although the book is a sequence of fun, exciting adventures in fantasy lands, the protagonists' repeated defence of the Faraway Tree from invaders of other lands begins to signify a different meaning when studied in the context of the Second World War. Furthermore, this fantasy text, which is steeped in England's cultural heritage, creates and continually reinforces the distinction between the English protagonists and the Other: the inferior inhabitants of other lands. The series, therefore, simultaneously reflects the ideologies of the British Empire while also using these notions of superiority and inferiority to reassure readers of the innate intellectual and physical supremacy of the English race during a time of war. In the following chapter, Blyton's use of the fantasy mode to respond to the subject of war is analysed.

Along with the adoption and re-working of fairy tale and nursery rhyme characters, *The Faraway Tree* engages with the traditions of folklore, folk tales, fairy tales and oral storytelling in ways relating to structure, language, characterisation, and time. Blyton's writing style has been rebuked by scholars of literature, with the texts' perceived lack of literary merit resulting in the academic dismissal of Blyton's work. The books are repetitive, feature a strong "authorial presence" (Rudd 156) with frequent interjections by the narrator, and follow a loose episodic structure. Blyton's books prioritise action and plot over character development, and the language used to tell these stories is uncomplicated by challenging words. Blyton has a tendency to repeat certain words - "lovely", "nice", "dear", "little" "very" – which is perceived as authorial laziness from a literary perspective and criticised for its supposed failure to challenge child readers and expand their vocabulary (Blishen 79). In folklore, however, the repetition of words "achieves a consistency of style" (*European Folktale* 33). Blyton also shares folklore's proclivity for straightforward, uncomplicated language: the vocabulary of the books "is so common as to be invisible: in no way does it impede access to the narrative" and in this way is illustrative of an admirably functional use of language (Rudd *Enid Blyton* 47).

Rudd writes that *The Faraway Tree* series, like fairy and folk tales, has "a loose, episodic structure" which mirrors oral tales' tendency to feature "loose ends" and "unexplained events" (*Enid Blyton* 157). An important, relevant distinction to note between the folk and fairy tale and the genre of fantasy is that in contrast with the setting of fairy tales, "the initial setting of fantasy literature is reality" (Nikolajeva "Fairy" 142). *The Faraway Tree* conforms to this particular fantasy literature convention, but the series adheres firmly to the folk and fairy tale norms regarding characterisation and language. The sense of timelessness and "eternity" conveyed in folk and fairy tales, and in Blyton's *The Faraway Tree*, is "alien to fantasy" which generally operates on linear time (Nikolajeva 141). Lüthi writes of the one-dimensionality of folktales, and according to his theory the absence of the "dimension of time" contributes to the "depthless world of the folktale" (*European* 19). In these tales, "there are no ageing persons" (Lüthi 19). Like the characters of folktales, the rural protagonists of *Faraway* "lack any relation to past and future, to time altogether" (11). Rudd comments on this important parallel between Blyton's work and the characteristics of folk tales, stating that "Blyton writes in a more oral, folk tradition, where the coordinates of time and place are always vague, and anachronisms are normal" ("Islands" 76). The *Faraway Tree* characters remain permanent fixtures of a timeless English rural space, and as we see with new, twenty-first century additions to the *Faraway Tree* series, the protagonists' perpetual childlike state facilitates the creation of new adventures.

A comic book sequel to *The Folk of the Faraway Tree* strengthens the connection between *The Faraway Tree* series and the traditions of folk and fairy tales. In *Up the Faraway Tree*, Blyton deliberately aligns the protagonists of the series with English fairy tale characters, illustrating a conception of the protagonists as perennial, unageing fairy tale-like figures. Bessie, Fanny and Jo, the child protagonists of *Faraway*, are aware of the fairy tale and nursery rhyme characters' fictionality, but the characters themselves are unaware of their fictional existence. When speaking to the bears about Goldilocks, Fanny and Bessie inform them of their knowledge of "the story of the three bears" (*Enchanted* 64). The mother bear is surprised, asking "what story?" followed by all three bears telling the protagonists they had "never heard of it" (*Enchanted* 64). To Bessie and Fanny this "really seemed rather extraordinary" (64). The *Faraway Tree* protagonists themselves are later similarly fictionalised as characters for readers of *Up the Faraway Tree* which was published in 1951, five years after the publication of the third title in the trilogy, *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*. *Up the Faraway Tree* is presented in a comic book format, with minimal text and two scenes per page. The opening image is of two protagonists, Robin and Joy, reading a book entitled "The Faraway Tree" (*Up* 11). The child characters decide to "go and find Jo, Bessie and Fanny, the children who live near the Wood!" (12). Joy and Robin, the child readers of the *Faraway* story, are overjoyed to meet the characters of their book, with Joy crying "It's the old Saucepan Man!... I've always wanted to meet you, Saucepan!" (27). Blyton consciously aligns the original protagonists of *The Faraway Tree* – Jo, Bessie, and

Fanny - with the English fairy tale characters encountered in the original trilogy series. The protagonists of the *Faraway Tree* series fulfil the same role in *Up the Faraway Tree* as Goldilocks and the Three Bears and Jack of the Beanstalk fulfilled in the original trilogy series: the fictional characters provide child readers with opportunities for adventure.

In January 2022, Hachette announced the publication of a new *Faraway Tree* story in May 2022, written by Jacqueline Wilson, the prolific and highly successful British children's author of the *Tracy Beaker* series. The new title, *The Magic Faraway Tree: A New Adventure*, will feature three new protagonists, Milo, Mia, and Birdy, who discover the Enchanted Wood of Blyton's original fictional world and travel to the "Land of Unicorns" and the "Land of Dragons" ("Wilson Pens"). The rewrite is effectively a sequel to Blyton's *Up the Faraway Tree*, and further fulfils Blyton's vision of the series as an open-ended world which welcomes new child protagonists and new adventures. The cover image of the new title features Wilson's name in large font, while Blyton's distinctive signature far less visible. The announcement of the title and the positioning of Blyton's signature on the cover image reinforces this chapter's argument regarding Blyton's work adaptability, and the author's gradual absorption into England's canon of folk narratives. In an interview with *The Guardian*, Wilson called it "a privilege" to be able to "write about Blyton's iconic characters and invent new children and magical creatures of my own for new readers to enjoy" (Flood). This reworking mirrors the modifications and updates Blyton made to folk narratives in the early years of *Sunny Stories*: through adapting and modernising folk tales, fairy tales, myths, and legends, Blyton introduced new readers to old stories. Wilson's reworking fulfils a similar objective: the new title invigorates *The Faraway Tree* story and introduces the characters and fictional world to new, twenty-first century readers.

The Faraway Tree series' original publication format closely resembles the short-story form of folk and fairy tales, as Blyton serialised the three texts as short, largely episodic, self-contained chapters in the magazine. In the twenty-first century, the language of *The Faraway Tree* has been modified and updated: old-fashioned terms, such as "tea-time" and "treacle" (*Enchanted* 14) are modernised to "time for lunch" and "sugar" in Hachette's twenty-first century editions of the series, which mirrors Blyton's modernisation of "Cinderella", "Sleeping Beauty", and other fairy tales in early editions of *Sunny Stories*. Twenty-first century children's authors have also reworked and reused Blyton's created characters and fictional worlds for new stories: Jeanne Willis' *Silky's Story* (2020) and Emily Lamm's *Moonface's Story* (2021) use the characters and setting of the original series for contemporary stories based in the *Faraway* world. This modification, adaptation, and updating of Blyton's stories parallel established traditions of reworking and rewriting folk and fairy tales for new generations of readers and audiences. With the series, therefore, Blyton enriched England's collection of native fairy stories, stories which showcase the moral goodness of English characters, and stories which are now reworked and rewritten for new generations of twenty-first century child readers.

Conclusion

Blyton's engagement with folk tales, fairy tales, myths, and legends – first through the practice of retelling national and international tales, and second through incorporating folk and fairy tale characteristics into her original writing - contributed significantly to England's national canon of folk narratives. Blyton often condensed complex tales to their core elements, simplifying the prose style to accommodate a wide range of national and international child readers and a wide age range of readers. She follows her predecessors' approach, adopting Lang and Jacobs' imperial method of selecting tales from beyond Britain and Anglicising these tales' language for the enjoyment of her *Sunny Stories'* child readers. Blyton also reworked non-English tales, such as Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier", to conform to Blyton's ideas of English heroism. The celebration of English heroism, bravery, and chivalry is most clearly seen in the English-origin tales and legends Blyton selects to retell: in tales of Robin Hood, King Arthur and his knights, and the legend of Saint George. The male protagonists of these stories epitomise for Blyton the core values and virtues of Englishness, and many themes and elements of these early retellings of English stories can be identified in Blyton's later, original writing. In *The Adventurous Four*, *The Children of Kidillin*, and the *Adventure* series, there is a clear celebration of male heroism, and a focus on adventure and exploration. Furthermore, the hierarchies evident within Blyton's retellings of English folk narratives are reflected within Blyton's own fictional societies: hierarchies based on gender, social class, nationality, and race.

Blyton engaged with the English canon of folk and fairy tales by adapting and simplifying national tales, but also contributed to this canon by writing new fairy tale-inspired fantasy texts. Through the fantasy series *The Faraway Tree*, Blyton forges new adventures for traditional English fairy tale and nursery rhyme characters, prolonging the lives of folk and fairy tale characters and intermingling their stories with the stories of her own created protagonists. In doing so, Blyton connects the series to England's cultural heritage. Characters from traditional English nursery rhymes are similarly commingled with the *Faraway* protagonists and inserted into new adventures which often involve the protection and defence of the Faraway Tree from potential invaders.

Within the contemporary children's literature industry, Blyton's own work has been modified and updated by publishers, and her writing is considered as malleable, as adaptable, and as favourable to change as the folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends Blyton retold in the early years of *Sunny Stories*. This evolution of Blyton's work into "the public domain" was addressed by Hunt in 1994, and since then, the Blyton brand has become even more entrenched within the English canon to become part of "myth that can legitimately be 'retold' (Hunt *Introduction* 117). The rewriting and revising of Blyton's work for new generations of child audiences, along with the use of her created characters and fictional worlds by other creators and authors, further reinforces the connection between Blyton's work and folk and fairy tale traditions, as Blyton's stories have become part of a national stock of characters, stories, and settings which can be modified and modernised for new readers.

Joseph Jacobs' nationalistic collection of *English Fairy Tales* can be understood as a response to the political and cultural problems of the late nineteenth century: the increasing vulnerability of the British Empire, and the growing threat to the union of Britain itself. Blyton, similarly, continuously responds to the evolving political and national issues of the twentieth century, transitioning from the celebration of English national identity and English values in her early *Sunny Stories* writing to a focus on the strength of a unified Britain in her Second World War fiction. In the following chapter, Blyton's transition from a focus on English national identity to British national unity is examined.

Chapter Two: Wartime Blyton and British National Unity

In Chapter One, Blyton’s early career retelling national and international tales in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* was examined, which initiated the analysis of Blyton as a periodical writer. In this chapter, the examination of Blyton as a periodical writer is progressed from the early years of the magazine – the interwar years – to the Second World War. This chapter studies the short stories and serialised texts published in the magazine that directly relate to the Second World War and focuses particularly on stories that ruminate on Britain’s enemies' national characters. In moving from the interwar period and the early years of the *Sunny Stories* magazine to the 1930s and the beginning of the Second World War, we see a transition in Blyton’s writing from a focus on an imperial Englishness to a more isolationist, embattled model of British national identity. Blyton’s wartime fiction celebrates British unity, with English and Scottish characters collectively defending Britain’s borders. In *Goodly is Our Heritage*, Singh writes that “in the context of Blyton’s books, nationality is specifically English as opposed to British” (214). While this is true of most of Blyton’s books and series, nationality is less specifically English and far more aligned with Britishness in her wartime fiction.

The short stories and texts published during the Second World War focused on a united war effort, with children of all classes from different countries within Britain - including displaced child evacuees - part of the defence of the British nation. In other Blyton series, including the *Adventure* series (1944-1955) and *Famous Five* series, clear distinctions are made between English, Scottish and Welsh characters, with Scottish and Welsh characters portrayed as less civilised, less cultured, and less capable of leadership than the

English protagonists. Blyton's fictional war response elevates non-English British characters to a temporary higher status and strongly emphasises a sense of united Britishness. This construction of British national unity differs from the focus on Englishness in the early years of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* and differs significantly from Blyton's post-war *Adventure* series.

Blyton's fictional output during the Second World War challenges the perception of Blyton as an author of escapist children's fiction. Throughout the 1940s, in the magazine *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* and in published novels, Blyton maintains an engagement with the developments of the war and with the realities of British child readers' lives during wartime. The threat to Britain and the British race elicited a fictional response by Blyton which addressed the prospect of invasion, of gradual corruption and a destruction of the British character, but also, importantly, a response which portrayed Britain and the British national character as inherently superior to all enemies. As well as providing evidence which challenges the perception of Blyton's work as disconnected from reality, the content of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* challenges the perception of wartime magazines for younger readers as merely sources of distraction, humour and escapism (Agnew and Fox). A chronological analysis of *Sunny Stories* reveals the changes in tone and content of the magazine from the peaceful interwar years, through to increasing nationalistic content and references to war both implicit - portrayals of evil; invasion stories - and explicit - references to Nazi Germany; air raids; children's submitted poems about soldiers - during the war years and into the post-war period. Conducting a study on *Sunny Stories* expands our knowledge of children's periodicals produced for younger readers and contributes to the under-researched area of wartime children's magazines.

This chapter's contextualisation of Blyton as a war writer is based predominantly on the short stories and serialised books published in *Sunny Stories*. However, books published outside of the magazine (particularly *The Children of Kidillin*) are also significant to the consideration of Blyton as a writer engaging and responding to the Second World War. Between the declaration of war in September 1939 and the announcement of the end of war in May 1945, over 200 volumes of Blyton's magazine were published. As a periodical writer publishing magazines for child readers every week and later every fortnight, Blyton's stories were a source of stability, entertainment, and reassurance for readers during the tumultuous years of the war. Blyton adapted different forms and genres to respond to the concerns of her wartime child readers. She wrote realistic stories to respond to the impact on children's daily lives – such as the prospect of evacuation, air raids, the presence of barrage balloons and soldiers in English cities. Non-realist forms and genres – such as texts based in fantasy secondary worlds, stories based within a fairy-tale framework, and stories featuring anthropomorphised toys - were chosen as suitable and effective forms with which to address more complex themes, such as the nature of evil and the contamination of 'good' characters by corrupt, 'bad' characters. In all forms of her wartime writing, Blyton seeks to convey the nature of evil to her child readers, presenting Britain's enemies as ruthless and corrupt. Blyton consequently creates a contrast between the morally good British citizen and the potential invaders of Britain's borders whose depravity and cowardice are presented as antithetical to the British national character.

Critical Scholarship

Blyton's work is commonly conceived of as disconnected from reality. In an essay on "The Blyton enigma", Nicholas Tucker reflects on the appeal of Blyton's books to child readers. He determines that children choose “a Blyton book as they choose their own daydreams, simply *because* of the blissful escapism that followed” (196). “There were always other authors”, Tucker writes, “and indeed the rest of life itself, to provide the necessarily more realistic picture” (196). This perception of her work as escapist is due to several factors. Critical theories concerning twentieth-century children’s fiction, particularly children’s fantasy fiction published during the mid-twentieth century, are partly responsible for the misreadings that occur in Blyton’s texts. In Hazel Sheeky Bird’s research on twentieth-century children’s literature, she writes that “publishers during the Second World War often saw merit in producing books precisely because they were escapist” (*Class, Leisure* 4). Jonathan Cape, Arthur Ransome’s publisher (the author of *Swallows and Amazons*), recommended the author to “steer clear of the war at all costs” after Ransome suggested writing a book about an evacuee (Bird 4). Karen Smith’s *The Fabulous Realm* (1993) employs a literary-historical approach to British fantasy fiction and refers to the period between 1900 and 1949 as the “playful Diversionary Stage” (3). This literary stage produced fantasy intended to “amuse and distract”; for authors to do otherwise would have, according to Smith, “gone against the primary desire of the times, which was to present a world in distinct opposition to the disorder of a war-torn reality” (223). Marcus Crouch reinforces Smith’s theories, writing that between 1920 and 1929 , the majority of books were fantasy stories “remote from everyday life”, offering readers escapism (Smith, 208). In his assessment of British children’s fantasy, Colin Manlove argues that “most 1930s fantasies are set in ‘this’ world: but towards the end of the decade there is a change, as the threat of war grows” (65). Pre-war children’s fantasy fiction had a “consolatory aim”, and its intention was to distract readers from the looming prospect of war (65). Blyton, in contrast, used fantasy to *respond* to the threat of war, choosing non-realism as a suitable form with which to address fears of wartime enemies and fears of invasion.

Fantasy and non-realism were not merely chosen by Blyton and other wartime and post-war authors as appropriate genres through which to write and attempt an understanding of war and conflict, but rather the genre of modern fantasy emerged out of the First World War. The Great War's "influence on the development of modern fantasy" is "only in recent decades [beginning] to receive serious analysis" (Stevenson 110). Shandi Stevenson argues that the genre is "too often dismissed simply as an escapist or nostalgic response to the upheaval of the war years and the dreamlike horrors of the Western Front" but "the fantasy of the first half of the twentieth century is in fact a complex, multifaceted response both to the war itself and to the cultural landscape of the postwar world" (110).

In addition to assessments of this period of children's fantasy literature as generally escapist, Blyton's account of her writing process along with the perception of Blyton as childlike has significantly contributed to the overall dismissal of Blyton's writing as disconnected from reality. Between 1953 and 1957, in letters to the psychologist Peter McKellar, Blyton discussed her writing process in detail. She described the process as "a kind of opening of sluice-gates" where she allows "a flow of cinematograph pictures and sounds to flood into my conscious mind, from the undermind" (Stoney 204). In correspondence with McKellar, Blyton explains that she "once tried to write a book in the usual way – sitting down, writing out a plot – inventing a list of characters – making a list of chapters and so on. I couldn't write a page, not a single page" (197). Blyton explains her conscious disconnect from the writing process, telling McKellar that "if I invented the adventures", the stories would not be as engaging, as exciting, as tangible for her readers (197). Her unconscious writing method leads Edwards to argue that “intention is probably exceptionally remote from composition” in Blyton’s work (*British Children’s Fiction* 491).

While Blyton’s “undermind” could unconsciously be ruminating on events in reality, a second psychologist’s influential assessment of Blyton as a childlike woman further distanced Blyton’s work from the adult world of reality. In 1969, Michael Woods assessed Blyton as an adult writer who “was a child, she thought as a child, and she wrote as a child; of course the craft of an extremely competent adult writer is there, but the basic feeling is essentially pre-adolescent” (Stoney 210). As outlined in the Introduction to this thesis, the understanding of Blyton as childlike is reinforced by information relating to Blyton’s physical body, specifically her “unusually underdeveloped uterus” (Cohen 30). In her biography on Blyton, Cohen speculates that “it seemed she had stopped developing physically the moment her father walked out, possibly because of the shock” (30). In 2006, 25 years after the publication of *Enid Blyton: The Biography*, Barbara Stoney released a new edition of the biography with an additional chapter on Blyton in the twenty-first century. Stoney writes that her original assessment of Blyton remains accurate: Stoney still considers her “an insecure, complex and often difficult childlike woman whose life was at times far removed from the sunny world she created for herself in her highly successful writings” (180).

Despite perceptions of Blyton’s work as escapist - both for Blyton and for the reader – some scholars contextualise her work within the socio-political and historical context in which she wrote. Rudd contextualises Blyton’s island stories within the political, nationalistic climate of 1940s wartime Britain: the 1940s “was a period of fierce patriotism with Winston Churchill speaking about the ‘wicked man…resolved to break our famous island race’” (“Islands” 75). Rudd argues that the many islands of Blyton’s fiction are “a metonym for the nation", with Kirrin Island of *The Famous Five*, for example, associated with the concept of an island race ("Islands" 73).). Similarly, Blyton's most recent biographer, Andrew Maunder, contextualises the author as a war-time writer who sought to "encourage… a distinctive view of England and of Englishness… by casting the country and its heritage in rural terms" (150). Maunder quotes David Trotter's arguments regarding the "formation of a national heritage" whereby the construction of heritage is "a fiction" and entails "hand-picking key images to appeal to the needs of the moment" (150). During the war years, the selection of images hand-picked for "the needs of the moment" included "a pastoral version of the English landscape and the histories and traditions which lay within it" (150). Blyton's *Famous Five* series, Maunder argues, contributed greatly to the wartime literary need for pastoral, idyllic visions of England. For Matthew Grenby, *The Famous Five* series (which began in 1942) provided wartime child readers "with a fantasy of their own centrality to… fight against the nation's enemies. The books could give children a sense that, metaphorically, they too were joining the war effort" (*Children's Literature* 175). Grenby highlights the fact that one of the central *Famous Five* characters, George, shares their name with England's patron saint, Saint George of Merry England, whose story Blyton retold in 1927 in *Sunny Stories*. *The Famous Five* series is the only series referred to by Grenby concerning Blyton's wartime writing. He does not elaborate on Blyton's incorporation of war themes in her other books and series.

In his book, *British Children's Fiction in the Second World War*, Edwards refers sporadically to Blyton's wartime publications and her references to the war. However, a substantial amount of relevant information and stories relating to the war and Britain's enemy are omitted from his study. Edwards writes that "Blyton largely excluded war from her wartime fiction" and argues that she "seems to have written little directly about the war… until it was over" (101,162). In the references to war that Edwards identifies and addresses in Blyton's work, he discusses her writing in terms of its consolatory and escapist nature. Edwards illustrates how her texts offered reassurance to evacuees by portraying the countryside in a positive light, and his study credits Blyton's wartime publications as consolatory and comforting to readers in the midst of air-raids. Her enchanting fiction, he believes, "immunised countless children from trauma when their homes were bombed, their families scattered and their parents distanced" (91). But a primary objective of Blyton's war tales was explaining to young readers the necessity of the war and the paramount importance of defeating Britain's enemies. Rather than distracting readers from the conflict, Blyton sought to explain and justify the war to young readers through realist and fantasy stories and through analogies and metaphors, all written in a language young readers could easily comprehend. Philip Gillett writes in *Reading Enid Blyton* that "several series originated in the early 1940s, but are set in more peaceful times. With the exception of *The Adventurous Four* (1941) the Second World War never intrudes into Blyton's world, which helps to create a sense of timelessness" (9). While it is true that Blyton was conscious of retaining a timeless, universal quality to her published books, short stories published in the magazine often directly alluded to the war or were framed by the war. Short stories first published in the magazine were often later collated and published in collections of tales, with titles such as *Six O' Clock Tales* and *The Red Story Book*. However, many of these tales were not re-published. The transience of these short stories and the magazine format lent itself to a directness and a specificity in relation to the realities of British children's lives which is far less evident in Blyton's published books. *Sunny Stories*, therefore, offers an invaluable record of Blyton's fictional response to the national and political issues facing twentieth-century Britain.

Blyton was 17 when the First World War began and, according to Barbara Stoney, "the war did not appear to affect Enid very greatly at the beginning" (22). World War Two brought more substantial changes to Blyton's home life and these changes are recounted in *A Childhood at Green Hedges* (1989), an autobiography written by Blyton's daughter, Imogen Smallwood. According to the autobiography, Smallwood's father, Hugh Pollock, joined the Home Guard "as soon as possible" when the war began (51). After being promoted to "Commandant of the War Office School for Instructors of the Home Guard at Dorking", Pollock began spending "a considerable amount of time away from home" (51). The family had moved to Green Hedges shortly before the outbreak of war, and Smallwood recounts the addition of "blackout curtains" and "gas-masks" to the house (49). An air-raid shelter was built within the grounds of the house, which "was lined with concrete and had steps down into a narrow passage with a wooden bunk on either side" (44). Another substantial addition to Green Hedges was Mary Engler, who Smallwood writes was "known as the house parlourmaid" (24). Engler was "a refugee from the Nazi regime in Austria", and Imogen believes that the eponymous protagonist of the *Mary Mouse* series was "modelled on Mary" Engler (24, 58).

As well as changes to her home life, Blyton's fictional output was affected by the Second World War. Her magazine survived the difficulties of production caused by the war, unlike many other British titles that ceased publication due to paper shortages. Although *Sunny Stories* survived the production and circulation difficulties caused by the war, the magazine was forced to revert to a fortnightly rather than weekly magazine in April 1942 due to the ongoing paper shortages. In her introductory letter from Green Hedges, Blyton breaks the news to her young readers: "I can't tell you how sorry I am to let you have *Sunny Stories* only once a fortnight now, but we haven't enough paper owing to the War" (V 272, 1). Blyton promises to "have it once a week again as soon as possible", but it remains a fortnightly publication even after the war ends (V 272, 1). In October 1945, Blyton and Newnes are still struggling with paper shortages, with Blyton advising her community of *Sunny Stories* readers to trade and borrow copies of the magazine: "I am so sorry that some of you can't get it, but you must just try and borrow it till we get enough to print a copy for each of you" (V 365, 1). Overall, however, Blyton "seemed to suffer very little from the paper shortage that was limiting book production generally", illustrated by the increasing number of titles published in the 1940s (Smallwood 52). According to Stoney, publishing houses invested in printing materials for Blyton's work because of a "certainty over her selling powers" and their confidence in the Blyton brand was rewarded, for new books published during the Second World War went quickly out of stock (136).

Blyton's productive writing and publishing period in the 1940s was enabled by her use of several publishers: she successfully maintained a high rate of production by using multiple publishers to counteract the restrictions placed on publishing houses by the "War Economy Standard", which provided each publisher with a limited "paper quota" (Gillett 17). Publishing texts with a variety of publishers enabled Blyton to "maximise the number of books printed" (Gillett 17). Resourcefulness on the part of one publisher, E.A. Roker of Brockhampton Press, resulted in the production of the *Mary Mouse* series which began in 1942: the series emerged from the paper shortage issue of the Second World War, with Roker buying "offcuts, small sheets of paper for which there was no obvious use" and inviting Blyton "to write stories to make little booklets" (Ray 27). Blyton created twenty-three *Mary Mouse* books using these small sheets of paper.

***Sunny Stories* during the War**

Kate Agnew and Geoff Fox provide a brief summary of the tone and content of papers, comics and magazines produced for younger children during the Second World War. They write:

> Where very young readers during the First World War were provided with stories about animals, children and soldiers in stirring and even dangerous action, children of a similar age during the Second World War seem to have been protected by either the bravado and ridicule of the comics, or by a gentle insistence that they really shouldn't bother too much about what was going on across the English Channel or in the skies above them. (24)

Their concluding assessment of the fiction available to young children concentrates on the genre's tendency to distract readers from the reality of war, and transform the war and the nation's enemies into figures of humour and ridicule. For example, a 1939 edition of the *Jester* features a "cartoon of a furious Hitler" with his cronies "General Snoring" and "Dr Gobbles" (*Children* 22). Blyton's *Sunny Stories* challenges this perception, for although containing stories of fantasy and adventure, Blyton maintains an engagement with the war through fictional stories, her introductory letters, and the publication of poems about the war submitted by child readers.

The magazines which suffered most from the difficulties caused by the Second World War were the schoolgirl weeklies. According to Drotner, "the majority of the schoolgirl weeklies ceased publication during the war", leaving a void for young female readers (210). What is more, according to Drotner, girls' papers that did survive the war did not engage strongly with the topic of war or adapt to the realities of the war: the framework and ethos of the papers didn't facilitate this transition. Drotner writes that "this transformation took place only in the interwar boys' weeklies”, explaining that from 1933, “a spate of fictional invasions of Britain” were published in Thomson’s ‘Big Five’ papers (216, 231). Warfare had become “an integral part of the schoolboy papers” but, in contrast, the fear of a potential German invasion, and the terror felt by children during the air raids was never “an explicit theme in the *Girls’ Crystal* or the *Schoolgirls’ Own Library*, the only schoolgirl papers to survive the war” (Drotner 215, 232). Girls’ papers largely failed to address or assuage readers’ fears, unlike Blyton’s *Sunny Stories* magazine which although directed towards a younger age demographic, regularly addressed the subject of war for both male and female young readers. Anxieties shared by male and female child readers, such as those elicited by the prospect of evacuation, the anticipation of air-raids, or the eventuality of an invasion, were non-discriminately addressed by Blyton during the Second World War. Therefore, although older female readers were largely neglected in wartime periodicals, young female readers’ concerns, anxieties, and need for distraction were addressed and satiated by Blyton’s mixed-gendered *Sunny Stories*.

While Blyton actively used the magazine to address the fears of her child readers, she also used it to market the ‘Enid Blyton’ brand and encourage readers to purchase her new publications. Readers were encouraged to submit poems, riddles, and puzzles to the magazine, providing space for child readers to share their experiences of war and thoughts on the conflict. However, readers’ submissions were often focused on Blyton’s books and regularly used as reader testimonials and advertisements for the magazine itself. While the magazine provided a space for readers to share their creativity and experiences, the acceptable tone of submissions was exclusively one of optimism and positivity. Poems and puzzles from child readers that incorporated Blyton’s name, the magazine's name, or any of her books were clearly favoured for publication. A trend was established in the 1930s whereby readers' content would praise the quality of the magazine, declare their love of Enid Blyton, and boast about how many Blyton books and magazines they have in their collection. Child readers' submitted poems, including a poem by an evacuated child, were used as reader testimonials and advertisements for the magazine itself. A competitive atmosphere was fostered amongst readers, spurred by Blyton, which encouraged readers' loyalty to the author and encouraged them to purchase more of her books and merchandise. For example, Christmas of 1940 was followed by a volume of *Sunny Stories* which informed readers of one "very lucky" boy who received five Blyton books for Christmas (V 158, 1). Blyton writes in her introductory letter that "I am sure nobody else could have been so lucky". The letter, at the very least, encourages readers to write in and inform Blyton how many books they were fortunate to receive, but also creates a challenge for readers to surpass this number. Readers were incited to prove their level of devotion to Blyton by building a collection of her books and merchandise. The child readers marketed the magazine themselves, and their competitive enthusiasm helped maintain the community of readers created by Blyton.

Realism

As a magazine for a younger age demographic, *Sunny Stories* primarily contained exciting stories of fantasy and adventure, with often a clear moral or lesson communicated in the short stories. Although targeting a younger age group, Blyton addressed the realities of child readers' lives, which in the Second World War resulted in stories about air-raids, Germany, and the prospect of invasion. Blyton's reflection and engagement with the realities of child readers' lives was not instigated by the outbreak of war, but a factor of Blyton's work from her earliest writing. "The Wishing Glove" is a notable original story included in the early years of the *Sunny Stories* magazine: the story focuses on the hardship endured by impoverished families in Britain during the interwar years. In 1926, the first year of the magazine, retellings of international tales comprised the majority of the magazine's content, but an original story written by Blyton focused on Britain, on England specifically, and on contemporary social and economic difficulties. Following the end of the First World War, the unemployment rate in Britain "climbed to 23.4% in May 1921", and "from there, it never fully recovered, remaining over 10% in almost every month of the 1920s" (Paker, 1). The interwar years are characterised as a period of both "poverty and progress", in which "the economy grew at a modest rate" and "living standards improved for those with work" (Gazeley 100). However, it was a harsh period of austerity for those without work, and in Blyton's 1926 story "The Wishing Glove", the realities of poverty in Britain during the interwar period are addressed. The Christmas story begins with the child protagonist forlornly telling his mother, "it's going to be a *horrid* Christmas!" with the mother's response explaining the child's despair: "Daddy can't help being out of work" (V 11, 24). The child's disappointment is not for himself but for his younger siblings who "haven't even got shoes to wear now!" and for his parents: "As for Daddy and you, I don't believe you've had enough to eat for weeks!" (24). Peter, the child protagonist, describes intense poverty, which is alleviated by fantasy and the arrival of Santa Claus. Peter finds a magic glove belonging to Santa Claus and uses the glove to conjure food, a fire, and warm clothing for his family. The tale concludes with the family returning the glove to Santa, for impoverishment, according to Blyton, is no excuse for greed or theft.

In "The Wishing Glove", Blyton combines realism with fantasy to respond to the harsh conditions of working-class child readers' realities, and she continues to use a combination of realism and fantasy to address wartime subjects and assuage child readers' wartime anxieties. “The Wishing Glove” is a Christmas story, and the Christmas period becomes for Blyton a time of increased engagement with the realities of British children’s lives. Christmas is a period of the year in which fantasy and reality combine: adults strive to present magic as real, creating a convincing illusion for children. Interestingly, Blyton chooses this period of the year to write stories that engage heavily with the realities of British poverty and, during the 1940s, with the realities of war. Rather than introducing fantasy to reality – which is Blyton’s *modus operandi* - with Blyton’s Christmas stories, she imbues a level of realism into a culturally magical period of the year. Christmas provides Blyton with a fantastical base upon which she builds a story that addresses difficult themes and subjects, such as poverty and war. Father Christmas bridges the divide between reality and fantasy, and in “The Wishing Glove”, his presence alleviates the children’s suffering. However, in Blyton’s wartime Christmas stories, a fantasy of child heroism is facilitated by tales centred around Father Christmas and Christmas Eve: British child protagonists show their bravery and use their intelligence to rescue Santa Claus, thereby saving Christmas and preventing the fantasy of the Christmas period from being destroyed by the war.

A *Sunny Stories* Christmas issue in 1940 included the story “Good Gracious, Santa Claus!” which begins by reflecting a concern that child readers may have felt during wartime: “do you think Santa Claus will come this Christmas, or do you suppose he will be afraid to, with a war going on?” (V 206, 3). Their fear that “he won’t come to the big towns like London” is due to their knowledge of British defence systems: Father Christmas may “be afraid of his reindeer getting caught in the wires of the barrage balloons” (3). Blyton’s wartime stories often addressed the worries and fears of evacuated children, but here, Blyton addresses the concerns of children within English cities. The child protagonists’ fears are realised when “one of the reindeer ran right into the wire of a barrage balloon!” (4).

Rather than quelling child readers' fears by reassuring readers of the safety of Santa Claus, Blyton presents to readers the prospect of a failed Christmas. This creates a scenario in which British children are positioned as the individuals responsible for preventing such a catastrophe, thereby granting children a certain level of power and responsibility. Santa's reindeers have fled in fright, and Elsie, the child protagonist, asks, "Can't you whistle your reindeer back to you?" to which Santa responds, "Not in war-time, my dear, not in war-time…Not allowed to whistle now…" (5). The rule against whistling was an aspect of the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) enacted during World War I. According to the Imperial War Museum's website, "whistling for London taxis was banned in case it should be mistaken for an air raid warning" (Mason). In this tale, a memory of the First World War is subtly incorporated into Blyton's fictional response to World War Two, resulting in a momentary fictional conflation of both world wars. As whistling is not an option, the child protagonists solve Santa's predicament by suggesting he borrow reindeer from the zoo. The child protagonists are observant, resourceful and quick-thinking, and because of these qualities become the heroes of a Christmas wartime tale.

In 1943, Blyton wrote "When Santa Claus was Captured" which opens with Santa Claus and his reindeer picked out by a "searchlight shining in the sky" (V 317, 2). On the ground, "gunners" are alerted to the sleigh, shout "unknown aeroplane", which consequently results in a soldier training "his gun at the swiftly-moving sleigh" (2). The gunner's shot "went so near the reindeer that they felt it whizz past their noses", and the noise of the shot causes them to gallop to earth (2). Santa's ordeal takes a turn for the worse as the soldiers fail to recognise him: he is "captured… and dragged… into a big tent nearby" (2). Interestingly and somewhat unpatriotically, British defence and British soldiers are portrayed as flawed and foolish in this particular wartime tale. The soldiers are overly suspicious and foolish and incapable of distinguishing Father Christmas’s sleigh from an enemy aircraft. The soldiers are convinced Father Christmas is a “very clever spy” and proceed to tie him up (3). This unflattering portrayal of authoritative adult figures is formulated to facilitate a fantasy of child heroism for readers. A little boy watching events unfold from his window identifies Santa and his reindeer immediately and thinks, “what a shame, they’ve taken him prisoner. How stupid grown-ups are!” (3-4). He frees Santa and admonishes the soldiers: “Fancy you not knowing him! I won’t have him made a prisoner” (5). As with “Good Gracious, Santa Claus!” the magic and fantasy surrounding the Christmas period create an opportunity for child heroism. However, with both stories, Blyton may have inadvertently introduced new fears to child readers: the fear of an injured, incapacitated or even incarcerated Father Christmas. Blyton risks the heightening of such fears to fulfil another objective: to create scenarios in which the innocence of childhood triumphs both the cynicism of adulthood and the atmosphere of suspicion engendered by the war. In other wartime stories, Blyton focuses on creating a distinction between the nature of British characters and the nature of the enemy, but the Christmas stories concentrate on creating a contrast between childhood and the adult world of war, distrust, and cynicism.

The wartime Christmas stories discussed centre on wartime child characters' small, heroic acts. In addition to creating scenarios of child heroism, Blyton considered it important for young child readers to understand the cruel, corrupt nature of the enemy and wrote propaganda-like stories focusing on the wickedness of Britain's enemies. While Blyton used fiction and the magazine to explain to young children the nature of Britain’s wartime enemies, she also understood that writing realistic stories about Germans and Nazis within Britain would be unsuitable and potentially frightening for readers. Blyton transforms Nazi soldiers and Hitler into fictional characters, but in contrast to Agnew and Fox's arguments, these figures are neither ridiculed nor portrayed humorously in the magazine. Instead, they are transformed into fictional characters to communicate to young child readers the danger they pose to Britain and British national identity.

The messages and propaganda of the Second World War, which were propagated by the Ministry of Information and communicated to adults through posters, leaflets, and books, were translated by Blyton into a language and format comprehensible to young readers. Information regarding the war and Britain's role within it were translated for different demographics, including juvenile readers. King George VI's message in 1939 on the justification of the war was directed towards an adult listenership, declaring that the nation was "forced into conflict by a state in the selfish pursuit of power that had disregarded its treaties and its solemn pledges" (Daley 158). In the periodical *Boys' Own Paper* this sentiment was translated into the language of sport and school: a language and context familiar to and understood by the magazine's adolescent male readers. A *Boys' Own* issue from December 1939 includes a note from the editor to readers whose brothers may be fighting in the war: these soldiers, the editor writes, are fighting for "fair play, the protection of weaker nations, the putting down of brutal bullying" so that they can return home to take up their "work again in an England that has fought fair and played the game" (V 62, 4). In the same issue, the language of school is adopted, with the conflicts which arise between pupils likened to Britain's relationship with Germany: "It's bullying brute-force we're up against – the big chap torturing a little chap…we're jolly well going to stop this ruthless bullying for good and all" (V 62, 4). Using the language of sport and school in reference to the war was a continuation of a trend from the First World War, in which juvenile wartime literature described Germany as the "bully in the big European school" (Paris 1). Germany remained the bully in World War Two juvenile fiction, portrayed as a nation that plays unfairly, ruled by a leader who refuses to obey the rules. These unsportsmanlike qualities were presented as antithetical to British national character and British soldiers, who are depicted instead as the protectors of the weak and the vulnerable.

In the *Sunny Stories* magazine, aimed at a younger age demographic than the schoolboy and schoolgirl periodicals, Blyton translates the sentiments and messages of war into a language and format which is comprehensible to a young child readership. Blyton found the formulaic structure and narrative conventions of fantasy and fairy tale helpful in conveying to readers the severity and magnitude of the war. A fairy tale framework is used in the depiction of Hitler and his soldiers in “The Strange Looking Glass” (1940). In “The Horrid Little Soldier” (1941), the conflict of the war is re-enacted in a child’s nursery using toys and dolls, and in the realist tale “Granny’s Bad Apple” (1940), Blyton uses the innocuous concept of an apple storeroom to explain the necessity of defeating Germany. Blyton's methods and genres, including the use of a fairy tale framework and the use of familiar childhood settings, were chosen for their effectiveness in communicating to readers the distinction between the good British character and the corrupt, evil German character. Blyton endeavoured to convey her vision and understanding of the enemy to her child readers in order to clarify Britain’s position in the war as the honourable defenders of rationality and humanity.

In 1940, several stories appeared in the magazine that either directly referenced the Second World War or addressed the war through a fantasy or fairy tale framework. “The Strange Looking Glass” and “Granny’s Bad Apple”, along with the first chapter of the serialised *The Adventurous Four*, were all first published in *Sunny Stories* in 1940. “Granny’s

Bad Apple" is an unusual tale in that it uses a British child character, Sammy, to represent the corrupting evil of Nazi Germany. The characterisation of Sammy is interesting: the child is used by Blyton to represent the looming threat Germany poses to Britain. He is portrayed as an outsider due to his status as a child evacuee and is never present in the tale but rather features as an ominous, abstract threat. In the story, Blyton uses the analogy of a rotten apple and its contamination of other apples to explain the gradual contamination and corruption of individuals, and subsequently, one nation's destruction by another. The story's protagonist, Denis, is the kind, innocent British child whose goodness is threatened by Sammy's presence.

Both Denis and Sammy are evacuees who have been "sent away from the town" because "it was war-time", and during his stay, Denis helps his grandmother with the storing of apples for winter (V 162, 25). Denis' grandmother teaches her grandson to be aware of minor flaws, for "one bad apple will harm all others" (25). This warning is mirrored with Sammy, whose minor flaws are significant in the context of war: he is described as "a sly boy, and very deceitful" (27). Denis is willing to overlook Sammy's character flaws and suggests he comes to live with Denis and his five cousins, but the grandmother forbids it, for "he is a sly boy, and I won't have him with my grandsons" (28). At this point in the story, Blyton begins to explicitly draw comparisons between the story and the danger the war poses to British national character: Denis tells his grandmother, in an outline of the virtues and qualities of an honest British child, that he and his cousins are "truthful", "good and helpful" (28). He promises they "shan't learn bad ways from Sammy", and perhaps even "he'll learn good ways from *us*!" (28). However, the grandmother is determined to protect the children and returns to the analogy of the bad apple to explain and justify her refusal to permit Sammy into her home: she shows Denis how the flawed apple has become "rotten from top to bottom" and furthermore, caused the apples surrounding it to rot (30). Evil, the grandmother explains, "goes on spreading and spreading, and it has to be stopped. That is why we are fighting this war – to stop evil things" (30). The grandmother ultimately fears for the purity of Britons if Germans achieve their objectives and infiltrate and conquer the country. Blyton's decision to prohibit the "sly" Sammy's presence within the story is a symbolic protection of boundaries which correlates with the protection and defence of national borders against external forces. The tale implies that the judgment of Britain's enemies imparted to British youth by authoritative figures must be accepted if the nation is to remain safe and pure. Although Blyton creates a strong contrast in the story between the British national character and the flawed nature of outsiders, the protection of national borders is essential, for, according to this story, the good-natured, honest purity of the British national character is susceptible to corruption.

The Adventurous Four was serialised in *Sunny Stories* from 1940 to February 1941. This serialised text and *The Children of Kidillin* mark Blyton's most direct, realistic engagement with the Second World War. *The Children of Kidillin* was published during the height of Blyton's war-themed writing in 1940 and published under Blyton's pseudonym, Mary Pollock. In both texts, Blyton creates a unity between British nationalities: Scottish and English, with the Scottish protagonist of *The Adventurous Four* becoming the ultimate hero of the text. In both texts, the emphasis is on a united British nation against a common foe: the Germans. Unlike *The Children of Kidillin*, the nationality of the enemy is never explicitly stated in *The Adventurous Four*, but references to the insignia of "the crooked cross" on the side of the discovered submarines identify the enemies as Nazis (94). Short stories published alongside serialised chapters of *The Adventurous Four* also assist the reader in identifying the nationality of the enemy: chapter eighteen, entitled "Heave-Ho! Heave-Ho!", was published in a *Sunny Stories* volume in January 1941 alongside the non-realist short story "The Horrid Little Soldier". In this short story, Blyton explicitly identifies the nationality of Britain's enemy as German and this identification of nationality further confirms the nationality of the enemy in *The Adventurous Four*.

The juxtaposition of *The Adventurous Four* chapter and "The Horrid Little Soldier" illustrates the value in studying the wartime text in its serialised form in the magazine, rather than analysing the text in its 1941 novel form. Other chapters of *The Adventurous Four* are published alongside notices about the war and its impact on periodical publication, which results in a conflation of reality and wartime fiction. In November 1940, a notice with the heading "ASK MUMMY OR DADDY TO READ THIS" is included alongside chapter nine of *The Adventurous Four*, entitled "The Mysterious Visitors" (V 199, 14). The notice provided detailed information on the problems facing periodical and magazine publishing and circulation. The note informs readers' parents and guardians that delays to deliveries are due "to the dislocation of transport caused by air raids" (V 199). As the notice is printed below a list of competition winners and is written in simple language, child readers likely read this notice and understood the problem. With this notice, fiction and reality overlap, for the notice appears after fictional stories about German enemies and black-outs in British cities. The first story published in this 1940 volume of *Sunny Stories* concerns the safe celebration of Guy Fawkes Day: fireworks "were not allowed… of course, because it was war-time" and the child protagonists are aware of the fact they cannot have a bonfire "at night because of the black-out" (V 199, 32). The disappointment of not having fireworks or a bonfire at night is placed within the broader context of war in the volume's next story, a chapter of the serialised text *The Adventurous Four*. The necessity of black-outs in British cities is due to the menacing enemy referred to in the chapter of *The Adventurous Four*: the protagonists of the wartime text see “a seaplane” with “the sign of the crooked cross… painted on each wing” (V 199, 18). The symbol, the narrator explains, is the “sign of the enemy, the foe of half the world” (18). The problems facing the delivery and circulation of *Sunny Stories* are linked with the events of wartime fictional stories published within the magazine. Through this juxtaposition, domestic inconveniences to children’s lives within Britain – the delayed delivery of favourite magazines, the prohibition of fireworks - are connected to the wider global conflict and ultimately to the German enemy. Individual stories are enriched by the magazine’s surrounding content, which includes notices and advertisements as well as other published stories, with child readers gaining a greater understanding of the war through the interlinking content of the magazine.

The textual and visual representation of the German army in *The Adventurous Four* does not seek to incite fear or terror in the reader’s mind. Instead, the book seeks to inspire patriotism in readers by eliciting awe and admiration for the protagonists’ bravery and perseverance. It is interesting to note here Kirsten Drotner’s assessment of the content of boys’ magazines as the threat of war and the threat of invasion increased. Drotner writes:

> [W]hen the threat of air raids and German invasions became realities, it ceased being possible, apparently, to treat that threat in a manner that was at once probable and pleasing. So the seriousness of battle was turned into a matter of laughter and merriment, or the center of action was transposed to exotic areas a safe distance from the British shores. (234)

In *The Adventurous Four*, child protagonists encounter German enemies on British shores. The tone of the story remains serious throughout, and a “probable and pleasing” conclusion is created in which the British protagonists are praised as heroes for discovering and alerting

British authorities to the hidden enemy base. Blyton used both realism and fantasy to respond to the threat of the Second World War, but in both responses, she maintained a seriousness in her fiction that was respectful of wartime fears of invasion.

In both realist texts, *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin*, references are made to real wartime events which further enhances the seriousness of these texts. These allusions enhance the realism of both texts, and as both stories portray a foiling of German enemy plans, the increased realism strengthens the reassurance Blyton offers in her fiction of a defeat of Nazi Germany. In *The Children of Kidillin*, the evacuated London children learn that submarines off the coast of Kidillin have torpedoed multiple British steamers. Sandy informs the London children on a mountain hike, “Over there is where the *Yelland* went down…And not far from it the *Harding* was torpedoed too” (30). Later, the governess tells the children that two more steamers have been sunk since the *Yelland* and the *Harding*: “by a submarine too – so there must be one lurking about somewhere” (54). In October 1939, a battleship anchored in Orkney, Scotland, was torpedoed by a German submarine. The characters’ referencing of the bombing and sinking of British steamers off the coast of Scotland seems to be an allusion to the real warship, the *Royal Oak*. In a discussion of *The Adventurous Four*, Owen Dudley Edwards draws a parallel between the working-class boat owners Andy and Andy’s father and the heroes of Dunkirk: “The story with its images of young children and working-class fishing-folk using frail boats to check Nazi armed forces was evidently prompted by Dunkirk” (287). Blyton includes references to significant, real moments during the war to strengthen her wartime fiction's patriotic, nationalistic messages.

These two realist wartime texts facilitate an empowerment of child characters – including evacuees - and a fantasy of heroism. In *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four*, the children are praised for their heroic deeds and for following their instincts, with an end reward of recognition and praise from authoritative adults. In the fantasy series *The Faraway Tree*, which was serialised in *Sunny Stories* throughout the war, adult praise is never sought, and the reward is in the defence of the land and its inhabitants. In this way, the fantasy series is less accommodating to children's needs and desires for recognition and acknowledgement of courageous, honourable deeds. Although the settings and the events of *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin* are realistic, these texts facilitate the fantasies of wartime children more readily: in both stories, the children become war heroes, praised by their families and recognised by authority figures as 'plucky' and daring, active defenders of their nation.

In *The Adventurous Four*, Andy is "a Scots boy" (144), but his nationality is downplayed for the purposes of presenting a united British front. English and Scottish protagonists in this wartime text are united and equal as "British children" (110). Jill, Mary, and Tom are the three characters who travel to Scotland for their summer holiday - travelling, presumably, from somewhere in England. Like Andy, they are identified emphatically as British rather than as English. After encountering foreign enemies, Tom is pleased that "neither Jill nor Mary cried", demonstrating to "the enemy how brave British children could be!" (144). A sense of British national identity is celebrated, with Andy comforting an upset Mary by telling her "We have to be brave now. We are British children, and so we have plenty of courage and heaps of ideas" (110). The union presented between English and Scottish characters is most strongly emphasised between the two male protagonists: Tom and Andy. Tom is also the name of the English child evacuee in *The*

Children of Kidillin, and the naming of these two characters is perhaps an unconscious reference to the British nickname for a common soldier, 'Tommy Atkins', or simply 'Tommy'. The two protagonists form a soldierly brotherhood, mirroring the camaraderie Blyton imagines between British soldiers at the front. Following their discovery of an enemy "submarine base so near our own land" on an isolated island, the two boys understand the urgency in alerting British authorities (94). The English Tom tells the Scottish Andy, "I don't care how much danger we're in… All I know is that we've got to go and tell our people at home about this submarine base" (85). In response, "Andy nodded", and the narrator tells the reader:

> both boys seemed to become men at that moment. They looked gravely into each other's eyes and what they saw there pleased them both. Each boy knew that the other would do his best and even more than his best. (85)

Although merely children, the British boys exhibit the bravery and resolve of adult soldiers. At the conclusion of the tale, the young protagonists successfully expose the enemy war base to the British authorities, thwarting the plans of the Nazis and consequently protecting the borders of Britain. The English children's Air Force father finds the protagonists and informs the children they "are sending warships and some aeroplanes to deal with the submarines and seaplanes" (185). Andy exhibits an enthusiasm for war, telling the British soldiers, "wouldn't I like to join the fight!" in a display of patriotism and pluckiness that the British airmen praise: "You're a good lad Andy" (185-186). Significantly, the Scottish child becomes the hero of the tale, but importantly, a Scottish child whose British national identity is stressed throughout the story.

The description of the boys' maturation as a result of their involvement in war mirrors Peter's coming of age in C.S. Lewis's "Narnia" series: Peter becomes "a tall and deep chested man and a great warrior…" over the course of the "Narnia" series (Melton *British Fantastic* 155). In both Blyton and Lewis's work, the experience of war and participation in conflict helps transform boys into men, or at least into slightly more robust boys. The idea of war as physically regenerative was prevalent in Britain during the First World War: war could be beneficial to a nation as it hardened its citizens and strengthened its male population. Edwardian Britain was criticised for its over-indulgent ways, with battles and conflicts serving as the antidote to physically deteriorated nations. According to Michael Adams, war was "good for the body politic… war scrubbed clean national arteries... clogged with wealth and ease, produced a trimmer, fitter culture" (Paris 13). Tom in *The Adventurous Four* is the weaker of the two male protagonists: he is less courageous, less physically skilled and less physically strong than Andy. The boys' war adventures physically and psychologically strengthen Tom. In Blyton's wartime fiction, war also unifies individual British nations: in *The Adventurous Four*, the English and Scottish characters mature together in the face of an external enemy force.

The unity between English and Scottish characters in both *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin* arises from the necessity of evacuating children from London. Before discussing the unity of nationalities and social classes in *The Children of Kidillin*, the short stories published in *Sunny Stories* that feature evacuated children or reference evacuation are first examined. These short stories illustrate Blyton's engagement with the figure of the displaced child and demonstrate Blyton's efforts to console the fears and anxieties of her displaced child readers. Agnew and Fox discuss the theme of displacement and the portrayal of evacuees in children's fiction published after the Second World War: "powerlessness and vulnerability" are the emotional states attributed to evacuees in texts set during the war, which differs drastically from Blyton's literary depiction of displaced children (*Children* 92). Sympathy for the child evacuee character is common in late-twentieth century children's texts about the war, for instance in Michelle Magorian's *Goodnight Mister Tom*. Penny Elaine Starns and Martin L. Parsons refer to the "pervasive wartime stereotype of the 'dirty evacuee'" which "quickly developed" during the war: urban children were seen as "young criminals" uncivilised and ill-mannered (270). Blyton rejects this stereotype of the uncivilised, criminal evacuee in her realist wartime texts of *The Children of Kidillin* and in short stories published in *Sunny Stories*. The absent child evacuee character of "Granny's Bad Apples", Sammy, is an exception to Blyton's otherwise positive collection of fictional child evacuees: Sammy is an abstract figure in the tale, used as a representative of the corrupting influence of evil rather than an actual character. In her other wartime texts, Blyton creates positive, active roles for evacuated characters, contrasting with other children's wartime literature wherein evacuees are portrayed as isolated and helpless, with readers encouraged to befriend and support them. For example, in an issue of *The Boy's Own Paper* published in December 1939, the editor suggests different ways in which readers can assist in the war effort: boys are encouraged to help the Air Raid Precaution warden with his duties, but also encouraged to be kind to evacuees, as they must naturally be "feeling a bit lonely and strange" (V 62, 3).

Sunny Stories provided Blyton with a means through which to instantaneously respond to the fears of child readers, including the feelings of trepidation brought about by the prospect of leaving one's home and one's family and moving to an unfamiliar place for an indefinite amount of time. Blyton responds to their anxieties with positive evacuation tales, tales in which child protagonists immensely enjoy their time in the countryside.

Evacuees in Blyton's realist stories are portrayed positively, granted agency, and provided with roles within the Home Front, ranging from morale boosting to national defence. Rather than being disempowered by their separation and displacement, Blyton's literary evacuees are empowered by the potential positive effects their presence in the countryside can have. As civilians in the Home Front, evacuees contribute in the effort to protect their nation: in *The Children of Kidillin*, the London evacuees work alongside their Scottish cousins to survey British coasts and ultimately foil the attempts of the traitorous spies to sink British steamers. Blyton's fiction supported government messages encouraging parents to evacuate children from British cities and towns through this positive portrayal of evacuation and child evacuees.

In "Benny's Barrow", published in March 1940 six months after the first wave of evacuations (named "Operation Pied Piper"), a young boy is told he must "leave his home in a big town and go far away into the country, because it was war-time" (V 167, 23). The story begins with a pleasant, appealing depiction of the countryside and a description of Benny's excitement "to see flowers growing in the fields, and cows and sheep…all over the place" (23). Although Blyton tends to romanticise certain aspects of evacuation, the practical, financial benefits of housing evacuees are made clear to her young readers: Mrs Brown, Benny's host, "didn't really want" the child "because she wasn't used to children", but as she was poor, "thought that it would be a help to have a little money coming into the house" (23). Evacuation is presented as an opportunity for adventure but also presented as an opportunity to be useful and helpful to others. Benny assists his elderly host by bringing food from the town to her rural house, which to Benny "felt grand. It felt important" (28). Benny is a helpful, well-behaved, and understanding boy whose presence brings cheer to his rural billet: Mrs Brown tells Benny, "you're a kind-hearted little boy… You make me kind too!” (30). The young evacuee’s arrival boosts morale at the Home Front. In Blyton’s *Sunny Stories* tales, child protagonists often demonstrate desirable characteristics and virtues worthy of emulation to readers. With the case of “Benny’s Barrow”, Benny’s willingness to work, his cheerful disposition and his lack of self-pity are presented as characteristics for wartime children and particularly child evacuees to emulate.

Blyton’s fiction supported the messages circulated by the government’s Ministry of Information department regarding evacuation operations and the importance of keeping children out of Britain’s cities. This was important, especially during the first year of the war, the “Phoney War”, when “nearly half of all evacuees returned home by January 1940” due to the non-arrival of the expected bombs on urban areas (Harris and Webb *Imperial*). The Government Evacuation Scheme “played on the fears of parents and argued that children would be healthier and stronger in the country”; a portrayal of the countryside certainly adhered to by Blyton in her fiction (Norris 77). A poster from 1939 entitled “Don’t do it, Mother – Leave the Children where they are” depicts a ghostly Hitler standing behind a mother telling her to take her children back to the city (Harris and Webb *Imperial*). Blyton’s positive spin on evacuation, her pleasant and exciting accounts of the countryside, her creation of stories featuring good, kind, and most importantly happy evacuees served a national service: she presented the prospect of evacuation in a way that was reassuring to readers and subsequently comforting to parents. In *Sunny Stories*, the concept of evacuation is consistently presented positively: the evacuation scheme provided children with the opportunity to explore the British countryside, which for Blyton is a far healthier and far more suitable landscape for children than industrialised, modern cities. Blyton’s magazine and books remained supportive of the government’s evacuation scheme and firm in their assurance of evacuation as an exciting adventure.

Evacuation as a subject matter was regularly incorporated into Blyton's published stories, but evacuation and the subject of war in general also featured on the peripheries of the magazine. Readers of *Sunny Stories* were encouraged to submit poems, puzzles and riddles to the magazine, with one reader submitted piece published in each issue. In 1940, a reader's submitted poem, "Bedtime", is published which talks of brave soldiers and the "Boys in Blue" and how these men are included in the child's nightly prayers (V 196, 2). The sentiments of the poem are echoed in Blyton's 1940 serialised text *The Adventurous Four* in which the children's Air Force father is admired as "a fine man, dressed in his grand uniform" (186) and again in the 1941 short story "The Horrid Little Soldier", in which the British doll voices his praise for "our brave airmen" (V 208, 4). A child reader's poem entitled "My Daddy" is published in 1942, which praises the "very good example" set by the child's policeman father as he always has "his gas-mask" hung "across his nice broad shoulders" (V 264). This section of the magazine afforded wartime readers a platform to voice their own thoughts on the war and their evacuation experiences. In 1944, a reader's father submits a poem to the magazine on behalf of his evacuated daughter living in Jamaica. The poem's publication suggests parents and guardians interacted with the magazine and may have been comforted by the magazine's uplifting depictions of evacuated children. The notices and advertisements framing the magazine were also often directed towards adults rather than child readers – for example, the note for "Mummy and Daddy" explaining to parents the delivery delays caused by air-raids - further suggesting a dual parent/child readership. The arrival of the magazine every second Friday, and the predictable, formulaic content was a welcome item of normality for children in an extremely turbulent and disruptive time. One child reader's submitted poem, titled "An Evacuee", is a letter of gratitude to Blyton, thanking her for the routine of the magazine and the comfort her writing brings: "I am a little evacuee,/And I am happy as a bumble bee, / I have *Sunny Stories* every week, /And now I have a nice big heap". The poem concludes: "To you, dear Enid Blyton,/ I say a big 'Thank you'!" (V 273, 2). The writer of the poem, June Crouch, is an embodiment of the fictional cheerful evacuee Blyton features in her war fiction.

Blyton includes many direct references to evacuation and evacuees in the fiction she published between 1939 and 1945, but in 1938, with the publication of the first chapter of *The Enchanted Wood* in *Sunny Stories*, Blyton appears to pre-empt the relocation of women and children to the countryside. In addition to the fantasy text presenting a positive relocation narrative, *The Enchanted Wood* pre-empts the absence of fathers during wartime and the change to women's lives caused by men's absence. *The Faraway Tree* characters relocate to the countryside at the beginning of the series, and while the father does accompany the family to their new home, he disappears shortly afterwards leaving the mother to provide for the family. War was looming in 1938, with David Lilly writing that on the "20 September 1938, the world appeared to be on the brink of war" ("British Reaction"). Preparations for the war and evacuation plans began in this year, with major disruptions to civilians' lives expected. The Government Evacuation Scheme developed during the summer of 1938 which endeavoured to prepare for "how the country could respond to prolonged, destructive, aerial bombardment" ("The Evacuation"). According to the National Archives website, "small scale evacuations of women and children took place at the height of the Munich Crisis in September 1938" ("Evacuees"). Jill Flewett, an evacuee sent from London to Oxford where she lived with C.S Lewis, described how the school she attended had prepared for the announcement of evacuation and practised for it in 1938, the year before the actual order was announced ("Evacuees"). While it remains uncertain whether the protagonists' relocation to the countryside in the *Faraway* series is prompted by Britain's early evacuation plans, the series' subsequent concerns with the defence of borders and the defeat of intruders is indicative of a connection with the Second World War.

Blyton's concern for evacuated children and her focus on the character of the displaced child in stories published in the *Sunny Stories* magazine is carried forward into her novel *The Children of Kidillin*. Blyton published the books under her pseudonym, Mary Pollock, and in the novel, the necessity of evacuation instigates a union and a friendship between characters of different British nationalities and from different social classes. Interestingly, aspects of evacuation - such as homesickness, loneliness, feelings of displacement and unbelonging - which are omitted from stories published under 'Enid Blyton' are explored in *The Children of Kidillin*. Unlike the optimistic evacuees featured in the *Sunny Stories* tales, Tom and Sheila are initially disappointed by their temporary rural home, which seems "plain and rather ugly" (8). They express their longing to return home: Sheila cries, "We'd like to see the big London buses we love, and our tall policemen…It's p-p-p-perfectly horrid b-b-being here – and I w-w-w-want my m-m-m- mother!" (26). Under the pseudonym, Blyton created a space to explore themes and emotional states which may have jarred with the optimism of the 'Enid Blyton' brand. The permittance of pessimism and sadness into the text is due to the realism of the story and the book's intended older readership. For Blyton to write of German spies, of British ships being torpedoed by submarines and the consequent death of British soldiers, but then deny, or ignore the feelings of anxiousness and homesickness felt by evacuated children would invalidate the realism of the story, and so Blyton chooses to address these negative emotional states.

Kidillin is home to the English evacuees' Scottish cousins, and initially, Blyton emphasises the differences and hostility between the two nationalities. The two pairs of children argue over the pronunciation of words, with Sandy, the Scottish boy, mocking his English cousins' accents: "Can't you talk properly?" (10). Sandy and his sister Jeanie are physically strong and fit from constantly roaming the mountains surrounding their home, whereas the London evacuees are unused to strenuous physical activity. Sandy again mocks the evacuees, telling them, "a lazy lot of folk you Londoners must be!" (11). Academically, however, Tom and Sheila surpass their Scottish cousins, and the English children use their advanced school level to equalise the playing field with their physically stronger Scottish counterparts. The English pair ridicule and infantilise the Scottish children, mocking the children for how far behind they are according to English school standards: "Why, at home even the *first* class could writer better than you can!" (21). The portrayal of English protagonists as knowledgeable and intellectual, and conversely of characters of other British nationalities - Scottish and Welsh - as connected to the natural landscape and as physically dexterous is a relationship dynamic that Blyton repeats in other texts, including in the post-war *Adventure* series. In *The Adventurous Four*, Andy's knowledge of the landscape, practical skills and physical strength elevate the Scottish character to a leadership role in times of war. Blyton decides to make Andy older than the rest of the group to further reinforce his position as leader. In the imperial *Adventure* series, these practical, physical qualities remain attributed to non-English characters – including Scottish and Welsh characters - but in texts set outside of wartime, these qualities are strongly associated with primitiveness. Singh discusses the distinctions Blyton makes between English, Scottish, and Welsh characters, highlighting the subordinate positions non-English characters generally occupy in Blyton's texts. Singh uses *The Famous Five* series as an example of the different hierarchical positions occupied by English and non-English characters: the lower-class character Aily in *Five Fall into Adventure* is described as a “ragamuffin” girl and a “little Welsh waif” (Singh 221). With the wartime text *The Children of Kidillin*, although differences exist between the Scottish and English children, the characters recognise and respect the skills of the other group, and furthermore, they become more alike and more equal as the story progresses: the relationship between the protagonists becomes mutually beneficial, with the English children’s physical strength and the Scottish children’s academic abilities improving because of their time spent together. This equality and unity is incited by the presence of a common, foreign enemy and the overarching threat of war.

Participation in the war through the finding of enemy spies in the Scottish countryside uplifts the spirits of the English evacuees, who eventually thoroughly enjoy their sojourn in Kidillin. The evacuated English children, like the protagonists of Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia*, become embroiled in a conflict from which their relocation intended to keep them safe. The opening sentence of Lewis’s *Narnia* establishes the text’s wartime framing: “Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids” (*The Lion* 1). War is presented as inescapable, even for children, and as encroaching upon rural Britain in both Lewis’s and Blyton’s fiction. The perception of the countryside as a safe refuge isolated from the dangers of war is subverted by the conflicts occurring within these rural spaces. While roaming the mountains surrounding the rural, isolated village of Kidillin, the children discover spies and a “strange looking machine” in an old cottage (12). The discovery creates an opportunity for the group to become involved in the war effort, and this opportunity helps the English and Scottish children to put aside their differences and work together to thwart the plans of their common enemy: "They all felt excited and important. They were out to catch spies, and to find out their secrets!" (64).

Although the identities of the spies remains vague, we learn that one is German, and upon discovering that one of the suspicious men is called Carl and speaks with an accent, the Scottish children's father decides he must alert the police for "Carl is a German name" (45). A distance is maintained between the British protagonists and the German enemy which ensures that neither the protagonists nor the reader sympathise with the men, and we unreservedly celebrate their capture and defeat at the story's conclusion. The two spies in *The Children of Kidillin* are indistinct figures who remain on the peripheries of the narrative: Blyton does not permit the enemies to properly enter the narrative or engage with the protagonists. Instead, they are restricted to the geographical margins of the story. In *The Adventurous Four*, the enemy is also isolated to the outer limits of the text: this isolation protects the child reader from the disturbing, frightening concept of a full German infiltration while also addressing the fear of such an eventuality in a safe, controlled format. Their presence in the story is minimal: the focus remains throughout on the child protagonists, with the German soldiers and spies rarely permitted the space to speak. Any dialogue between the two spies is indirectly recounted by the protagonists: their voices are not permitted in the narrative. Individual spies and enemies feature as indistinct, abstract figures, and Blyton portrays the overall enemy in a similar, abstract manner: Captain MacLaren refers to Britain's enemies as "evil things", in language which functions to dehumanise the Nazis (93). Referring to the enemy as 'evil' strengthens the contrast between the British and German nation, with the conflict reduced to a simple battle between good and evil. The four child protagonists' actions in assisting in the defeat of evil reinforces their sense of inherent goodness.

The discovered German machine is a “wireless transmitter” which is being used to transmit the location of British steamers to German submarines (80). The realisation of its use enrages the young protagonists: “that’s what they’ve been doing, the wretches! As soon as they see the steamers pass on the sea in the distance, they send a wireless message to some submarine lurking nearby, and the submarine torpedoes the steamer!” (80-81). As in *The Adventurous Four*, the protagonists of *The Children of Kidillin* are provided with an opportunity to obstruct the enemies’ plans and actively assist in the defence of their country. Sandy, the Scottish child, destroys the transmitter, successfully preventing any further steamers from being sunk (81). Blyton incorporates the new technologies of war and battle into the children’s text, increasing the realism of the story: Captain MacLaren tells the children, “we’ll probably get the submarine out there that’s been damaging our shipping – for we’ll send out a false message, and ask it to get in a certain position to sink a ship – but our aeroplanes will be there to sink the submarine instead!” (93). A fantasy act of wartime heroism is created, in which young British schoolchildren destroy advanced German military technology. Although only children, their contribution to the war effort is substantial, and furthermore, their involvement is encouraged by the Scottish children’s father, Captain MacLaren. Mrs MacLaren, the children’s mother, dislikes “all this talk of sinking this and that” and worries about the children being “mixed up in adventures of this sort” (93). Their father, in contrast, recognises the need for all British citizens – children included – to assist in the defence of the nation and the defeat of evil: “When countries are at war, everything is different… We are fighting evil things, and I am glad we have such plucky children to help us!” (93). The children’s evacuation, furthermore, leads to a strong connection being formed between two different British nationalities, English and Scottish; a relationship which is emphatically celebrated at the conclusion of the story.

The end of the story celebrates the union of English and Scottish characters, particularly the male comradeship between Sandy and Tom. The reader is reminded by Captain MacLaren of the English and Scottish children's turbulent, hostile relationship at the beginning of the story: "I *did* hear that you couldn't bear one another at one time" (94). The development of their relationship and resolution of their differences is highlighted and praised: the Scottish Sandy tells his father that he "couldn't' have done it without Tom", while explaining the discovery and capture of the spies (94). In response, Tom tells the Captain, "I'm proud of my Scottish cousins", to which the Captain replies, "And I'm proud of my English nephew and niece!" (94). Equality and a sense of harmony is reached between the English and Scottish protagonists, which contrasts with the relationship between British nationalities in Blyton's imperial adventure series published at the end of the war and discussed in the next chapter. In Blyton's post-war *Adventure* series, relationships between English, Welsh, and Scottish characters are largely harmonious, but this harmony is based on unequal power relationships. The Scottish male characters of *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin* occupy positions of power, but leadership roles are exclusively assigned to English protagonists in Blyton's post-war *Adventure* series.

Non-Realist/Fantasy Response

Blyton's literary response to the Second World War was twofold: it encompassed both a realist and non-realist approach. This chapter, so far, has focused on Blyton's realist wartime publications: "Granny's Bad Apple", *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin* address the subject of war and the concept of evil while remaining grounded in realism. Other texts, including the short stories "The Strange Looking-Glass" and "The Horrid Little Soldier" and the series *The Faraway Tree*, are non-realist, fantasy responses to the war. Blyton’s non-realist short stories and series exhibit the same fears of invasion, contamination, and subordination at the hands of powerful enemies as her more explicit stories about the war. In studying both modes of response, it becomes clear that a non-realist form provided Blyton with a suitable framework to consider the enemy's nature and explore the nature and origin of evil. Moreover, the non-realist form facilitated for Blyton a means to safely play out catastrophic scenarios, including the prospect of an invasion of British spaces by enemy forces. *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four* are realistic stories framed by war and evacuation, but these texts maintain a focus on British child protagonists and portray the enemy as abstract, peripheral figures. In the realistic setting of Scotland in *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin*, a distance is maintained between the enemy and the human child protagonists. In contrast, in Blyton’s short non-realist stories, the enemy is positioned at the centre of the narrative, which initiates an exploration of the enemy's individual and national character.

Many of Blyton’s realist and non-realist wartime texts are examples of invasion narratives. These invasion stories are part of a tradition of children’s invasion texts that emerged from adult invasion fiction's popularity in the nineteenth century. Invasion narratives for adult readers in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century were hugely popular, with books such as Erksine Childers’ *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903) and William Le Queux’ *The Invasion* (1906) enjoying “enormous success” in the early twentieth century (Drotner 230). Children’s invasion texts featured a similar plethora of potential invaders as were found in adult invasion narratives. In 1909, P.G. Wodehouse wrote *The Swoop! or How Clarence Saved England,* satirising the invasion novel. It tells how a “troop of gallant Boy Scouts liberate Britain from simultaneous occupation by nine foreign armies” (Bulfin *Gothic Invasions* 12). The theme of “the movement of evil toward home” first emerged in the juvenile boys' papers of the early twentieth century during the Edwardian period (Drotner 230). Sidney Gowing, writing under the pseudonym John Tregellis, wrote a series of stories entitled "Britain Invaded", "Britain at Bay" and "Britain's Revenge", first serialised in *Boys' Friend* in 1906 and "undoubtedly inspired by the enormous success" of Childers and Le Queux' work (Drotner 230). Gowing's books "like their counterparts for adults" became "extremely popular" (Drotner 230). Beginning in 1933, six years before the outbreak of war, the hugely successful Scottish publisher of story-papers D.C. Thomson began publishing "a spate of fictional invasions of Britain" in their Big Five papers: *Wizard, Rover, Skipper, Hotspur* and *Adventure*. In Blyton's work, potential invaders in the realist texts are confined to the borders of the narrative and concurrently the borders of Britain. Blyton's realist texts hint at the possibility of infiltration and invasion, but they are reserved in their expression of these fears due to the setting of the novels in contemporary, realistic Britain. The fantasy texts, in contrast, allow Blyton to fictionally engage with the profound fear of invasion experienced by British civilians during the Second World War.

In her literary-historical analysis of British children's fantasy fiction, Smith describes the fantasy texts published for children between 1940 and 1949 as playful and "light-hearted" and "designed to amuse and distract, instead of focusing on the havoc that was so graphically being illustrated to a war-weary British populace" (*The Fabulous Realm* 3). According to Smith, the fundamental objective of children's fantasy authors writing during the war was to distract and divert the reader's attention from the conflict and turmoil of reality. This was achieved by creating stories that removed the child reader from the conflict and offered an opportunity to temporarily escape. Blyton's short fantasy tales published in *Sunny Stories* challenge Smith's assessment by incorporating the realities of the war: Blyton seeks to assuage child readers' fears through stories of fantasy, reassuring child readers of the supremacy of the British forces.

In studies of wartime children's fiction, including juvenile periodicals, fantasy is identified as a useful genre through which to write about the war and through which to distance the events of the war from the reader's lived reality. Fantasy and fairy tale are commonly negatively associated with escapism, with escapism as a concept in children's texts used as proof of the text's ignoring of "the realities of life…" (Bird 4). However, other scholars discuss J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S Lewis's use of fantasy, fairy tale and allegory to portray the war and explain Britain's role within the conflict. Tolkien and Lewis were both accused of writing and facilitating escapism (Shippey 86), but Tolkien's understanding of escapism was as a means to transform "experience into another form and symbol", not to shun experience or reality (Helen "Tolkien"). Paul Fussell in studying fantasy as a "legitimate literary response to the war" uses Northrop Frye's "theory of modes to delineate the place of fantasy on the cycle of possible literary reactions to trauma" (1). Shippey includes Tolkien and Lewis in his categorisation of twentieth-century war and post-war "traumatised authors", with Shippey arguing that "the authors who spoke most powerfully about the events of the twentieth century have for some reason found it necessary to use the metaphoric mode of fantasy, to write about worlds and creatures we know do not exist" ("Tolkien" 81-82). Tolkien contemplated his own choice of genre – fantasy, and a fairy tale framework - for *The Lord of the Rings* and explained: "it was an escape…and at the same time, it may have become a way to wrest meaning from incomprehensible experience by transforming it into something more familiar" (Croft 28).

Shippey argues that the twentieth-century non-realist fiction of Lewis, Tolkien, George Orwell, William Golding and T.H. White are connected by a theme: “that theme is the nature of evil, a subject handled by all five with extreme originality, deep reluctance to accept prior opinion, however authoritative, and sometimes a degree of obsession” (85). The five authors’ preoccupation with the concept of evil was “forced upon them by their life experience” rather than chosen as an interesting topic to explore through fiction (all but one of the authors, T.H. White, served in the war) (85). Shippey also argues that to a certain extent, these five men “became writers of fiction… to articulate this theme” in an attempt to gain clarity on “the major issue of British politics” between 1900-1950, which encompass both world wars (85-86). In an essay on Tolkien, Peter Grybauskas reinforces Shippey’s argument and describes the author’s work as “principally concerned with the nature of evil” (92). All five “post-war fantasists” chose non-realism as the genre through which to examine the nature of evil: they “turned to fantasy, or fable, or science fiction, however one likes to label their genres because they felt that the theme of human evil was not one which could be rendered adequately or confronted directly through the medium of realistic fiction alone” (85-86). With non-realism, authors can adapt the symbolism and imagery of mythology, fantasy and fairy tale to bring clarity to the complexity of war.

Blyton’s mid-twentieth century wartime fiction for young child readers exhibits a similar preoccupation with the theme of evil. However, a primary difference between Tolkien, Lewis, and Blyton’s fiction is timing. Blyton responded to the conflict and speculated on the nature and origin of evil while Britain was still fighting against the Axis powers. For example, in February 1940, Blyton published the short story “The Strange Looking Glass”, which addresses the expansion of the Third Reich under Hitler’s rule using a fairy tale framework and fairy tale language. Published in *Sunny Stories*, the tale is a political allegory that employs fairy tale narrative conventions to address the subject of war, the conflict between good and evil, the prospect of invasion, and effectively convey the violence and cruelty of Hitler and Nazi Germany. The tale provides further proof that Blyton's objectives in her wartime fiction were not exclusively to provide consolatory reading and escapism: clarification of the war and of Britain's role in it constitute two primary objectives of the author's wartime publications.

As with fairy tales, the story's opening sentence lacks definitive place or time markers, and the use of "once" is indicative of the story's fairy tale form: "There was once a man who was chief of a big country" (V160, 7). In the short story, characters and events are far enough removed from reality to avoid frightening or disturbing young readers, but the primary elements of the tale are sufficiently analogous to the current war and Germany's incessant crusade across Europe for readers to draw parallels between "Lord Biff" and Hitler. The name of the character, Biff, is "appropriately childish", as 'biff' was "the current playground slang for 'hit'" (Edwards, 159). Although the name is, according to Edwards, "childish" and intended as a joke, the story itself is solemn and dark, with religion enhancing the earnestness of the tale. Lord Biff - the fictional, fairy tale embodiment of Hitler – is determined to expand his kingdom and orders his "fierce and cruel men" to invade "the little country of Nearby, and make it mine" (V 160, 7). Biff's soldiers are then ordered to "go to the land of Notfaroff, and tell them I am sorry they do not belong to me…Tell them I will do all I can to make them Biff men" believing they would rather be part of his empire (7). People of Notfaroff "hated belonging to Lord Biff" but are forced to surrender "for the Biffians were very cruel and strong" (7). The demonisation of a ruler who wishes to expand his kingdom and believes other nations would prefer to be part of his great empire is ironic given Blyton's support for British colonialism in her adventure fiction. There is a lack of awareness on Blyton’s part of the hypocrisy in condemning a nation for invading and subjugating other nations.

Biff is portrayed as a delusional figure, who believes he is “the greatest man in the world” but through the intervention of a Christ-like character, the true natures of Biff and his men are revealed to be animalistic (9). Religious references are very rare in *Sunny Stories*: Jesus is referred to in a poem written by Blyton in 1939 (V 154), and two child readers’ submitted poems make reference to praying, one of which is about praying for the brave “Boys in Blue” during wartime (V 196). In “The Strange Looking Glass”, a character resembling Jesus is responsible for revealing Biff’s sub-human nature. He possesses a mirror which he tells Lord Biff “is the eye of God”, and within this mirror, Biff is reflected as a “rat”, a “peacock”, a “snake”, and a “treacherous, cowardly jackal” (8-9). Biff’s soldiers and the men Biff relies on for advice are portrayed in the mirror as either passive, “poor, stupid sheep” or vicious predators: “he held the mirror up to another of his great friends, and in the glass he saw faithfully reflected the horrible head of a savage wolf, a snarling dog, a cruel vulture-bird, and a sharp-nosed rat” (10). Incensed by his men’s sub-humanness, passivity and viciousness, Biff orders his soldiers to “kill them all!”, which further emphasises Biff’s delusional and cruel nature (10). The tale ends with Biff’s demise, brought about by his realisation that “he was only a mad dog leading a troop of sheep and mice” (11). In this tale, Blyton utterly dehumanises Britain’s enemies and positions them in opposition to God and Christianity. Britain and British soldiers are consequently and implicitly positioned on the side of God, with Christ’s reckoning of Lord Biff a hopeful reassurance of the ultimate defeat of evil.

Representing Hitler and the Nazi army as animals aligns with the broader trend within twentieth-century British fiction to portray Germany and Germans as subhuman. Germany was presented as the largest and most obvious threat to Britain's empire in pre-World War One fiction, and the nation was consequently vilified and demonised. The dehumanisation and demonisation of national foes were established tropes of the genre of invasion narratives, a genre defined by Bulfin as "a paranoid literary phenomenon that responded to widespread social concerns about the possible invasion of Britain by an array of hostile foreign forces in the period between 1870 and 1914" ("To Arms!"). Milne argues of pre-World War One speculative invasion fiction that "the overriding feature of the 'invasion fiction' genre is the degree to which it reflects… a broad cultural anxiety about the prospect of rising German power and the dangers the German Empire would pose in the event of a modern war" (194). Lieutenant Colonel Chesney's invasion text, *The Battle of Dorking*, published in 1871 depicts a "successful, durable German occupation of Britain" (174) with the German soldiers presented as "more animal than human" – a "hulking lout…a broad-shouldered brute" (Bulfin 193). During World War One, the German enemy was described in terms of "animal figuration" – "creatures with fangs and… arms that hang to the ground with clawlike hands…" (Croft 48). Fussell writes that the propaganda of the First World War was guilty of "gross dichotomising", in an attempt to exaggerate the differences between "us and them" (Croft 47). Twentieth-century fantasy authors, including Tolkien, also described enemies in animal and subhuman terms to remove any qualms the reader may have against killing these creatures. The "Orcs are an exaggerated depiction for the Germans", Helen argues, without hope of redemption, beastly and supernatural (Helen "Tolkien"). Blyton's depiction of Hitler as a rat, a peacock, a snake, and a jackal, and his right-hand men as "a savage wolf, a snarling dog, a cruel vulture-bird, and a sharp-nosed rat" is a perpetuation of the use of animal imagery to describe and dehumanise Britain's enemies in Second World War fiction (V 160, 10).

During the war, there is a significant shift in Blyton's attitude to the moral reformation of child characters and characters' capacity to improve. Blyton's narrative style in *Sunny Stories* is highly repetitive and formulaic, and a proclivity for moral cautionary tales prevails throughout her work. A recurring theme of Blyton's *Sunny Stories* tales, and of her fiction in general, is the reformation and improvement of a child character's unruly personality and behaviour through some form of incident or intervention which causes the character to renounce their previous wayward and unruly ways. The morality of Blyton's books and stories shifted during the war to better fit with contemporaneous wartime ideologies: the war called for a new understanding of humanity and the world, one which was more rigid and characterised by dichotomies. This new view of humanity is reflected in "The Strange Looking Glass", in which Lord Biff is a true fairy tale villain who is unforgiven by a narrative that separates characters into good and evil. The protagonist Biff is left to dwell in the realisation of his depravity, with no hope of transformation or improvement. The final sentence emphatically quashes any possibility of reformation: "What could save him now? Nothing!" (11). As Edwards writes, the story is "wholly at variance with the ending with which she normally tied up her narratives, the good ending happily and the bad on the road to reform" (159). "In much post-war literature", according to Stevenson, "the corruption or at least the evolution of morals is a major theme. The erosion of old values is portrayed not merely as coincidental with the war, but as the result of the war's betrayal and destruction of timeworn ideals" (113). For Blyton, the effect of the Second World War on the author's value system is instantaneous and evinced by the unconventional conclusions to both "The Strange Looking Glass" and "Granny's Bad Apples". Blyton's disruption of her own formulaic narrative arcs reflects British wartime values: characters who are dangerous – Lord Biff in “The Strange Looking-Glass” - or pose a potential danger to Britain – Sammy in “Granny’s Bad Apple” - must be shunned and isolated rather than provided with the knowledge and space to reform. Blyton’s wartime value system, communicated through stories like “The Strange Looking-Glass”, conveys to her young readers the magnitude of the current war and the absolute necessity of defending Britain from encroaching evil.

Less than a year after the publication of “The Strange Looking Glass”, Blyton published the fantasy wartime short story “The Horrid Little Soldier”. Published in *Sunny Stories* in 1941, the story creates a more explicit contrast between German and British national characters than “The Strange Looking Glass”. In contrast to the realistic texts of *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin*, a close proximity is permitted between German and British characters. This is due to the text’s non-realistic setting: the characters are toys rather than humans. In a significant contrast with “The Strange Looking Glass”, the German enemy of “The Horrid Little Soldier” is granted an opportunity to redeem himself, but his complete relinquishment of power is a prerequisite of his redemption. The two stories’ contradictory attitude towards the character of the German enemy reveals, on the one hand, Blyton’s effort to impart to young wartime readers the nation’s accepted prejudices towards enemies - and Germany in particular – and, on the other hand, a struggle against her own long-established objectives in writing fiction for children: to teach moral lessons and improve the moral character of readers through showing the transformation of problematic individuals into obedient, well-behaved citizens.

In “The Horrid Little Soldier”, Germany’s thirst for power and desire for domination is thwarted by Britain, with Germany forced to submit to the authority of the British. However, this conflict between Germany and Britain is represented by toy soldiers and takes place within the domestic setting of a child’s nursery. The figures belong to a child and the story could be understood therefore as a child playing at war, pitting a German toy soldier against a British pilot. The child’s fantasy of war is literally being ‘played’ out with a reassuringly positive outcome. The conflict in the story arises when one toy soldier in the nursery “wanted to rule the whole fort” and “make everyone do exactly as he wished” (V 208, 3). He insists that “the dolls… salute me when I march round the nursery” and punishes those who refuse to obey his orders. Forms of physical torture are described, with one of the dolls kept in a box “so long that he couldn’t stand up when he came out” and a clock-work mouse’s tail cut off with a sword (4). The tale's hero, a British “airman-doll”, is then introduced to the nursery (4). The doll makes reference to the real war and to real British pilots who he knows he is a toy replica of: “I’m proud to be an airman-doll… Goodness, I’d like to do some of the things that *our* brave airmen do” (4). The story appears in the magazine shortly after the Battle of Britain, in which British RAF fighters forced back the German Luftwaffe and were integral to the halting of a German invasion. Blyton’s miniaturised tale of a German suppression is in part a celebration and appreciation of the RAF’s victory.

Upon meeting the authoritarian toy soldier, the British airman-doll is outraged by his behaviour, telling the toy soldier that “No British toy should behave like that!” (5). The soldier’s behaviour is presented as antithetical to the British national character, and his aberrant nature arouses suspicion regarding his nationality: “I’ve an idea you aren’t an English toy” (6). A “label underneath his feet” is subsequently discovered which states

“MADE IN GERMANY”, proving the British airman-doll’s suspicions correct (6). This infiltration of a British space highlights the need for vigilance during wartime: the British airman doll is suspicious of his fellow nursery toy, and his suspicions regarding the non-Englishness of the toy soldier are proven correct. Both the characters and readers of the tale learn that the soldier’s oppressive behaviour and desire for power are symptoms of his German national identity. To the nursery toys, the discovery of the toy’s nationality explains the soldier’s authoritarian behaviour: “No wonder he doesn’t know how to treat other people who are weaker than he is!... No wonder he wants to rule over us and make us salute and kneel to him… He’s made in Germany! How horrible! How disgusting!” (6). The discovery serves to reinforce the conception of the British national character as inherently good, with the airman doll emphatically and triumphantly declaring the German soldier and the German soldier’s behaviour as definitively un-British: “This soldier was made in Germany! He doesn’t belong to us! He isn’t British! He was made in Germany!” (6). Pride in Britain’s national character is retained by externalising unpleasant, authoritarian character qualities.

The story's second half deals with the German toy soldier’s redemption through his subordination to a British leader. In “The Strange Looking Glass”, it is the Christ-like figure who forces the evil Lord Biff to reflect on his actions and nature; here, the British soldier instigates the German-made toy’s self-reflection and self-realisation. The two figures – the British airman doll and the Christ-like figure - are aligned as benevolent intervenors and forces for good. Upon learning his true national identity, the soldier is distraught, for he believed he was English and is deeply disappointed to realise his disconnection to the English race: “He liked our country… He liked being with English children and English toys. He had thought himself to be English, and after all he wasn’t – he was a German toy” (6).

‘English’ and ‘British’ are used interchangeably in the tale, with the airman doll’s declaration of the soldier’s un-Britishness associated with the soldier’s sense of a loss of Englishness. However, the soldier’s lament presents England and Englishness as the enviable ideal. This section of the tale is illustrative of a continuing celebration of Englishness despite a general transition to a focus on Britain and British unity during this period of Blyton’s writing. The German toy soldier is perceived and perceives himself as a product of a nation whose national identity is characterised by tyranny and authoritarianism. “He hung his head. He was ashamed. He knew that the Germans were bullies and that they had been cruel to many weaker lands” (6). Instead of being shunned from the nursery, the toys, under the direction of the British airman-doll, work to reform the German soldier. The British doll believes that “we must all be scornful to him, disgusted with him, fierce with him” because only then will he “know what it is to feel hurt and miserable and afraid” (7). Power is stripped from the German toy and he becomes the ostracised oppressed, with the British doll enforcing the German soldier’s subordination. The British airman disempowers and humiliates the German soldier by ordering “him about as if he were a very naughty little dog” (7). The soldier is eventually invited back into the nursery as a member, but only if he fully accepts his subordinate position and fully acknowledges the British doll as leader: “we’ll give you a chance again… but you will be under *me*, and have to do as *I* tell you” (8). If the soldier proves himself worthy and behaves, he is promised the reward of a British/English nationality which further reinforces the idea of Britishness/Englishness as a nationality of privilege, coveted by other nationalities: “if… I think you can really play your part well again in the nursery… I’ll tear off that label of yours. Then you will no longer have ‘Made in Germany’ under your feet” (8).

In this fantasy re-enactment of the Second World War, imperial ideologies are applied to the conflict between Britain and Germany. Blyton's belief in the altruism and wisdom of the British empire is clearly evident: through interacting with the British characters, the German soldier learns to suppress his national instincts and conform to British democratic rule. The corrupt German character improves under the leadership and guidance of the British ruler, in a reframing of a colonial relationship between superior master and inferior subject for a wartime context. Imperial ideologies are here reframed for a World War Two context, but this tradition of incorporating the sentiments, values, and ideologies of the imperial adventure genre goes back to the fiction of World War One. Nineteenth and twentieth-century imperial adventure fiction for children lauded Britain as an altruistic, civilising force and celebrated Britain as a nation of enlightened rationality, intelligence, racial superiority, and moral goodness. During the First World War, the tropes and conventions of imperial adventure fiction were modified, with authors positioning Britain as the defenders of civilisation against a barbaric German force. Paris writes that the First World War was viewed as "a chivalric struggle against the forces of evil", with Britain entering the war due to an obligation to protect Belgium against a powerful German army (12). Britain's duty was to intervene, to quash the evil and greedy foreign superpower who ultimately threatened the position of authority Britain possessed, and for "authors of juvenile fiction… 1914-1918 always remained the Great War for Civilisation – another glorious triumph for the British Empire" (xxi). With Blyton's "The Horrid Little Soldier", these tropes of imperial adventure fiction are adapted for a Second World War context, with the intervention of the British airman doll presented as, firstly, necessary, and secondly, as beneficial to all. The British protagonist and Britain as a nation are positioned as rightful global leaders, keeping wayward nations in check.

In addition to short non-realist stories, the non-realist *Faraway Tree* series was also serialised and published in *Sunny Stories* throughout the Second World War. The first chapter of *The Enchanted Wood*, the first title of the series, was published in *Sunny Stories* in October 1938. *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*, the third title of the series, ended in January 1946. The series, initially, appears entirely disconnected from reality: readers are presented with adventures in secondary worlds, in which protagonists befriend magical folk and enjoy travelling through exciting lands. However, the underlying foundations of the *Faraway* series are reflective of imperial and wartime ideologies concerning the perceived innate superiority of Britain. The fantasy series offers reassuring, repetitive, fictionalised defeats of foreign, subhuman or inhuman intruders. In serialisations of texts such as *The Adventurous Four,* Blyton engages with the war and the nation's enemies directly, with the four child protagonists foiling the plans of a group of German spies. With *The Faraway Tree*, Blyton draws upon fantasy and fairy tale genres to respond to the war and the threat of invasion, with the necessity of defending Britain's borders against invaders translated into a non-realist, fantasy world.

The main objective for the characters of *The Faraway Tree* series is to protect their domestic, idyllic rural space from intruders, and to defend the borders of this home from foreign, external threats. The characters from the Land of Tempers escape their own world and seek refuge in the Tree by ousting the original inhabitants. This episode is representative of the fear of invasion and the potential "overthrow of British society by hostile foreign intruders" felt by Britons and reflected in nineteenth and early-twentieth century popular fiction (Bulfin "To Arms" 483). Another army of intruders seek to infiltrate and hold hostage the inhabitants of the Tree: "The goblins found the hole that leads down through the clouds, and poured down it! They took every one prisoner" (*Enchanted* 150). An ambush is planned for the Red Goblins who have infiltrated and imprisoned the inhabitants of the Faraway Tree: the group of protagonists work together to "either push them down the tree or take them prisoner" (*Enchanted* 159). The protagonists, who are "thoroughly enjoying" the defeat and capture of the goblins, eventually pile the intruders "on top of one another", where they are "most uncomfortable and frightened" (162). The army of Red Goblins; the greedy trolls mining for treasure underneath the Tree; and the irascible, irrational creatures from the Land of Tempers must all be swiftly returned to their rightful homelands in order for the border of the Faraway Tree to be re-established. The protagonists' defence of their adopted home and their resistance to powerful, secondary world villains seeking to capture and subjugate the British protagonists closely mirrors Blyton's realist wartime texts, illustrating a preoccupation with the theme of invasion in both her realist and fantasy wartime fiction.

Throughout *The Faraway Tree* series, the male and female protagonists work collectively to banish secondary world intruders, which contrasts with the male-dominated realist texts of *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four*. In Blyton's wartime fiction, female character involvement is curtailed by realistic, domestic settings, but a fantasy setting proves a liberating space for female characters. In *The Faraway Tree* series, Beth and Fanny actively battle against and engage in conflict with the tyrants of other lands. Female characters fully engage with the enemy in a way that is denied to them in the realist texts, in which they fulfil far more supportive, minor roles. In *The Faraway Tree* series, Jo initially attempts to place himself as the authoritative male hero within the secondary, fantasy world. Prior to one potentially dangerous adventure, he tells his sisters to remain in the Tree while he ventures out alone. Both girls refuse to see the logic in his order and insist on accompanying him. As discussed in Chapter One, the three protagonists encounter

Goldilocks and the Three Bears in the first book of the series, *The Enchanted Wood*. The encounter is followed by a scenario in which Jo, the male protagonist, performs the role of Goldilocks, eating the bears' porridge, sitting in their chairs and sleeping in the Little Bear's bed (*Enchanted* 72). While Jo is re-enacting the female protagonist's role, his sisters, Beth and Fanny, fight alongside the Three Bears, who are under attack from their enemies, "the white bears" (68). Beth and Fanny join in the battle, for as the narrator explains, "after all, if people are fighting you, you can't do much but defend yourself" (65). Meanwhile, in the cottage of the three bears, Jo hides "in a corner, for he didn't want to be mixed up in any fight" (*Enchanted* 69).

In contrast, the male duos of *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four* perform the daring tasks necessary for the capture and defeat of the enemy. The female protagonists are repeatedly told to stay behind and accept their roles as moral supports and lookers-on. In *The Adventurous Four*, Mary and Jill's role in the war and the defence of their country is best expressed whilst the protagonists are considering how to alert the police to the German soldiers' presence:

> Well, Andy, it's very important that you should get back and tell the secret of these islands," said Jill at last. "So, for the sake of our country, Mary and I will stay behind here without any fuss and do the best we can, whilst you and Tom set off for home. But do rescue us as soon as possible! (159-160)

Due to the realist texts' directly being framed by the war, the emphasis lies on male camaraderie and male courageousness. The war offers an opportunity for the male protagonists of the text to demonstrate their bravery, their patriotism, and their chivalric duty to protect their vulnerable female counterparts and defend their nation. On the other hand, the *Faraway Tree* series facilitates a fantasy of child heroism for both male and female protagonists, creating scenarios in which both boys and girls defend the borders of their home against disruptive outsiders.

Conclusion

A concern for the safety of Britian's borders and the protection of the British national character is prominent throughout Blyton's wartime fiction. Blyton's wartime fiction is consolatory and reassuring - not because it distracted readers from the war, but because it reaffirmed to British readers the perceived superiority of their nation. In both realist and non-realist texts, plucky and daring young protagonists foil the attempts of the enemy to infiltrate and contaminate their homeland. The need to protect one's borders against German forces is communicated to readers in *The Adventurous Four*, *The Children of Kidillin* and "Granny's Bad Apple". The message is reiterated and reinforced through the fantasy stories of "The Strange Looking Glass", "The Horrid Little Soldier" and *The Faraway Tree* series. Blyton elicits a sense of patriotism in her readers by explaining Britain's noble and utterly necessary role in the war while simultaneously providing reassurance to readers by publishing triumphant stories of the defeat of insidious and subhuman forces that seek to transgress the boundaries of Britain.

A unity of Britishness is evident in the stories Blyton wrote during the Second World War, but towards the end of the war, and within a context of imperial adventure, this united sense of Britishness gives way to an elevation of Englishness. In moving from fiction framed by war to fiction inspired by the genre of imperial adventure, Blyton focuses her attention on the advanced state of English technology, scientific knowledge, education, and culture. In the following chapter, this change is analysed within the context of post-Second World War Britain and the state of the British Empire.

Chapter Three: Englishness, Adventure, and an Empire in Decline

> Quite apart from my millions of English-speaking readers, I have to consider entirely different children – children of many other races who have my books in their own language. I am, perforce, bringing to them the ideas and ideals of a race of children alien to them, the British. I am the purveyor of those ideals all over the world, and am perhaps planting a few seeds here and there that may bear good fruit (Blyton *A Complete List of Books*)

The previous chapter examined Blyton's expansion of national identity during the Second World War; as we now move to examine her post-war publications, we see British national unity subsiding, and Englishness emerging as the national identity celebrated and positioned as superior to all other nationalities. This chapter analyses Blyton's conscious return to Englishness, prompted by the end of the war and growing imperial instability. The introductory quote above is taken from Blyton's foreword to *A Complete List of Books*, published in 1951, in which Blyton reflects on the books and series she had so far published. Importantly, the quote illustrates a reflection on the purpose of these books in disseminating an image of British character to readers outside of Britain. Underlying the statement in Blyton's foreword is a strong colonial belief in the benefit of other races' exposure to British “ideas and ideals”. Although the quote refers to the “ideas and ideals” of British children and the British race, these values and ideals are consistently conveyed through English child protagonists in Blyton’s work. Singh’s statement that “in the context of Blyton’s books, nationality is specifically English as opposed to British” corroborates this assessment of Blyton’s work as disseminating an ideal of Englishness, rather than a broader sense of Britishness (214). The statement echoes Cecil Rhodes’ belief in the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race, which he contended were “the best, the most human, most honourable race the world possesses” (“Confession of Faith”).

White Englishness, specifically, is positioned as the naturally dominant racial identity, with non-white characters from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia positioned as naturally subordinate to Blyton’s English protagonists. Blyton’s Second World War fiction contrasted British national character against the depravity of wartime enemies. In her imperial adventure fiction, characters from countries less advanced, less civilised and less enlightened than England provide “the dissimilarity against which” Englishness is constructed and defined (Singh 227). The sites and spaces used in Blyton’s *Adventure* series, published between 1944 and 1955, illustrates her transition from a unified sense of British identity to a firm assertion of English supremacy, as Scotland and Wales become sites of imperial adventure for the English child protagonists. Stuart Ward writes that “historians are generally in agreement that 'empire was a major component in British people's sense of their own identity, that it helped to integrate the United Kingdom and to distinguish it in the eyes of its own citizens from other European countries” (4). The impending loss of the Empire prompts Blyton’s adventure texts to shift from a wartime celebration of a united Britain to a narrower form of English nationalism, one in which Scottish and Welsh characters are aligned with colonial child characters encountered in Africa and the Middle East.

This chapter first contextualises Blyton's realist and non-realist adventure fiction within the genre tradition of imperial adventure fiction, positioning Blyton's mid-twentieth century adventure texts as a continuation of a genre developed in the eighteenth century with the publication of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).[1] I map the imperial and colonial ideologies which underpin and pervade Blyton's adventure texts – both her realist and non-realist books and series - and analyse the texts' conflictual attitudes towards the Empire. Blyton reworked nineteenth and early twentieth-century forms of imperial adventure fiction for a post-Second World War child readership and I illustrate how Blyton's contribution to the genre of imperial adventure disrupts the general trajectory of twentieth-century imperial children's literature. Blyton's imperial adventure texts first showcase the superiority of the English race and second highlight the necessity of the British Empire and the imperial mission by demonstrating the immense economic, technological, cultural, and scientific gap between England and other nations. The primary texts of this chapter are the non-realist series *The Faraway Tree*, which was serialised in *Sunny Stories* between 1938 and 1946; the realist text *The Secret Mountain* (1941), the third book of the *Secret* series (1938-1953); and the realist *Adventure* series (1944-1955). Neither *The Secret Mountain* nor the *Adventure* series was serialised in Blyton's magazine, but due to the texts' realistic settings, the texts are closely aligned with the imperial adventure stories published in post-war British children's periodicals. I argue that the decision to exclude the texts from *Sunny*

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[1] The genre of imperial adventure fiction rooted in earlier travel writing: "The late Victorian period of imperial expansion saw a particularly close relationship between travel writing and the successful colonial adventure stories of writers such as Henry Rider Haggard (b. 1856–d. 1925), Rudyard Kipling (b. 1865–d. 1936), and Robert Louis Stevenson (b. 1850–d. 1894)" (O'Cinneide *Travel Writing*)

Stories during a time of significant imperial change was due in part to the international availability and success of the magazine in Britain's colonies.

Blyton's *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain* reflect a steadfast belief in the altruism and goodness of British imperialism: Blyton's romanticised vision of Empire idealises the relationship between coloniser and colonised, portraying English imperialists as benevolent forces for good. Blyton's imperial adventure texts repeatedly create relationships between child characters that mimic the power dynamics between coloniser and colonised. The majority of these relationships end with the colonised child character unchanged and depicted as incapable of change or improvement. The colonised child characters' failure to improve, despite the English protagonists' efforts, serves to reinforce the gap between the white English protagonists and the non-white, non-English child characters which in turn reinforces the texts' presentation of white Englishness as utterly superior. Although the *Adventure* series celebrates the ideologies of the British Empire and the colonial enterprise, as the series progresses the books begin to exhibit signs of concern for the future of the Empire motivated by the waves of decolonisations in the 1940s and 1950s. The final book of the *Adventure* series, *The River of Adventure* (1955), concludes with a sense of loss for the Empire which contrasts with the "mission accomplished" sentiment of other twentieth-century children's imperial fiction (Ward 15). Blyton's construction of Englishness is inextricably linked to the Empire. The Empire's disintegration and waves of decolonisations fail to affect Blyton's steadfast conviction in the inherent goodness of the Empire. For Blyton, the disintegration of the Empire is a loss of opportunity for other nations to better themselves by adopting English ways of living.

The Magazine

With *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* magazine, Blyton consistently makes a concerted effort to extend the magazine's reach to as many countries as possible. While increasing one's international market certainly makes financial sense, Blyton's statement regarding her belief in the improving benefits of reading about English children is arguably a contributing factor in Blyton's international promotion of the magazine. As we know from Chapter One, in the early years of *Sunny Stories*, Blyton collected and presented national and international tales together, juxtaposing English fairy tales with tales from Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. After 1927, the magazine became predominantly Anglocentric, with most of Blyton's stories set within England or Britain. In 1939, in the introductory letter of the magazine, Blyton wrote of the magazine's success in other countries, proudly telling her readers how far the magazine reached: "It goes to Australia, India, New Zealand, Canada, Africa, Tasmania – and to Bermuda as well!" (V 155[2]). Like the national and international tales Blyton collated and presented together in the early years of the magazine, Blyton sought to unite national and international readers of *Sunny Stories* into a community of loyal fans. Readers from outside of Britain were strongly encouraged to participate in the magazine's competitions, some of which were specifically created for international readers, and were encouraged to submit poems and riddles for publication within the magazine.

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[2] Blyton's statement in the magazine regarding *Sunny Stories*' international readership is corroborated by anecdotal references to Blyton's international success: Singh refers to Blyton's popularity in "the Indian subcontinent, Australia and New Zealand, and former British colonies in Africa and the West Indies" (200). Translations of her books into "Malay, French, Fijian, Japanese, Indian, Finnish, Icelandic, Greek" and other languages provides further evidence for Blyton's vast international readership (Stoney 198). Information regarding the dissemination of Blyton's books is, therefore, anecdotal rather than statistical. A complete list of the countries in which Blyton's books were disseminated, and the sales figures for these countries, is currently absent from Blyton scholarship.

Andrew Lang is referred to by Björn Sundmark as "the folklorist of empire", a description which echoes Teverson's analysis of the British folklorist ("Andrew Lang"). Lang worked to collate international stories into a unified collection, with England at the centre of this process. Blyton's *Sunny Stories* magazine, while a reversal of Lang's process, served a similar unifying purpose: from the very centre of the Empire, Blyton dispatches stories set within England, with admirable English protagonists, to countries formerly or currently under British rule. During a period of imperial decline, Blyton strove to create and to subsequently maintain an international Empire of readers: *Sunny Stories* unified readers from Britain, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere, and presented to this national and international community of children a highly favourable vision of Englishness.

Analysis of Blyton's *Sunny Stories* magazine continues in this chapter through the mapping of colonial and imperial ideologies in *The Faraway Tree*. In general, the *Sunny Stories* magazine favoured non-mimetic stories for young child readers: both Blyton's *The Faraway Tree* and *The Wishing Chair* are serialised in the magazine, whereas mimetic series based within Britain and typically intended for older child readers (such as *The Famous Five*, *Malory Towers*, *St Clare's*, and the *Secret Seven*) were not. Of course, there were exceptions: the realist *Adventurous Four* titles were serialised in the magazine during the Second World War, but overall, *Sunny Stories* targeted young child readers and illustrated a clear preference for fantasy, non-mimetic short stories and series. This preference for non-realist stories for younger readers explains the serialisation of *The Faraway Tree* and partly explains why neither *The Secret Mountain* nor the texts of the *Adventure* series were serialised in *Sunny Stories*. *The Secret Mountain* and titles from the post-war *Adventure* series – *The Island of Adventure* (1944), *The Mountain of Adventure* (1949), and *The River of Adventure* (1955) - are central to this chapter's analysis of Blyton's attitude towards the

British Empire and the presentation of colonial and imperial values to child readers. *The Secret Mountain* is the third title in the *Secret* series, with the first two titles of the series, *The Secret Island* and *The Secret of Spiggy Holes* serialised within *Sunny Stories* between 1937 and 1940. Blyton's decision to publish *The Secret Mountain* as a complete novel in 1941, rather than first serialising it in the magazine, is arguably due to the text's explicit reflection of British imperial ideologies. By 1941, *Sunny Stories* was available to and being read by children throughout the British Empire, illustrated by Blyton's 1939 introductory letter celebrating the international success of the magazine. In the 1940s and 1950s, during a time of considerable imperial tension and upheaval, it is understandable that the realistic imperial adventure stories of *The Secret Mountain* and the *Adventure* series would be excluded from a magazine whose reach extended to readers from within Britain's colonies. While The *Faraway Tree* series certainly reflects a colonial worldview, the imperial and colonial themes of the non-realist series are less perceptible due to the texts' setting in a secondary world. Blyton populates this secondary fantasy world with non-human characters, which further disconnects the series from the reality of the Empire.

It was outside the confines of the *Sunny Stories* magazine that Blyton, therefore, published stories that explicitly reflected her nation's colonial and imperial attitudes. Despite being excluded from *Sunny Stories,* the themes and settings of the realist *Adventure* series' titles share significant parallels with post-war juvenile periodicals: these parallels are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The Genre of Imperial Adventure Fiction

Bob Dixon describes Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe as "a blue-print for colonisation" and a foundational text in the genre of imperial adventure ("Empire: Fiction"

75). Crusoe’s explanation to the reader that “the whole country was my own mere property, so that I had an undoubted right of dominion” and that “my people were perfectly subjected – I was absolute Lord and lawgiver” encapsulates the ethos of the genre and the mindset of the imperial adventure protagonist (Dixon 74). The sense of power, entitlement, and superiority felt by Defoe’s Crusoe is stereotypical of imperial adventure male protagonists, with Blyton’s male protagonists a juvenile version of fictional adult colonisers. Dixon outlines the primary characteristics of the genre, highlighting the genre’s Anglocentrism; its use of language in establishing power structures, with terms like ‘Master’ and ‘Lord’ being used to refer to the protagonists by colonial subjects; slavery and servitude; the genre’s inherent racism, for as Dixon explains, “it seems impossible to subject people to an alien rule without believing in their inferiority” (76); the genre’s lack of female characters; and finally a clash of religions and religious beliefs, with the protagonist’s rational, civilised Christianity contrasted with the superstitions of colonial subjects and frequent barbarity of indigenous religions. The beliefs and superstitions attributed to fictional indigenous peoples are one of the ways “the lands and indigenous peoples ‘out there’ in the far reaches of the British Empire are Othered” in British imperial fiction (Bradford “The End of Empire” 197). Due to the texts’ Anglocentricity, religious beliefs, cultural practices, customs, systems of governance, typical dress are all judged by English standards, with English standards presented as the “norm” (Bradford 197).

Roderick McGillis explains the immense influence Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* had on nineteenth-century children’s literature: the text “set the standard for the boy’s adventure story, and it presented a strong argument for Britain’s imperialist enterprise” (*Gender and Empire* 11). As David Steege writes, “Given the need of an empire, such as the British Empire, to sell itself to its people – to win hearts, minds and bodies to the colonial struggle –

it is not surprising to find that fiction intended for children drew on and contributed to attitudes towards British colonies and their indigenous peoples" (91). McGillis summarises the "typical plot" of many of nineteenth-century children's imperial adventure texts inspired by Defoe's immensely popular tale: "one or more young men, and sometimes women" find themselves "marooned on some tropical isle or lost in some barren land where they claim possession of the land through their ability to cultivate it and fashion a garden in the wilderness" (11). McGillis names *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1814), *Masterman Ready* by Captain Marryat (1841-1842); *The Coral Island* by Ballantyne (1857) and *Little Miss Robinson Crusoe* by Mrs. George Corbett (1905) as examples of such *Crusoe* inspired children's tales (*Gender and Empire* 11).

In his biography on Blyton, Gillett writes that "Like all writers, Blyton built on the work of her predecessors, *The Secret Island* (1938) bearing more than a passing resemblance to R.M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1857), which was one of her favourite childhood books" (16). A cursory glance at the titles of Blyton's books reveals an extensive use of the island trope in her work: *The Island of Adventure*, *The Secret Island*, *Five on a Treasure Island*, and the Kirrin Island stories, in which a group of young protagonists construct a makeshift home for themselves on a deserted island. Captain Frederick Marryat's *Masterman Ready*, a Robinsonade for child readers, is particularly relevant to Blyton's imperial texts for children, as *Masterman Ready* glamorises colonialism and the "hierarchical theme where 'inferiors' are ready to risk, or give, their lives for supposed 'superiors' out of devotion" (Dixon "Empire" 79). The trope of the "loyal native" who recognises the superiority of the English protagonists and willingly subordinates themself to them is used extensively in Blyton's imperial adventure texts, and this trope relies on adherence to a racial hierarchy which like in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Masterman Ready* is "assumed without question" in Blyton's imperial fiction. (Dixon 79).

In the *Adventure* series, *The Secret Mountain*, and the non-realist, fairy tale inspired fantasy series *The Faraway Tree*, a distinction between English national identity and the Other provides the foundation for power relationships which position the English protagonists as naturally dominant due to the clear deficiencies and inferiority of the Other. Blyton relies on colonial binary oppositions of Us and Other, Civilised and Savage, rational and irrational in creating characters for both the realist adventure texts and the fantasy series. In both the realist and fantasy adventure texts, a hierarchical power structure is constructed and maintained which positions the English protagonists as dominant. In addition to a general conforming of imperial adventure fiction conventions, Blyton's *The Secret Mountain* contains a scene directly inspired by Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), and parallels are also clearly evident between Blyton's texts and Hugh Lofting's colonial *Doctor Dolittle* series (which are discussed later in this chapter). Despite clearly drawing from earlier, influential works of imperial adventure fiction and contributing to Britain's canon of imperial adventure texts, Blyton's imperial adventure stories are rarely referred to in studies of imperialism and colonialism in twentieth-century children's fiction. The texts are excluded entirely from Daphne Kutzer's study of Empire and imperialism in British children's literature. Singh studies the colonial undertones of Blyton's *The Famous Five* series, identifying the traits of Empire builders in the series' young protagonists: "trust, responsibility, and scrupulous fairness, combined with courage, resolve, decisiveness, determination, and physical prowess, were the idealised traits of the empire builders, and we see these qualities at their inception in Blyton's children" (*Goodly* 218). The characters Darrell and Sally of Blyton's post-war school series, *Malory Towers*, also possess the “qualities and traits of character” required for “successful service at the Empire’s outposts” (Singh 235): they both display strong leadership qualities, and like the protagonists of *The Circus of Adventure*, ensure that younger students and children respect their elders’ authority and “toe the line” (Singh 27). Blyton’s school series, including the *St. Clare’s* series (1941-1945), likewise communicates the ideals and ideologies of the Empire in texts written within a domestic, British setting: Singh argues that Miss Theobald’s “admonition to a student… that we must never judge people by what they have but by what they are, that kindness and friendship are earned and not bought” is a reiteration of the “British conviction that they held their empire by moral and not physical force, by superiority of character, not superiority of means” (238). Interestingly, in contrast, female characters in the *Adventure* series and in *The Secret Mountain* are subordinate to their male counterparts, illustrating that while the school setting was considered by Blyton to be a safe, appropriate place in which to create characters who exhibit the skills and traits of future Empire builders, female characters assumed a secondary role in actual colonial settings to facilitate a colonial adventure for their male siblings.

Singh only briefly mentions the *Secret* and *Adventure* series in her discussion of colonialism in Blyton’s work, and furthermore states that “Blyton’s books are not ostensibly about the Empire at all… It would not be difficult to isolate the imperial message in the works of Henty or Buchan, but Blyton’s stories are seemingly distant and detached from the context of empire. One would be hard put to find any mention of the Empire at all” (232-233). While the protagonists of *The Famous Five*, *Malory Towers* and *St Clare’s* series certainly exhibit the correct characteristics for future Empire builders, it is the protagonists of Blyton’s *The Secret Mountain* and the *Adventure* series who actively perform the role of the coloniser. Before analysing these protagonists, I first examine the colonial ideologies evident within Blyton's fantasy *The Faraway Tree* series. The colonial and imperial underpinnings of the fantasy series have heretofore not been identified in studies of colonial children's literature. This series, intended for readers younger than the intended readers of the *Secret* and *Adventure* series, introduces readers to the tropes and themes of Empire that are later engaged with explicitly in Blyton's realistic imperial adventure stories.

Fantasy Imperial Adventure

In Chapter Two, I discussed Blyton's fantasy series *The Faraway Tree* in the context of the Second World War. The series bookends the war, and the three texts of the series illustrate an engagement with wartime fears of invasion and infiltration by foreign forces. Blyton incorporates conventions and tropes of imperial adventure fiction into the fantasy series, resulting in a series that merges war themes with imperial adventure themes. A fundamental element of the genre of imperial adventure fiction is a belief in the inherent superiority of the imperial nation – in this case, Britain. This element of the genre made it an appropriate choice for a wartime context, but so too for a post-war period celebrating Britain's victory. As Kutzer argues, "the war and empire were two parts of the same knot of Western ethnocentricity and perceived European superiority" (93). We see this merging of war and imperial tropes in two other realistic texts written by Blyton during and after the war. Published in 1946, *The Castle of Adventure* follows the series' four English protagonists on their adventure in Scotland, which is portrayed as far less advanced than England. The villain of the text is called 'Mannheim', a German-sounding name which Blyton may have consciously or subconsciously known was the name of a city in Germany. Mannheim is a spy who speaks a language the children do not understand, but Blyton does not explicitly state his nationality. Neither is the nationality of the men in *The Mountain of Adventure* (1949) disclosed, but they too have German-sounding names: ‘Meier’ and ‘Erlick’. In *The Mountain of Adventure*, Japanese “servants” work for the Germans, who they refer to as “Master”, and the book explicitly states the nationality of the Japanese men: Lucy-Ann, the youngest and kindest of the *Adventure* series protagonists, refers to the men as “the nasty little slinky Japanese servants” (155). In the short stories and series set during wartime, which explicitly reference the Second World War, Blyton reassures readers of her belief in the inherent supremacy of the British nation and the inevitable defeat of Germany. Blyton’s imperial adventure writing similarly reaffirms and celebrates the intellectual, moral, and technological superiority of the English protagonists and the protagonists’ nation. Due to the ethos of the imperial adventure genre, and because Blyton was writing during wartime, masculine qualities of heroism, leadership, rationality, courage and eagerness for adventure are all emphasised. Bravery in the face of danger and a desire to participate in dangerous missions are celebrated qualities of the male protagonists. The conclusion to *The Castle of Adventure* involves the two male protagonists – Jack and Philip – assisting the male adult, Bill Smugs, in capturing armed enemies. Jack repeatedly comments on how thrilling the adventure has become and how “unbearably exciting” it was “to stand hidden in armour” waiting to ambush the foreign men (163). The girls, at this stage of the adventure, have been sent away to safety, proving that while Blyton superficially subverts the masculinity of the imperial adventure genre by including female protagonists in both the *Adventure* and *Secret* series, the female characters’ presence only serves to heighten the masculine nature of the genre by positioning the females as subordinate to the male protagonists. The female characters of Blyton’s non-realist *The Faraway Tree* series are allowed greater involvement in the action and adventure of the texts. Increased female independence and participation is due to the texts' non-realistic setting and the greater distance between the text and the reality of the war and the Empire.

Through her fantasy *Faraway Tree* series, Blyton instils young readers with an impression of non-English spaces as inferior and as existing to provide resources, entertainment and adventure for the English protagonists. Fundamental to imperial adventure fiction is the journey to, discovery and exploration of a strange, foreign land. The trope of venturing out to strange lands and returning home to "nice, safe old England" is incorporated into Blyton's fantasy and realist adventure writing (*The Secret Mountain* 30). The places and people encountered by the protagonists in the realist and fantasy texts are consistently portrayed as less advanced than Britain and the British protagonists. Blyton's fantasy texts lay the groundwork for her realist imperial adventure texts published outside the magazine. The fantasy adventure texts are aimed at younger readers: the language, plot events, and humour indicate a target readership younger than that of the realist adventure texts. *The Faraway Tree* protagonists progress through a series of imaginary colonial adventures and are positioned by Blyton as superior colonial observers. An Anglocentric worldview is established wherein protagonists travel through multiple fantasy lands, observing, evaluating, judging, mocking and criticising each land and its inhabitants. Although the protagonists' own home life is far from ideal – the family are poor, the father gradually absents himself from home, there is a constant worry about money and food – the protagonists' national identity as English instils a sense of superiority, power, and authority, which emerges in the protagonists' interactions with other characters from the secondary world.

Throughout *The Faraway Tree* series, the protagonists encounter a myriad of characters: characters typically found in Blyton's own fairy stories such as pixies, fairies, and giants, as well as familiar characters from fairy tales and nursery rhymes. However, a proportion of the characters encountered are non-fantastical and human-like. These characters are very similar to the protagonists but live in another land within the fantasy world and possess particular idiosyncrasies. The protagonists are often intrigued by these characters, observing them, and judging them based on their British standards. Often, the protagonists are critical of the inhabitants, their differences and what they perceive as these characters' inherent irrational natures.

Many works of twentieth-century children's fiction set within the boundaries of Britain incorporate themes of Empire and are structured upon imperial ideologies. Juliana Ewing's *Mary's Meadow* (1886), Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1905) and *The Secret Garden* (1911), and Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* (1926) are examples of texts set within Britain, but which reflect Britain's imperial status and imperial mindset. Child protagonists in twentieth-century British domestic children's fiction often claim and colonise unused, barren spaces: for example, in *The Secret Garden*, an "unused space is… appropriated and transformed" and "characters acquire ownership over land through tilling, tending and harvesting someone else's property" (McGillis 12). Blyton's *The Faraway Tree* series is likewise set within the confines of England. The family move from the unpleasant, urban city to the quiet solitude of the English countryside, and as with Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, discover a space that alleviates the hardships they experience in their primary world. Unlike *The Famous Five* series, *Malory Towers,* and the *St. Clare's* series, Blyton's *The Faraway Tree* juxtaposes a primary, British world with a secondary, fantasy world, and it is this fantasy world that facilitates the enactment of colonial exploration. Landscapes in Blyton's fantasy

The Faraway Tree series are portrayed as existing to serve the English protagonists: both land and people are presented as exploitable, existing to fulfil or serve a function.

In *The Faraway Tree*, individual lands and their inhabitants are either useful, and potentially beneficial to the protagonists, or an inconvenience for the English explorers. The illogicity of certain fantasy lands of *The Faraway Tree* series are an annoyance to the rational British protagonists. An expedition to “The Land of Topsy-Turvy” causes consternation amongst the protagonists: in a land where everything and everyone exists upside down, Jo distances himself from “this silly land” and exasperatedly tells the inhabitants that if they were “sensible” they would make a “rule, saying that everybody must be the right way up” (*Magic* 24). Individual lands in the fantasy series are either advantageous to the protagonists; offer entertainment and fun, or are viewed as ridiculous and serve to remind the protagonists of the superiority and rationality of their homelands. The focus of the fantasy series, therefore, remains on the nature of explored lands and a notable difference in the manifestation of imperial ideologies in Blyton’s fantasy *Faraway Tree* series compared to the realistic *Adventure* series is the fantasy protagonists’ profound sense of entitlement to discovered lands’ resources. Secondary world lands and spaces, in addition to providing fun and adventure, offer a wealth of free, natural resources. Kutzer, in analysis of Edith Nesbit’s *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* (1899) writes that the implied message of the text is that treasure “is to be found not at home, but in the colonies” and that bringing found treasure “to England is both good and natural” (67-69). In Blyton’s *The Faraway Tree* series, the transport of “treasure” back to England is presented as not only good and natural, but also absolutely necessary for the welfare of the English family. Blyton’s *The Faraway Tree* and *The Wishing Chair* series, wherein protagonists travel to “The Land of Take-What-You-Want”, “The Land of Goodies”, “The Land of Presents” is dependent on an imperial outlook which presents discovered and explored lands as consumable spaces; spaces which exist to materially serve the visitors. Furthermore, discovered lands in the fantasy series are depicted as spaces which freely offer their resources to the English child visitors. Goods and resources from fantasy lands are not paid or traded for, but simply taken, or gifted to the protagonists. In the "Land of Take-What-You-Want", the children are informed "if you want anything, you can usually get it there for nothing" (*Enchanted* 117). Access to other lands and other lands' resources is presented as necessary for the health and subsistence of the English family: the children rely on the ability to take resources from other lands to ensure their survival. Goods and valuable resources – including tools, medicine, livestock – are transported from explored lands back to the protagonists' homes in the primary world. At a time when the family are struggling financially, due to the father losing "some money one night" (the circumstances of the loss are not explained), the fantasy world offers supplies to maintain the family's home lives. As the series progresses, the existence of other lands from which valuable resources can be acquired without remuneration is normalised, with the protagonists repeatedly benefitting from the generosity and plentifulness of foreign lands. The "Land of Magic Medicines" provides the children with a mysterious cure for their mother's ailments, which the inhabitants of the land are happy to gift to the protagonists (*Magic* 140). "The Land of Goodies" is an entirely consumable country, where "everything in it seemed to be eatable" (*Magic* 117). Inhabitants of the land express no objection to the consumption of their land's natural resources by outsiders.

The protagonists of *The Faraway Tree* maintain an observer status throughout their travels: they comment on and judge the customs of other lands but are uninterested in intervention. *The Yellow Fairy Book* (1936) is an early version of the "Faraway Tree" stories, and in this early incarnation, the child protagonists are more than observers; they become wise oracles to societies and cultures who are incapable of rational thought. Peter and Mary, the protagonists of *The Yellow Fairy Book* travel to "The Land of Stupids", where upon their arrival, they comment on the land's "stupid-looking houses" (23). Indigenous cultures are often infantilised and portrayed as childlike in imperial adventure fiction, and Blyton draws upon this convention to create inhabitants of fantasy, secondary worlds who resemble "grown-up babies!" (24). Antoinette Burton writes of the imperial belief in "the movement of ideas, culture, and improvement" flowing "in one direction: from home to away", which in Blyton's fantasy story manifests in the two child explorers trying to improve the "Stupids'" lives by correcting their mistakes ("Rules of Thumb"). The ruler of the land asks the child protagonists to solve his citizens' problems, for he is incapable of governing the land himself: "once a day my people come to me with complaints and grumbles… Perhaps you could tell them what to do?" (31). The lives of the inhabitants are greatly improved by the intervention of the English children, and the ruler and his citizens are immensely grateful for the English child protagonists' wise counsel. The "Stupids" realise the benefit of the children's intervention and are consequently reluctant to let the clever children leave: "I expect they don't want us to go', said Mary. 'We are much too useful to them! I'm sure they'd like to keep us here to answer all their silly questions and to put everything right for them, just as long as ever they could!" (*Yellow* 38). The children reject the inhabitants' pleas, as neither the land nor its inhabitants is of any benefit to the protagonists. This episode of the fantasy adventure serves to elevate the protagonists' egos by positioning the children as intellectually superior to the infantile natives. The principles underpinning the chapter reflect a view of imperialism as a necessary and altruistic endeavour.

A similar need for wise, clever, English governance is found in Blyton's *Adventures of the Wishing Chair*, which was published one year after *The Yellow Fairy Book.* The *Wishing Chair* books resemble the format of *The Faraway Tree* series as they involve the discovery and exploration of many various fantasy lands. Peter and Mollie, the two protagonists, travel to the "Land of the Scally-Wags", whose inhabitants are described as childlike, "horrid people" who are "dirty and untidy" (192, 198). Peter is mistaken for a powerful, wise King by the land's inhabitants, and unlike his counterpart in *The Yellow Fairy Book*, this Peter fully embraces the position of authority and power granted to him. Mollie asks Peter if he enjoys "playing at being a King", to which he replies: "I'm not playing at it, I am a King!" (204). Mollie is impressed by her brother's imperiousness, and tells him "Oh, Peter, you do make a good King!.. I do wish I could be a queen" (205). The hierarchy created in the chapter, whereby the external English protagonists are recognised as rightful rulers and respected for their superior intelligence closely mirrors the plot of *The Yellow Fairy Book*'s "The Land of Stupids" episode. Although exhibiting a greater interest in ruling the wayward Scally-Wags, the two *Wishing Chair* protagonists share *The Yellow Fairy Book*'s protagonists' eagerness to escape from illogical fantasy lands and return home. The imperial belief in England's ability to introduce order, rationality, and to improve the lives of other nations is clearly reflected in Blyton's fantasy texts. Whether or not the protagonists act on this improving, civilising mission does not diminish the impression of other lands and their inhabitants as inferior.

Realistic Imperial Adventure: Disrupting Trends

In comparison to the fantasy texts *The Faraway Tree*, *The Yellow Fairy Book*, and *The Adventures of the Wishing Chair*, Blyton's realistic imperial adventure texts – *The Secret*

Mountain and the *Adventure* series – engage far more explicitly with the tropes and conventions of the imperial adventure genre. In *The Secret Mountain*, four English child protagonists – Mike, Peggy, Jack, and Nora – travel from England to Africa in search of Nora, Peggy and Mike's pilot parents, who have crashed somewhere in Africa. Their journey to Africa – the specific country is not made known - brings the protagonists into contact with two African societies: one "tribe" is a group of sun-worshippers, who intend to sacrifice one of the protagonists to please the sun-god (50). The second tribe poses less of a threat to the protagonists, but they are portrayed as equally as primitive. The *Adventure* series similarly has a mixed group of four protagonists: Dinah, Lucy-Ann, Philip, and Mike. The protagonists regularly become embroiled in dangerous adventures such as uncovering the clandestine plans of criminal masterminds, or thwarting an attempt to usurp the throne of a European King. Although some of the names of the countries visited and explored by the protagonists are created by Blyton – such as Barira, and Tauri-Hessia – each of the places visited by the English protagonists are realistic and located in real, geographical regions, such as Europe and the Middle East. The realist texts are not entirely devoid of fantasy elements: the "swift movement" from the protagonists' home in England to Africa, the Middle-East, and Eastern Europe is "similar to the swift movement from the real world to the fantastic in children's fantasy" (Kutzer 2). Apart from the swift transition from home to the site of adventure, however, these texts are grounded in realism and the reality of Britain's Empire.

The protagonists of the fantasy texts are not preoccupied with the assertion of power through the establishment of Master-Subject relationships, despite the protagonists of *The Faraway Tree* consistently positioned as superior to the majority of characters encountered. In contrast, the protagonists of the realist adventure stories assert their power and authority over other human characters. With the fantasy texts, it is predominantly the land that is exploited: various lands are travelled to and resources are collected and brought home to the English protagonist's primary world. Rather than offering material resources in the realist texts, other countries offer excitement, adventure, memorable experiences, and opportunities to prove one's bravery and intelligence.

In her study of Empire and imperialism in British children's books, Kutzer writes that, "Before World War I, images of empire are more likely to appear in realistic fiction than in fantasy", but directly after the war, Empire "receded into the world of fantasy" in children's literature (129). A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* books and Hugh Lofting's *Doctor Dolittle* series (1922-1948) are cited as examples of this general transition of imperial themes into non-realistic, fantasy literature. *The Yellow Fairy Book* was published in 1936, and the first title in *The Faraway Tree* series appeared in 1938 in Blyton's *Sunny Stories* magazine. The date of these texts' publications conforms to general trends of children's literature in that they retain the ideologies and values of Empire, but within a fantasy rather than realistic setting. Kutzer suggests that authors' use of fantasy to discuss and reflect on the Empire is due to the genre's separation from reality, making the genre a more appropriate, less "disturbing" setting to analyse "empire and its effects" (129). Kutzer identifies Arthur Ransome as "the last children's writer to reflect issues of empire in easily recognisable and definable ways": meaning, in a realistic rather than fantasy setting (*Empire's Children* 129). Ransome's *Swallowdale* (1931), *Winter Holiday* (1933) and *Missee Lee* (1941) are the texts chosen by Kutzer for discussion, which were all published before Blyton's realistic imperial *Adventure* series. In the same year *Missee Lee* was published, Blyton wrote *The Secret Mountain*, which entails a journey from England to Africa and the encountering of anachronistic African cultures and tribes which the English protagonists perceive as primitive. In 1944, *The Island of Adventure* - the first title of the *Adventure* series - was published. In this text, colonial racial hierarchies and representatives of the Other are brought home to England. The series' last title, *The River of Adventure*, is set within the Middle-East, and was published in 1955. As with *The Secret Mountain*, the text emphasises the distinctions between the rational, educated, 'civilised' English protagonists and the impoverished, superstitious, childlike inhabitants of Barira. Although Barira is an imaginary country, the reader is told it borders Syria, which locates the country within a real geographical region.

Blyton's realist imperial adventure texts were therefore published at a time when themes of Empire in children's books were primarily found in fantasy settings, or in narratives of exploration of extreme landscapes such as the Arctic and Antarctic. Blyton's imperial adventure texts set in Africa and the Middle-East appear to disrupt the general trajectory of children's imperial fiction in the twentieth-century. However, Kathryn Castle's research on post-war children's periodicals illustrates the use of British colonies in realistic adventure fiction, which aligns Blyton's *Adventure* series more closely with the content of mid-twentieth century juvenile periodicals than mid-twentieth century children's books. Despite the growing number of British colonies gaining independence and the "withdrawal of western power" in the mid-twentieth century, the "old polarity between the enlightened and the backward nation" survived in stories published in post-war children's papers ("Imperial legacies" 150). Castle writes that while fantasy and science-fiction were genres employed by children's authors to perpetuate themes of Empire, the appeal of the interaction between "the westernised hero" and the superstitious "native" in realistic fictional tales remained ("Imperial legacies" 150). Although Blyton's adventure texts resemble the realistic stories of Empire in post-war children's magazines, there are significant differences between Castle's assessment of the portrayal of Empire in children's periodicals, and Blyton's portrayal of Empire. In post-war children's magazines, Castle identifies a tendency within stories to "end the chapter of empire on a positive note" (Ward 15), and states there is "evidence in the papers of a sense that the duties of empire could be safely abandoned" (Castle 152). Although the English protagonists rarely generate any meaningful change in other nations and other cultures, Blyton portrays other nations and cultures as still desperately in need of intervention and external guidance.

Scotland and Wales are two of the real geographical places used as settings for imperial adventure in Blyton's *Adventure* series. Blyton incorporates themes of Empire identified in Castle's study, such as the contrast between the hero and the superstitious native, in the texts set within Scotland and Wales. There is a notable difference, therefore, in Blyton's construction of national identity in stories explicitly framed by the Second World War and stories inspired by and grounded in the genre of imperial adventure. The use of Scottish and Welsh spaces as sites of imperial adventure marks a significant shift from Blyton's wartime texts, wherein Blyton created and promoted a sense of British national unity. In the imperial *Adventure* series, Blyton returns to a narrow model of national identity focused on England and Englishness. This heightened sense of English nationalism is, as Kutzer argues of British post-war fiction, "a defensive reaction to Britain's dwindling influence" as an imperial power, with imperialism giving way to "its close cousin, nationalism" (107). In the wartime texts of *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four*, the Britishness of the protagonists is emphasised, with both the English and Scottish characters becoming the celebrated heroes of the texts. In *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin*, which are both set during the Second World War and refer directly to the war, the Scottish characters are physically superior to the English characters, and possess practical skills which the English characters lack. The Scottish characters' skills of navigation and their courage marks them as equal, or even superior, to the English protagonists. The Scottish child, Andy, is portrayed as the hero of *The Adventurous Four*, and in both *The Adventurous Four* and *The Children of Kidillin*, the English and Scottish characters are united in their defence against foreign attack. Enemies and villains exist in the *Adventure* series, but as the war is now over, a common foe fails to unite British nationalities and fails to encourage a sense of equality between English, Scottish and Welsh protagonists. What emerges in Blyton's imperial adventure fiction, therefore, is an elevation of Englishness above other British nationalities. Blyton's imperial adventure fiction accentuates the cultural differences between the countries of the United Kingdom, presenting Scotland and Wales as lagging behind modern, urban, rational England. In her wartime texts, Blyton highlights the physical and academic differences between English and Scottish protagonists, but these differences are emphasised in order to celebrate the unity and respect ultimately achieved between the British children. Once the wartime threat of invasion and defeat is removed, the physical, intellectual, and educational distinctions between Scottish, English, and Welsh characters are heightened, and in general, England is presented as far more advanced than its neighbouring countries.

In 1975, Michael Hechter, the American sociologist, published *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development 1536-1966*, in which "he argued that the 'peripheral' nations of the British Isles, namely Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, had functions as internal colonies within the British Empire" (Gramich "Internal Empire" 176). Hechter argued that these countries had "suffered from similar, Anglocentric cultural and economic exploitation" as Britain's other, further afield colonies (176). In histories of the British Empire, Scotland, Ireland and Wales were described as the "training ground" for "the repressive practices" of Britain's overseas Empire (Sorenson 53) and Turner argues in

"Internal Colonisation" that it was "through expansion into Scotland and the Highlands that many of the ideological and governmental apparatuses of what would come to be viewed as 'overseas' colonialism were 'developed and refined'" – such as "the hierarchisation of colonised people" (774). In Blyton's adventure texts set within Britain, colonial ideologies intersect with class to create power relationships which mirror the colonial relationships established in texts set in the Empire. Non-English nationalities and class intersect to create the contrast needed for Englishness to continue to be constructed and continue to be presented as superior and rightfully dominant. The characteristics and tropes Blyton uses to portray the child indigenous characters of the Middle Eastern character Oola in *The River of Adventure* and the African character Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain* are similar to the characteristics of the Welsh David in *The Mountain of Adventure* and the Scottish Tassie in *The Castle of Adventure*. Parallels between these characters - in how they are portrayed, and how they are treated by the English protagonists – signify an alignment in Blyton's mind between colonial subjects in the Empire and lower-class, rural non-English citizens in Britain. The alignment of Welsh and Scottish characters with colonised subjects in Africa and the Middle East reflects Hechter, Sorensen and Turner's arguments regarding the positioning of Wales, Scotland and Ireland to the imperial centre of England.

A second explanation for the elevation of England above its neighbouring countries arises from the increasing unrest throughout Britain's colonies and the spate of decolonisations in the 1940s. Dixon's analysis of imperialist literature from the 1870s to World War I as "a fantasy of masculine and Anglo-Saxon supremacy" is strikingly applicable to Blyton's imperial fiction written and published during and immediately after the Second World War (*Writing the Colonial Adventure* 5). Blyton's *The Secret Mountain* was published in 1941, and the *Adventure* series was published between 1944 and 1955. During this period, the Empire experienced significant losses. MacKenzie writes that “to most intelligent observers”, it was clear from the 1930s that Britain could not maintain control of South Asia, and between 1947 and 1948, “rapid decolonisations in India, Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka”, along with the “departure of Ireland from the Commonwealth” combined to form the first significant “implosion” of empire in the twentieth century (“The Persistence” 21-24). Blyton’s decision to focus on Englishness and English national character at a time of imperial vulnerability recalls Teverson’s theory regarding Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs’ response to the potential disintegration of Britain and the Empire towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century: as Teverson argues, “the increasing fragility of the British Empire” coupled with the union of Britain being threatened by “strong expressions of ethnic and cultural nationalism in other parts of the British Isles” contributed to Jacobs’ decision to create a national collection of English tales (7, 13). Blyton similarly narrows her focus in the post-war *Adventure* series to English protagonists and Englishness, which is highlighted most strongly by the use of Scottish and Welsh characters as contrasts against the educated, cultured, rational and scientific English children.

This theory of Blyton’s imperial anxiety, however, is complicated by MacKenzie and Castle’s research concerning the concerted efforts of the government, the media, the popular press, and children’s authors to continue celebrating the vigour of the British Empire. MacKenzie argues that in the 1940s and until the late 1950s, “there was good evidence that the British were exceptionally ignorant about their Empire”, even though India gained independence in 1947 (28). The BBC was “still projecting a confident image of imperial development” during the 1940s: “colonial exhibits, colonial months and trade fairs continued to tour the country until the early 1950s”; and in children’s literature, the *Empire Youth Annual* which was “filled with pictures, tales and yarns of Empire and

Commonwealth" was published throughout the 1950s (MacKenzie 29). Culturally, there was a collective effort to downplay the disintegration of the Empire, and politically, the idea of the Commonwealth played a significant part in this "anaesthetising" of imperial decline (Ward 7). The disintegration of the Empire was reframed as an intentional transition to a Commonwealth of nations: speaking in 1958 on the replacement of the word 'Empire' to 'Commonwealth' on the Royal Empire Society's masthead, the Chairman of the society, Lord De La Warr spoke about the transition of the Empire into a "Commonwealth… because of Britain's deliberate policy towards her Imperial responsibilities. What has happened today, therefore, is not a retreat but a direct fulfilment of the noble work done by our fathers and grandfathers in taking our traditions of liberal law and material progress to every quarter of the globe" (Ward 7-8). Ward writes that the "Commonwealth anaesthetic was at its most effective at the time of Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953", which was followed by an extensive tour of the Commonwealth and the Empire between 1953 and 1954 (13-14). The coronation coincided with another significant and much-celebrated imperial event: the "conquest" of Everest in 1953 by the New Zealander Edmund Hilary.

In Blyton's *The Secret Mountain* and throughout the *Adventure* series, we see the ideologies and objectives of the Empire still being celebrated, with Blyton using the genre of imperial adventure fiction to bolster the notion of English superiority. The *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain* are part of this national, cultural attempt to retain a confidence in the future of the Empire. However, just as the illusion of imperial strength begins to wear thin in the 1950s, signs of decline begin to creep into Blyton's later *Adventure* series titles. The inclusion of Scottish and Welsh landscapes in the *Adventure* series is strongly suggestive of an anxiety on Blyton's part for the vulnerability of the Empire prompted by the wave of decolonisations in the mid-twentieth century. Fears of colonial insurgence, coupled with a sense of a lament for the loss of Empire, reinforce this theory of anxiety for the power and future of the Empire. In the following section, Blyton's support of the ideologies and objectives of the Empire is illustrated, along with, an examination of her portrayal of the Empire in relation to other twentieth-century children's fiction. Following this examination, I analyse the indications of imperial decline found in the final title of the *Adventure* series: *The River of Adventure*.

English national identity is associated with Godliness, with altruism, and with advanced civilisation in Blyton's adventure fiction: the child protagonists represent the values and virtues of Englishness, who are perceived as pioneers of human rights, as embodiments of benevolence, and as bastions of rationality and common sense. The perception of Englishness as such is fortified by continued confrontations with other nations and cultures who are depicted as uncivilised, cruel, and irrational. This construction of national identity through contrasts aligns with Alisha Walters' theories on Kipling's *Kim*, who argues that "British identity is formed through physical and emotional exchanges with racialised colonial subjects; this imperial identity has no meaningful or coherent existence outside of its encounter with the Others of empire" ("A White Boy who is not a White Boy" 332). Blyton wrote about her wish to share the "ideas and ideals" of the British race, who she considered the pinnacle of humanity (*A Complete List*). She talked about her wish to circulate this ideal to other races, who would benefit and learn from her portrayals of brave, virtuous and morally sound British children. Rudd describes Blyton as "undoubtedly a daughter of Empire" who "celebrates England, her home country, quite rhapsodically" ("Blyton and Blighty" 135). An important component of this celebration involves emphasising the faults and failings of other nations, European, Scottish, and Welsh included. Schacker states that "national identities are formed through the delineation of boundaries:

this process is more often the result of encounter with or reaction to an obviously alien 'Them' than it is the product of ‘cultural consensus at home’” (*National Dreams* 5). In the *Adventure* series and in *The Secret Mountain*, Blyton constructs and defines Englishness against Middle Eastern, African, European, Scottish, and Welsh characters and cultures. These cultures are invariably portrayed as less advanced and less civilised than England. Englishness, therefore, is defined in opposition to the Other, as the antithesis to the irrational, childlike, primitive and superstitious nature of other cultures and nationalities. The contrasts her books create serve to highlight the supremacy of England, but furthermore, they illustrate the need for external English intervention and serve to justify the colonisation of weaker lands.

Poverty, hunger, and a lack of hygiene characterise many of the non-English landscapes presented in Blyton’s *Adventure* series. In *The River of Adventure*, Blyton presents only the negative aspects of the country, highlighting the nation’s poverty, juvenile crime, and aesthetically, the dirt of the city. The city is depicted as desperately poor: while travelling on the river Abencha/Adventure, the protagonists come to the “village of Ullabaid” where they see “crowds of almost-naked, brown-skinned children” (*River* 47). While exploring the city, the protagonists quickly realise that they must be watchful for child pick-pockets after Jack is almost stolen from by “a small, dirty boy” (23). Bill Smugs, the children’s father-figure, later warns the protagonists of the rampant crime in Barira, explaining that “these small kids are taught to steal as soon as they can walk” (38). Throughout the *Adventure* series, cleanliness is used as a basic signifier of a nation’s developmental stage. In the Middle-Eastern *The River of Adventure*, the Scottish *The Castle of Adventure*, the Welsh *The Mountain of Adventure* and the European-based *The Circus of Adventure*, Blyton repeatedly draws attention to the lack of hygiene and the uncleanliness of the countries' inhabitants. In *The River of Adventure*, the experience of touring and travelling through Barira is tainted, Dinah believes, by the impoverished reality of the inhabitants: she admires the "little group of native houses" which look "most picturesque now" but are sure to be "smelly" if one got close to them, which she considers "a pity" (35). The houses are aesthetically pleasing to the child visitors, but ultimately disappointing. Dinah's description of Barira resembles Blyton's account of her travels through Casablanca: in her autobiography, Blyton writes, "I have gone into smelly, picturesque bazaars in Casablanca, and held a bottle of smelling-salts to my nose while I bargained with a brown-faced, shrewd-eyed native for a jar I had fallen in love with" (Dixon *Catching them Young* 66). In the imaginary country of Taura-Hessia, which is located somewhere in Europe, the inhabitants are again described as "very dirty", with the "peasants" wearing "raggedy skirts" (*Circus* 141). Closer to home, in the rural communities of Scotland and Wales, characters are likewise described as dirty: the vagrant child Tassie in *The Castle of Adventure* is scrubbed clean by the protagonists' mother, but immediately becomes filthy once again. Anne McClintock discusses the emphasis on cleanliness in imperial discourse and the association between uncleanliness and primitiveness in *Imperial Leather* (1995). McClintock publishes an 1899 advertisement from Pears' Soap which states that "The first step towards lightening THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness. PEARS' SOAP is a potent factor in brightening the dark corners of the earth as civilization advances" (32). In Blyton's *The Castle of Adventure* and *The River of Adventure*, the washing of characters is depicted as the first, necessary step in improving the state of non-English characters.

In Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and Perry Nodelman's application of Said's theories for children's literature, the inherent qualities of the Oriental Other are delineated. The qualities of the Other – in Nodelman's case, the child – are the antithesis to the intellectual, moral composition of the European. In Nodelman's application of Said's theories, he equates the Oriental Other with the figure of the child, who is 'colonised' by adults ("The Other"). Bradford highlights the problems with Nodelman's arguments, correctly stating that "children are always seen as occupying a state or stage that will lead to adulthood, whereas Orientals never transmute into Orientalists and are thus always and inescapably inferior" (*Unsettling Narratives* 7). Certain white, British child characters in Blyton's fiction are positioned as inherently and inescapably inferior, for example, the Scottish child Tassie in *The Castle of Adventure*. However, motifs of childhood are primarily projected onto non-white children and adults while the English child protagonists are more closely aligned with the characteristics and role of the Orientalist: they define and characterise "the other as other" in order to define themselves (Nodelman *The Other* 32).

The distinctions between the European and Europe's perception of the Oriental Other are reflected in Blyton's imperial adventure fiction, with Blyton drawing upon common perceptions of the Oriental Other in her creation of non-English characters. This occurs not only in the creation of characters in *The River of Adventure,* which is set in the "Orient", in the Middle East, but also in the African-set *The Secret Mountain*, and in the creation of characters within Europe and within Britain. Said writes of the Oriental as characterised as "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different'", with the European then characterised as "rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal'" (*Orientalism* 40). Two pairs of contrasting characteristics outlined in Said's *Orientalism* are particularly emphasised in Blyton's fiction: childlike and mature; and irrational and rational. The mature English child protagonists become responsible for the care and protection of other, more childlike and helpless child characters. Moreover, adult men are also depicted as childlike: in *The River of Adventure*, Tala is jealous of the parental care offered to Oola by the English family, and is eager to gain approval and praise from the English children. Irrationality, superstition, primitive religious beliefs and a lack of scientific knowledge are qualities used to create sharp distinctions between the English protagonists and the cultures and tribes of Africa, the Middle-East, and even Scotland. Although the indigenous child characters are clever, they are superstitious, and lack Western scientific rationality. This lack of academic, scientific knowledge reinforces the perception of non-English nations as lagging behind England.

English rationalism is contrasted against superstition in several of Blyton's imperial adventure texts. In *The Secret Mountain*, Captain Arnold, the children's father, explains to Jack that the Folk of the Secret Mountain are "worshippers of the sun" who believe in order to please and placate the sun-god, people must be regularly sacrificed (91). Jack is astonished that such a religion and such beliefs still exist, with the narrator explaining that Jack knew about "ancient tribes who had worshipped strange gods and made sacrifices to them" but "he had never dreamed it could happen today" (91). In *The Secret Mountain*, the locals are frightened by the actions of the sun-worshippers, who lack a rational, scientific explanation of solar eclipses. The battle between rationality and atavistic sun-worship in *The Secret Mountain*, and the subsequent triumph of rationality is presumably inspired by the lunar eclipse of Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. In both Haggard and Blyton's texts, a diary informs the logical protagonists of the forecasted eclipses, and they utilise this knowledge to gain power over the primitive solar and lunar worshippers. Therefore, scientific knowledge and advanced technology not only separate the English protagonists from other nationalities, but Western science and technology are used to terrify and hence gain power over primitive natives. In his analysis of Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines,* Joseph Bristow writes that "the explorers resort to the very forms of superstition they seek to denounce" to deceive and defeat the African characters (138). This feigned belief in supernatural forces is replicated in Blyton's *The Secret Mountain* to gain power over the African mountain tribe. The mysterious Folk of the Mountain are terrified by the solar eclipse that the British characters both understand and, through astronomical science, are able to predict. Despite the Folk's entire religion and belief system revolving around the sun and the sun-god, the English group – through astronomy and science – possess more knowledge of the sun and predict the solar eclipse which the Folk understand as a "killing" of their sun-god. The English group devise a way to appear god-like to the Folk, using their belief systems against them to trick them. Through science and astronomy and access to Western knowledge, the group gain power over the primitive Folk and become equally as powerful - in the Folk's eyes - as the gods they worship.

Irrationality and superstitious beliefs are not only associated with 'primitive' societies in Blyton's fiction, but also associated with females and femininity. Despite the inclusion of female protagonists, Blyton's imperial adventure fiction conforms to the masculine nature of the genre. As with other iconic works of imperial adventure texts, such as Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, in Blyton's fiction "masculinity is glorified; femininity is vilified" (Bristow 139). In *The Castle of Adventure*, Tassie and the villagers believe the ruined castle to be occupied by a murderous man who kidnaps people within the castle. These beliefs and rumours are dismissed by Jack and Philip who courageously explore the castle that the villagers are too terrified to enter. However, the female protagonists of the group – Lucy-Ann and Dinah – are more inclined to believe the stories Tassie tells of the murderous man. Similarly, in *The River of Adventure*, Oola and Tala believe a loud banging from inside a stone cave is caused by ancient gods waking up; the English male protagonists – Jack and Philip – calmly provide a rational explanation for the noise. A lack of scientific rationality, and a proclivity to believe in superstitious beliefs aligns the indigenous people of Africa and the Middle East, with the Scottish Tassie and the female protagonists. In studying the female protagonists' role in Blyton's adventure fiction, we realise the female characters do not fit with the author's conception of Englishness which emphasises masculine values of rationality, courage, and independence. The girls, like the non-English child characters encountered, serve to facilitate the male-centred adventures, and enhance the perception of the male protagonists as heroic through their narrative positioning as dependent, in need of protection, and more fearful. The girls pay more heed to locals' explanations of phenomena, rather than dismissing locals' explanations as illogical, as their male counterparts tend to do. Dinah and Lucy-Ann of the *Adventure* series, and Nora and Peggy of the *Secret* series, are often educated on scientific, natural phenomena by the male protagonists, for instance, the solar eclipse in *The Secret Mountain*. Through highlighting their dependency on male protagonists, their gullibility and tendency towards superstition, Blyton positions the female protagonists as occupying a space outside the author's ideal, male form of Englishness.

These examples clearly demonstrate the importance of masculinity to Blyton's construction of Englishness. Her books celebrate masculine qualities of heroism, bravery, rationality, and science and defines itself in opposition to female qualities of intuition and passivity (Nodelman "The Other" 30). In Blyton's *Adventure* and *Secret* series, the female protagonists are portrayed as physically weaker than their male counterparts, and dependent on their respective brothers for protection, but they are not particularly feminine characters. The indigenous female character of Tassie, the Scottish girl in *The Castle of Adventure* is portrayed as extremely boyish: her obsession with shoes is a product of her impoverished state rather than a product of a feminine interest in clothing. Although a contrast is created between the English male and female protagonists, Blyton's understanding, and construction of Englishness as inherently masculine is most forcefully displayed in interactions with effeminate male European characters. Upper-class, royal, male European children represent weak femininity in Blyton's *Adventure* and *Secret* series, and these male characters closely resemble Edward Said's description of the inherently female Oriental Other (Nodelman 29). Paul is a Prince of a tiny European country, and he accompanies the English group on their adventures in the *Secret* series. Paul is infantilised, and treated similarly to the female characters of the group – he is small, and usually requires extra help during long treks – whereas the male characters are independent, strong, and fully capable of looking after themselves. Paul's character closely resembles the portrayals of Indian royals in children's imperial fiction, who were frequently depicted as "pampered, petulant, volatile, and slight of stature" and in contrast to whom British boys appeared "manly" (Castle 59). In *Empire's Children*, Daphne Kutzer states that "the figure of the oriental was often feminized" (Empire's Children 97) and she maps Said and Perry Nodelman's assessment of the female Oriental Other onto the character of Christopher Robin, the English protagonist of A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* series (1926-1928). Kutzer argues that the illustrations of Christopher Robin "feminize the little boy… portraying an androgynous figure with a bowl haircut, shorts, and a blousey sort of tunic top" (Kutzer 97). With the *Secret* series and *The Circus of Adventure*, Blyton creates highly effeminate characters who are ridiculed and mocked for their lack of masculine qualities. The inclusion of feminised young boys in Blyton's fiction serves to underline the superiority and dominance of the inherently masculine English protagonists.

The English boys, although children as well, infantilise Prince Paul and treat him as a wayward child: in *The Secret Mountain*, Paul's 'minder' Pilescu orders Paul to sit in the shade during the hottest part of the day. Paul disobeys, telling him "it is not for you to order me”, evoking his royal status and asserting his superiority over Pilescu, a subject of his father’s kingdom. Mike, the English protagonist, tells Paul “don’t be an idiot, or I’ll come and get you into the shade by the scruff of your neck” to which Paul concedes and “trotted into the shade like a lamb” (34). Despite the presence of royalty, Mike, the English child, is the one with power and authority. Singh discusses the “ideal of leadership” that connects “all the Blyton books” and illustrates how “the capacity for leadership is linked to nationality”: this association is emphatically made in the *Secret* series and in *The Circus of Adventure* (224).

The English female protagonists are contrasted against the effeminate, weak character of Gus in *The Circus of Adventure*, whose behaviour disgusts the English female and male characters. Gus – whose real name is “Prince Aloysius Gramondie Racemolie Torquinel” is the heir to the throne of his home country, Tauri-Hessia which, from descriptions of the people and geography, is located somewhere in Europe (71). Gus is portrayed similarly to Prince Paul: he is first characterised as effeminate and weak, which consequently justifies the English protagonists’ assertion of power over the European child. The Prince is repeatedly told he looks like a girl “with all that long curly black hair” (22) which annoys all the English group, but most of all Dinah: Gus’s “hair fell over his eyes. He pushed it back. He was always doing that, and it got on Dinah’s nerves. ‘Your awful hair!... You ought to be a girl’” (69). In *The Circus of Adventure*, the female protagonists feature much more prominently compared to other *Adventure* series stories: it is Dinah and Lucy-Ann who express the strongest criticism of Gus’s feminine behaviour, which serves to accentuate the practical, modest, sensible nature of all the English characters – both male and female. The English family are intolerant of Prince Paul and Gus’s notions of superiority, and work to teach the European children of the correct hierarchical order, which has male

Englishness at the apex. Even before Gus's arrival, the two male protagonists, Jack and Philip, pre-empt a potential threat to their position of authority, and consequently discuss plans to assert their dominance once he arrives. The two boys tell the others: "Small boys have to toe the line with us… We get enough of them and their fat-headedness at school – *we* know how to deal with them all right" (9). Gus's effeminacy eradicates any threat to the English children's position of authority, while also justifying the English children's ruthless bullying of the child. The adult English parental figures – Mrs Mannering and Bill Smugs – encourage the English children to bully the haughty Gus into submission: Mrs Mannering tells the children that she thinks "you can quite safely make young Gustavus toe the line" and thinks "he seems a spoilt little cry-baby to me" (25). Frivolity and silliness are externalised, attributed to non-English characters and portrayed as the antithesis to the sensible English character. The European Royals are another Other against whom the English protagonists' masculinity, rationality, maturity and intelligence are highlighted.

In the novel, there are "revolts" in Gus's home country of Tauri-Hessia, which threaten the stability of the country's government. The villains of the text are attempting to usurp the current King, Gus's uncle, and instate Gus as ruler (75). Bill Smugs tells the children that "it's important to both Governments", British and Tauri-Hessian, "that there should be a sound, strong ruler in Tauri-Hessia", and the young Gus is neither. With the help of the English protagonists, the plans to overthrow the King are foiled, and order is again reinstated (75). According to Castle, the "alliance between British protagonists and the forces of progress or the upper classes abroad was a familiar pattern from imperial children's fiction", in which "intervention by young Britons in the internal politics of sovereign states" to "save the throne of a rajah, or prince or mandarin, faced with local rebellion" was common (157). In *The Circus of Adventure*, Blyton emphasises the need for a masculine, strong leader, and throughout the text, Gus's feminine nature is presented as inappropriate for a nation's ruler.

Throughout Blyton's imperial adventure texts, Englishness is repeatedly placed in contrast with impoverished, uncivilised countries and peoples, reaffirming the intellectual, technological superiority of the English race. With skilled, clever indigenous children, including Tassie in *The Castle of Adventure* and Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain*, the English protagonists' superiority is ensured through the comparison of Tassie and Mafumu to animals. Due to their high social status, this method of Othering is not suitable for either Prince Paul of the *Secret* series or Gustavus Barmilevo of *The Circus of Adventure*. The feminisation of the royal characters functions to diminish Paul and Gus's power, with the English protagonists' position of power maintained because of the protagonists' natural masculine natures.

In Bradford's postcolonial readings of children's literature, the temporal contexts in which indigenous societies are thought to exist is analysed, with Bradford drawing upon Johannes Fabian's study of time in anthropological thought. Fabian argues that "during the colonial era 'all living societies were irrevocably placed on a temporal slope' with 'advanced,' 'urbanized,' and 'modernized cultures at the apex" (Bradford *Unsettling Narratives* 147). In contrast, "indigenous peoples occupied the lower realms of this scheme; indeed, they were frequently consigned to a space-time outside of history, being… without a history of their own and incapable of participating in the modern era" (147). This sense of a "temporal slope", or temporal hierarchy is evident in *The Secret Mountain* and throughout the *Adventure* series, with Blyton repeatedly drawing attention to the distinctions between modern English civilisation and the early, undeveloped civilisations of other countries. The setting of *The Secret Mountain* and the cultures the protagonists encounter are so strongly atavistic that the clash of ancient and modern draws parallels with time travel narratives. The protagonists are witnesses to a pre-historic society, a society which has never seen airplanes before, or even mirrors. Airplanes are new to the African tribesman accompanying the English group on their journey in *The Secret Mountain*. His description of the "the big white bird" and his fear that the bird "would see him and eat him" is highly amusing to the child protagonists (40). Blyton's fictional depiction of Africa closely resembles the portrayal of Africa in children's periodicals of the "post-Darwinian world" of the late nineteenth century: Castle writes that "Africans were viewed as incapable of any interest in or ability for self-directed change… On the 'evolutionary scale' they remained much lower than the other peoples within the imperial orbit, and centuries away from the British" (*Britannia's Children* 94-95). Furthermore, the specific country in which the story is set is not disclosed by Blyton, with the protagonists commenting on "the rolling country of Africa" but failing to accurately locate their whereabouts (52). Due to the lack of specificity regarding location, the presentation of the text's tribes as ancient and primitive is associated with the entire African continent.

Other lands and other cultures in the *Adventure* and *Secret* series are, likewise, decades, if not centuries behind England in terms of technological advancements, culture, science and basic infrastructure. In the European-based *The Secret of Killimooin*, the imaginary country of Baronia is "allowed superior aircraft design", which contrasts with the African tribesman's fear of the English plane (Singh 226). But, overall, it is clear from other descriptions that Baronia is "a somewhat backward country" (Singh 226). Although a wealthy monarch rules over Baronia, the narrator informs the reader that "there was something very wild and exciting about Baronia. It looked so beautiful, smiling under the summer sun – but it might not be all it seemed to be on the surface. It was not ‘tamed’ like their own country – it was still wild, and parts of it quite unknown” (20). Class differences are evident in the European country, whereas in *The River of Adventure*, the entire nation is portrayed as impoverished. In *The River of Adventure*, Blyton draws parallels between the contemporary people of Barira and Biblical figures who lived centuries ago. Lucy-Ann sees a “dignified, white-robed man” who looks exactly like “Abraham” from her “picture-Bible”, and another woman “with a pot on her head” who reminds her of “Rebecca going to the well” (16). The reader is then informed by Bill Smugs, the children’s adult detective friend, that these parallels extend beyond physical appearance: “Well, many of the people in the Bible came from these parts!... And in some ways the people and their villages too have not changed a great deal” (16). The geographical and spatial journey from England to Barira, therefore, is also a temporal journey to a much earlier century. As we see in *The Castle of Adventure*, the protagonists do not need to venture as far as Africa or the Middle East to encounter fear and trepidation of modern technology. Tassie, the Scottish girl, refuses to travel with the English protagonists on a train, for “the little girl was terrified of the train” and “shrank back when they suggested it” (70). The train, a symbol of modernity, of imperial progress, is rejected by the Scottish child. Tassie’s fear reinforces the reader’s perception of the child as belonging to a society and a country which is decades behind urban, modern, technological England.

In addition to judging non-English characters and nations based on their standards of hygiene and temporal position in relation to England and English characters, non-English characters are judged by their ability or inability to speak the English language. Characters are also judged by their accent, with the English protagonists’ manner of speaking presented as the correct form of English. Differences in languages and dialects are absent in the fantasy series, where all characters speak English, and speak it with the same accent. In Blyton's realist adventure texts, language is used to signify intelligence and aids in the construction and reinforcement of power structures as the position of characters in the social hierarchies of the texts closely aligns with the characters' grasp of the English language. The Japanese servants in *The Mountain of Adventure* are infantilised, repeatedly being referred to as 'little', even by the youngest and smallest of the child protagonists, Lucy-Ann. The servants' difficulties with English grammar and with the pronunciation of the letters 'r' and 'l' is mimicked and mocked by the child protagonists: "Your master no nicee… Your master plenty nasty" (137). The Welsh character, David, is similarly infantilised and presented as unintelligent due to his struggle to understand and speak English. David is an adult, and assigned as the children's guide through the mountain in *The Mountain of Adventure*, but the English protagonists patronise the Welshman. The narrator repeatedly refers to the Welshman as "little", and his name is often prefaced by "poor": "the little Welshman was very shy" (46). This infantilisation through language occurs again with the description of Sam, the "black man" Lucy-Ann finds hiding in a tree from a pack of dogs: in this case, Sam repeatedly refers to himself as "poor" and the young protagonists feel responsible for the safety of the adult man (*Mountain* 88). The protagonists complain about David's inability to speak and read English, and he is described by the male English protagonists as having "not much brain" (*Mountain* 58). At the end of the tale, it transpires that English was not the main problem, but reading in general. Bill Smugs points out to the children that the name of the mountain the children and David were trying to reach was written on their map in Welsh: "It was really quite easy to find, if only David had known how to read a map… The name was on it in Welsh… But I don't believe David can read words of more than three letters!" (183). David's inability to comprehend long words justifies the protagonists' infantilisation of the Welsh man. Tassie, the Scottish child character of *The Castle of Adventure* cannot read or write in her first language, English. In both *The Mountain of Adventure* and *The Castle of Adventure*, readers are reminded repeatedly of the Welsh and Scottish characters' illiteracy, which contributes to the justification of a hierarchy in which the erudite, knowledgeable English children are positioned as leaders.

Characters who speak fluent English are not guaranteed equal status to the protagonists, as characters are also hierarchised based on their dialect. The language is hierarchised, with the protagonists' style of speaking and accent as the established, correct form of English, and other accents presented as deviations from the norm. Jo-Jo in *The Island of Adventure* initially speaks with a strong Southern American accent: "Miss Polly shouldn't use this room… No, that she shouldn't, and I've telled her so. It's a bad room" (20). Later, the reader learns that Jo-Jo's accent has been part of the character's disguise, and Jo-Jo reveals his intelligence by switching to his 'natural' accent, which is exactly like the English protagonists' speech style. Prior to this, while Jo-Jo spoke with an African American/southern American accent, the children believed the character to be half-mad, foolish, superstitious and entirely irrational. The conflation of the English language with intelligence and education is again seen in *The River of Adventure*, where the cunning criminal mastermind, Raya Uma, sounds nothing like his own people, but rather speaks fluent, perfect English. A further hierarchising of the 'natives' of other lands based on language and their ability to speak English occurs at the end of *The River of Adventure*, where a man asks to speak to Philip in the gorge and Philip thinks his voice was "not quite English" and consequently thinks "he might be a good-class native" (144).

The language of Blyton’s books is a common focal point for scholars’ criticisms, with the critic Aidan Chambers writing of Blyton’s “linguistically impoverished style” in 1973 (Buckingham 7). While maintaining a general simplicity of style, the language of the *Adventure* series functions as an effective, powerful method of conveying power and authority. The original, correct name of the river in *The River of Adventure* is ‘Abencha’. However, shortly after the English protagonists’ arrival to Barira, they decide ‘Adventure’ is a much more appropriate name, and choose to use the English rather than the correct, indigenous name for the remainder of the story. The Anglicisation of the river’s name is one example of Blyton’s use of language to assert the dominance of the English language and Englishness. Dixon uses Robinson Crusoe’s relationship with Friday as an example of how language reinforces the Master-Slave relationship in imperial adventure fiction. Crusoe renames Friday and insists he refers to Crusoe as “Master”: this renaming and choice of terms consolidates the dominant-subordinate relationship of the two characters (Dixon 75). Language in Blyton’s books is similarly used to consolidate power relationships between English and non-English characters. Blyton chooses similar terms for indigenous characters to use to address the English protagonists. In *The River of Adventure,* Bill Smugs tells Oola that he should refer to him as “Master” (31). Oola uses language associated with religion and divinities to refer to Philip, calling the English child protagonist “Lord” while referring to himself as ‘servant’ (31). The titling of Philip as ‘Lord’ in *The River* is a replacement of the indigenous child’s original religion with a new belief system and recognition of a new English Lord and Master in a subtle reflection of the Christian elements of the Empire’s ideologies. In *The Secret Mountain*, the African child Mafumu does not place himself in this position as servant, he instead calls Mike a “king of boys”, which would make Mafumu his subject, but not his servant (50). In *The River*, the language of servitude is much stronger: Jack tells Philip that Oola “seems determined to be your slave”, and henceforth the relationship is one of Master-Slave/Servant, where Oola considers himself a possession of Philip (37-38). At one point in the story, the narrative perspective switches to Oola speaking in his own language to Philip’s pet snake, where he tells the snake that both it and he “belong” to Philip. The indigenous child refers to himself as “lord’s servant! Oola work for him!” (44).

Similar terms of power are used in interactions between the white English protagonists and the black servant Jo-Jo in *The Island of Adventure*. Jo-Jo is positioned as inferior to the English children due to his race and his position as servant. A colonial Master-Subject relationship is established, with Jo-Jo referring to the child protagonist as “Master Philip”, and Philip in turn issuing commands to the servant: “Jo-Jo, put that trunk in the car too” (14). Jo-Jo is characterised similarly to the adult indigenous characters of *The Secret Mountain* and *The River of Adventure*: he is superstitious, described by Philip as “full of queer beliefs and stories” (21); he is considered intellectually inferior, described by Dinah as “even more stupid than before” and “quite mad” (10). The family Jo-Jo works for are poor, with their impoverished state repeatedly referred to. Jo-Jo, consequently, is underpaid: Philip tells Jack “he could get much more money anywhere else” (20). There is a possessiveness in the manner the white family speak of Jo-Jo, with Philip describing him to a stranger as “our black servant” (42). The family grow impatient of Jo-Jo, repeatedly complaining of his increasing strangeness and laziness: the protagonists’ Aunt Polly, Jo-Jo’s boss, complains he is “really getting impossible” and in a clear evocation of colonial language, describes the black man as “so uncivil” (53). Blyton concentrates on Jo-Jo’s physical appearance, with repeated descriptions of his facial expressions and a detailed description of the “big powerful body” of the “black man” (35). Despite his physical size and strength, he is considered childlike by the protagonists due to his superstitious nature.

Philip, one of the young male protagonists, diminishes the power and authority Jo-Jo's age and stature grants him by infantilising the adult black man: Philip mockingly ask Jo-Jo, "Did you sleep all night long, like a good boy?" (38). At the tale's conclusion, it transpires that Jo-Jo is in fact a criminal mastermind, performing the role of the superstitious, irrational colonial subject in order to disguise his criminal intentions from the white family. The revelation reflects a fear of the potentially dangerous colonial subject's migration to the core of the Empire – England – and justifies the English protagonists' innate distrust of the black man.

Jo-Jo is a 'strange' black man who looks, speaks and acts differently to the white family but neither Jo-Jo's nationality nor background is disclosed to the reader. The lack of specific information regarding Jo-Jo's nationality is characteristic of Blyton's writing. Rudd defends Blyton's aversion to specifics, arguing that "race and nationality are, largely, irrelevant, and, therefore, are hardly bothered with: Blyton needs to demarcate types only, in order to have her story unfold; hence, queer unknown countries are ideal" ("Blyton and Blighty" 129). With *The Secret Mountain* and the imagined 'Barira' of *The River of Adventure*, the omission of geographical detail results in a generalised view of Africa and of the Middle East. Blyton's non-specificity in relation to foreign countries and the texts' lack of "precise national coordinates" is, according to Rudd, typical of Blyton's lack of interest in location: the adventures which take place within Britain are also not set in a specific area (134). Sarah Park Dahlen, in her work on adoption in children's literature, discusses the problem of impreciseness in discussing other countries and other cultures outside of the US. The lack of specificity causes a homogeneity of many different countries, nationalities and cultures. In children's books on the subject of adoption, the child's nationality is often not specified, and Dahlen writes "the lack of specificity actually perpetuates the stereotype that any one Asian person/country/culture can stand in for another Asian person/country/culture" (155). According to Rudd many non-British readers of Blyton "devoured her books in the manner of folk and fairy tales, seeing them as being set in a non-specific, make-believe realm", including the books set in England ("Blyton and Blighty" 137). The difference, however, is in the manner with which England, English people, English society are constructed and presented to unfamiliar readers, compared to the manner with which the non-specific regions of the Middle East and Africa and the people living there are depicted. Unpleasant characters are encountered in the stories set in England and Britain, but these characters are contrasted against the admirable protagonists who embody the characteristics and values of Englishness. At the very least, the reader receives an impression of Britain as a diverse nation inhabited by various types of people, but most memorably and significantly home to the heroic, intelligent, courageous protagonists. In contrast, the impression of Africa and African civilisation presented in *The Secret Mountain*, and the Middle East and Middle Eastern civilisation in *The River of Adventure*, is one of homogenised primitiveness.

Language is used as a tool of colonisation in *The Secret Mountain*, where the non-white African child's education in English behaviour and values coincides with his learning of the language. The English language in *The Secret Mountain* is understood as a gift, one of the many Western/British gifts bestowed on the African child which elevates the child above his people and his society. Mafumu's learning of the English language is part of the reverence towards all things English – both people and objects – that is strongly conveyed in *The Secret Mountain*. Mafumu's learning of the English language is also an act of colonial mimicry, defined by Amardeep Singh as the imitation of "members of a colonized society (say, Indians or Africans)" of "the language, dress, politics, or cultural attitude of their colonizers" ("Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English"). Singh explains that mimicry "is seen as an opportunistic pattern of behavior: one copies the person in power, because one hopes to have access to that same power oneself. Presumably, while copying the master, one has to intentionally suppress one's own cultural identity" ("Mimicry and Hybridity"). In an unsuccessful effort at colonial mimicry, Tala in *The River of Adventure* attempts to suppress his own cultural, natural instincts and distance himself from his own people, to mimic the customs and ideals of the English family he admires and whose approval he longs to gain. The episode in which he pretends to be surprised and disgusted by Oola's unwashed body is Tala's most significant attempt to mimic Western/English standards of hygiene. Tala is desperate to appear like the English family, and so when instructed to wash Oola, he feigns disgust at the uncleanliness of the child, an uncleanliness which Tala does not see: "This was news to Tala. He hadn't even realised that Oola had an unpleasant smell. But he sniffed in his direction at once and pretended that he could smell something horrid. He wrinkled up his nose in disdain" (44). However, as Homi Bhabha writes in his discussion of mimicry, there is a "difference between being English and being Anglicised", and although Tala welcomes the opportunity of "being Anglicised", he is reminded by the protagonists that he will never be English ("Of Mimicry and Man" 13). Tala cooks a meal for the family, which is ungratefully disparaged by the family when they jokingly ask if it contains insects. The joke is solely for the amusement of the white English family: Tala does not understand why they are laughing. To the protagonists and to the reader the implication of the joke is clear: Tala is and always will be categorised as Other. Englishness is and continues to be in revised editions of the *Adventure* series a national identity that non-English characters recognise as superior, and consequently imitate and strive towards. With Tala, the colonised character's attempts to mimic the behaviour of the English colonisers is futile, as the distinction between Englishness and the Other cannot be traversed. Although mimicry is presented by

Blyton as a step towards 'improving' one's nature, the ideal of Englishness is unattainable for non-English characters.

Romanticisation of Empire and Colonial Relationships

The English protagonists' relationships with the Other - encompassing all non-English, non-white characters – serve to emphasise the differences between Englishness and other national identities while simultaneously providing opportunities for a propagandic presentation of virtuous Englishness and imperial altruism. The contrasts outlined above between England and other less 'civilised' nations function to highlight the need for external intervention and ultimately justify Britain's colonial enterprise. Upon seeing the harsh conditions in which other, non-English characters live, the young protagonists are regularly incited to intervene in the lives of unfortunate indigenous characters. Blyton uses the idea of a dysfunctional, abusive family to illustrate the benefits of English rule: indigenous adult characters are depicted as unfit parents/parental figures, whose actions and behaviour are detrimental to the wellbeing of indigenous child characters. These indigenous parental figures are removed and replaced by the English child protagonists who rescue and temporarily adopt indigenous child characters. The child protagonists' status as child is temporarily subverted during their adventures in colonial spaces: they become teachers, almost parents, to other child characters. Upon returning to England, the protagonists revert to children again. In *The Famous Five: Five Get Into a Fix*, a similar parent-child dynamic is created between the English protagonists and "the little Welsh waif", Aily, to whom the protagonists become "almost like surrogate parents" (Singh 221). In the imperial adventure texts, the African, Middle Eastern, and Scottish child characters' lives greatly improve under the English protagonists' care. The relationships reflect positively on the

English protagonists, who represent the ideal, benevolent coloniser, motivated purely by a concern for the welfare of Others.

The benevolent colonisers of Blyton's series closely resemble Hugh Lofting's character, Doctor Dolittle. David Steege, in analysing Lofting's response to the Empire in his *Doctor Dolittle* series writes that the "character of Doctor Dolittle is Lofting's attempt to soften, re-shape and humanise the face of colonialism while maintaining a sense of the white British male's key place in creating and maintaining civilisation" (Steege 94). Lofting's kindly, benevolent animal doctor is a benign representative of the Empire (Steege 95). A similar re-visioning of Empire occurs in Blyton's work, where the idea of Empire and of colonialism is softened through being represented and embodied by four young sympathetic, kind English children. The protagonists' age is the primary difference between Lofting and Blyton's protagonists, with Blyton's group of four children harking back to earlier, nineteenth-century imperial adventure classics: Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* in particular. As with Hugh Lofting's version of imperialism in the *Doctor Dolittle* series, Blyton presents an Empire which is non-violent, non-oppressive, and in which the vices and selfishness of imperialists is removed. Blyton makes a point of highlighting the protagonists' lack of interest in monetary gain in *The River of Adventure* when they refuse to take any of the valuable discovered treasure. Readers are persistently reminded of the kindness of the English protagonists, demonstrated through their sympathy for mistreated native children and mistreated animals. In Blyton's adventure fiction, colonial relationships are romanticised to portray the English child protagonists in a highly favourable, honourable light, and as with Lofting's work, the objectives and ethos of Blyton's Empire are represented by altruistic and caring male British protagonists. Jack and Philip of the *Adventure* series share Dolittle's love for animals: their affinity and kindness to animals –

particularly Philip's – heightens the reader's perception of the boys' virtuous and sympathetic natures. Jack's fascination with birds is linked to a Victorian model of colonisation, as he longs to capture rare species through photography and showcase his achievements through submitting photos to nature magazines. Philip's character is more closely aligned with Dolittle's, in that his motivations for keeping and caring for animals is borne out of a sympathy and love for them: he has no desire to showcase the animals he captures. Philip acquires various animal companions over the series, and his connection with animals is marvelled at by other characters and the narrator. In *The Mountain of Adventure*, the enemies - the German sounding Erlick and Meier - set their pack of dogs on the English group. Philip speaks softly to the dogs, transfixes them, and transforms them into pets: "The dogs did not understand one word, but they understood his tone of voice. They remembered this boy. They felt his friendliness and his attraction" (250-251). Philip continues to talk to the dogs in "a low voice" while "the other children, and Bill and Johns, watched spellbound. They all thought the same. Philip, Philip, what is there in you that makes all creatures your friends? What gift have you got, so rare, so irresistible?" (251). The various animals Philip tames and domesticates prove highly useful to the English children: the fox-cub in *The Castle of Adventure* assists in the group's escape from various entrapments, and in *The River of Adventure*, Philip's tamed snake is used as a powerful weapon to control the local people.

Once animals meet Philip, they immediately accept him as their new Master, their new owner and willingly leave behind their own kin. This occurs with the lamb in *The Mountain of Adventure* and the fox-cub in *The Castle of Adventure*, which both seem to prefer Philip to their actual family and their own species. The love and loyalty Philip's animals have for their owner is mirrored in the relationships between non-English children and the English protagonists: indigenous child characters declare a similar desire to be removed from their own families, tribes and cultures and 'adopted' by the English characters. Steege's argument that Doctor Dolittle's "relationships with animals are very similar to his relationship with the island tribes" mirrors the conflation of childlike indigenous characters with animals in Blyton's *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain* (95). Animals in Lofting's Dolittle series love the British Doctor and refer to him as "the Great Man'" (Steege 95). The nature of Dolittle's relationship with African animals is reproduced in relationships between Philip and Oola, and Mike and Mafumu. Although he has a powerful connection with animals, Philip is never compared to any of the animals he keeps: he is always Master, an adored, benevolent coloniser whose animal subjects wish to be at his side constantly. Non-English characters are also presented as having a close connection with the natural world and an affinity with animals, but the texts imply that this is due to a hierarchical proximity between the indigenous character and the animal world. A "half-wild, dirty, long-haired old shepherd" in *The Mountain of Adventure* is depicted as being more closely aligned to his flock than to human society, and the English children consider there to be "something very touching in the sight" of the shepherd "calling to his lambs and being answered" (27). The Scottish Tassie is also immediately trusted by Kiki the parrot and Button the fox-cub, and the narrative aligns the child with the pet animals.

According to Blyton's texts, violence against children is customary in other countries and cultures. Orphaned and unloved children encountered on the protagonists' adventures are depicted as innocent victims of cultures which condone abuse. According to Blyton's texts, familial love and care are unfamiliar concepts within African and Middle Eastern societies and native children are abused by what Blyton perceives as the norms of African and Middle Eastern society. In *The River of Adventure*, the protagonists witness a young child being beaten by an adult and are horrified when “nobody made the slightest attempt to stop the whipping” (29). Philip intervenes and indignantly tells the man “In my country you would be sent to prison for such a cruel deed” (30). The nation is being judged by its failure to meet English standards. Mafumu’s African tribe in *The Secret Mountain* is similarly intended to illustrate the brutality of non-English nations: Mafumu’s guardian, his uncle, declares “he would not care at all if Mafumu were eaten by a crocodile or caught by a leopard” (46). Familial love, and an obligation to care for and protect children is missing from the African culture, which heightens the reader’s perception of the African tribesman and the African culture as strange and Other. The absence of a sense of obligation to protect vulnerable individuals is juxtaposed with the male protagonists’ repeated concerns for their sisters’ welfare and the duty of care they feel for the weaker, more dependent members of their family. For the Scottish child Tassie, violence is utterly normalised, with the mother’s physical violence reciprocated by the child: the protagonists hear of the fight between Tassie and her mother, wherein Tassie “flew at her mother and banged her hard. And her mother took hold of her and shook her like a rat” (*Castle* 101). The trope of the abused child is used by Blyton once more, again emphasising the lack of affection between family members in other cultures. As non-English cultures are depicted as socially accepting of physical child abuse, this justifies the English protagonists’ intervention to rescue abused indigenous children from their cruel cultures.

In *The Secret Mountain*, the English protagonist, Jack, forces the African tribesman to stop hitting his young nephew, Mafumu. After this display of kind protectiveness and intolerance of abuse, Mafumu declares he will renounce his own family, his own tribe, in favour of being with Jack: “He says he will be your friend for ever… He says he will leave his uncle and his tribe and come and be with the wonderful boy all his life. He says you are a king of boys!” (50). Likewise, the indigenous child in *The River of Adventure* begs Philip to “Take me with you, lord!” after Philip’s intervention to stop Oola’s uncle beating the boy (29). Oola, in gratitude and in hope of escape “ran to Philip and took his hand. He knelt down before him” and promises “Oola be servant, Oola work for you!” (31). The English protagonists intervene and interrupt the regular actions of the natives, and this, in both cases, is viewed as a positive act. This intervention initiates a rebellion of the child natives against the older members of their society: the children, now enlightened to the ways, values and morals of the English characters, turn away from their own societies and align themselves with the English characters. They are deeply grateful and pledge themselves to the English characters, who both Mafumu and Oola see as god-like and heroic. In Blyton’s version of Empire, power relationships of Master and Subject are not forcefully imposed upon indigenous characters, instead, the English protagonists feel compelled to intervene, and reluctantly become masters and parental figures to desperate indigenous children. Through relationships between English protagonists and temporarily adopted indigenous children, Blyton’s fiction reflects a crucial myth of imperialism, that it was Britain’s duty to intervene and improve the lives of others by becoming their leaders.

The language of servitude and slavery – “servant”, “master” - combine with descriptions of indigenous child characters’ physical behaviour to create a perception of native child characters as possessions of the English protagonists. The physical positioning of characters acts as a visual reinforcement of the power relationship between white ‘Masters’ and African and Middle Eastern subjects in *The River of Adventure* and *The Secret Mountain*. The characters are often described as prostrate, clinging and grovelling to the English children. They long, like Philip’s animals and pets, to be as close as possible to their kind rescuers. The submissive behaviour of the child characters mirrors descriptions of physical positions in *Robinson Crusoe*, wherein Friday is said to prostrate himself before Crusoe, placing Crusoe's foot on his head as a sign of servitude and acceptance of the Master-Slave relationship (208). In the text, Crusoe is said to have been "called plainly by Providence" to "save this poor creature's life" (Dixon 76), which closely mirrors the formation of the relationship between Philip and Oola in *The River of Adventure*, and Mike and Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain*.

The indigenous children's physical behaviour is comparable to the movements and behaviour of animals, which dehumanises the child characters and reinforces the hierarchical positioning of the English protagonists as dominant. Throughout the *Adventure* series, Philip's affinity with all sorts of animals, along with his gifted ability to tame animals, is repeatedly emphasised: lambs, dogs, snakes, parrots vie for Philip's attention and affection and happily accompany Philip on his adventures. Oola serves Philip in the same way his other pets do: Oola is loyal to Philip and is helpful to him as a protector. Furthermore, according to Bill Smugs – the husband of Dinah and Philip's mother - Oola's behaviour is typical of the inhabitants of Barira, which therefore leads the reader to understand that Oola's pet-like characteristics are representative of the general demeanour of the locals: "I know what it is when one of the natives takes a fancy to anyone. Philip would find him underfoot all the time!" (*River* 66). Oola's attachment to Philip is not unusual but rather something which occurs frequently and causes annoyance for visitors. In Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* we see a similar portrayal of inferior natives as found in Blyton's adventure fiction: a native of a "tribe of Indians" finds the hero of the story, Amyas Leigh, and fawns "around Amyas, like a dog who had found his master" (Dixon "Empire Fiction" 84). The animals the indigenous child characters most resemble are domestic pets: cats and dogs. This is evidenced by their proclivity for curling up at the foot of their respective ‘owners’. After being rescued by his abusive uncle, Oola in *The River of Adventure* “curled himself up on the bare deck at Philip’s feet, and closed his eyes, perfectly happy and at peace. He was with his ‘lord’. He was guarding him!” (41). Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain* similarly prostrates himself before Mike and keeps “as close to Jack as he could, as if he thought that Jack would protect him from everything” (111). In *The Castle of Adventure*, the Scottish girl, Tassie, is as attached to Philip as his pet fox-cub. The fox-cub, “like Tassie, followed [Philip] about whenever it could” (29). The characters’ physical dexterity reinforces the perception of the characters as more animal-like than human: Mafumu is likened to a goat, then a snake as he “slid down on his tummy and wriggled” on the ground (*Secret* 71). The Scottish child, Tassie, is described as “sure-footed as a goat” (*Castle* 24). Attempts to tame and domesticate the wild Tassie fail: she is washed and provided with new clothes but immediately becomes filthy once more. Blyton creates a parallel between Tassie and the fox cub Philip adopts: Tassie, like the fox-cub, cannot help her uncleanliness, as it is part of her wildness.

Rudd discusses Blyton’s tendency to describe characters in animal terms and portray them as sub-human, referencing Tassie from *The Castle of Adventure*, a “gypsy-like girl” and Carlotta, a wild half-Spanish pupil in *Summer Term at St Clare’s* (“Blyton and Blighty” 132). The dehumanisation of non-white characters is absent from Rudd’s analysis, and Rudd also excuses and defends Blyton’s tendency to compare lower-class, gypsy characters with animals because “these are exactly the qualities that her most popular character also possesses… namely, tomboy George from the *Famous Five*” (133). While George is said to climb “like a monkey”, she is not dehumanised in the same way Oola and Mafumu are in the *Adventure* series (133). George’s tomboyish nature grants the character power: her ability to climb like a monkey masculinises her and positions her as equal to the male protagonists.

Oola and Mafumu’s animal, particularly pet-like natures, disempowers the characters and places them in subservient positions to the English white protagonists. Rudd fails to consider the racial implications in aligning non-white characters with animals and neglects to address the impact the portrayal of non-white characters as sub-human has on the relationships between white and non-white characters. At the beginning of the article, Rudd negates accusations of “xenophobia and outright racism” in Blyton’s work by arguing these assessments of her work are “based on rather uninformed and selective readings of her work” (“Blyton and Blighty” 125). In his analysis of dehumanised characters, racialised characters, and non-specificity in relation to geography, Rudd is extremely selective in the stories and characters he uses to defend Blyton’s work against accusations of xenophobia and racism.

The indigenous child characters possess qualities which, like the animals Philip captures, prove helpful to the protagonists and the fulfilment of the protagonists’ objectives. One of their most valuable qualities is their loyalty: their attachment and affection for Philip and the other children incites them to carry out potentially dangerous acts to assist the protagonists. Like Philip’s animals, they also possess an intimate connection with the natural world and a knowledge of the local landscape, which the protagonists’ lack. Their comparability to animals enhances the young indigenous characters’ innocence, increases readers’ sympathy for the indigenous child characters, and significantly heightens the readers’ admiration for the protagonists who take pity on and rightfully intervene in the lives of these innocent, helpless, powerless creatures. The dehumanisation of indigenous children, coupled with the English protagonists’ intervention to stop the abuse of these indigenous children and their subsequent, temporary adoption of these children, creates scenarios that serve to justify and idealise the practice of colonialism.

Furthermore, Blyton's texts present the subservient roles of non-English children as stemming from the child characters themselves, rather than the English protagonists imposing a subservient role onto those they consider inferior. Likewise, the English protagonists treat non-English characters as pets due to the characters' inherent sub-human nature: this is evident by the initial embarrassment the English boys feel because of the fawning, adoring behaviour of the indigenous male characters. In a brief section in *The River of Adventure*, the perspective switches to the indigenous child character, Oola, who aligns himself with the pet snake Philip carries, and refers to both the snake and him as possessions of Philip. Blyton wishes the reader to consider the relationships formulated throughout the texts as arising from the indigenous children's recognition of their inferiority rather than as dictated by imperial and colonial power structures and a racial hierarchy created by the West. Colonial relationships between coloniser and colonised are therefore depicted as being as natural as the relationship between a human and their pet.

Signs of Decline

One of the most significant aspects of these relationships between the English protagonists and non-English children is that the relationships are temporary. Blyton romanticises the ideologies of the Empire, as we see with the interactions between benevolent English colonisers and grateful, willing colonised subjects. However, although Blyton praises and celebrates the ideas and the ideologies of Empire, there is an acceptance of the inability to fulfil the objectives of the Empire, which in turn evokes a sense of loss. This sense of loss is clearly seen in comparing the conclusions of two of Blyton's imperial adventure texts: *The Secret Mountain* and *The River of Adventure*. MacKenzie's arguments regarding the illusion of Empire in the 1940s and 1950s complicates Kutzer's theories regarding the imperial nostalgia of post-Second World War children's literature. Kutzer writes of the "nostalgia for a vanished and powerful Britain" that manifest in "many forms in children's books both during and after World War II" (*Empire's Children* 129). With Blyton's *The Secret Mountain*, published in 1941, a celebration of the ideologies and objectives of Empire is evident, rather than a nostalgia for a once great and powerful Empire. *The Secret Mountain* presents colonialism in action.

In *The Secret Mountain*, education in English customs, values, and leadership culminates in the identification of Mafumu as an appropriate future leader of his African tribe. English education is presented as a necessary pre-requisite for future leaders: in *The Circus of Adventure* and the *Secret* series, Gus' home country of Tauri-Hessia and Prince Paul's home country of Barira are believed to be incapable of providing an adequate education for their future rulers and the children are consequently sent to England for their education. It is only in England, and within an English education system, that the principles of strong leadership can be acquired. At the conclusion of *The Circus of Adventure*, Jack describes Gus as "just a silly boy at present" but believes that when he has "learnt all that the British people had to teach him, at lessons and at games, he would make as fine a King as his uncle" (311). The uncle, the current King, received his education in an English school, too. The time Mafumu has spent in the company of English children has prepared him for leadership. The power to rule is consequently bestowed upon the African child from the ultimate holders of power: the English.

In Blyton's work, power relations are dictated by hierarchies established within the text, with a character's position within the hierarchy dependent on their race, nationality, gender, and class. White, male Englishness is positioned as dominant within this hierarchy, allowing Blyton's male protagonist to occupy a position of power and authority that other characters rarely question or challenge. From their position of power, the English protagonists can grant or transfer power to another character, a character who has proven his respect for England and English values. Herbert Kohl and Bradford analyse the use of objects and symbols in Jean de Brunhoff's *Babar*[3] to grant and transfer power from European to African characters: Babar, a Europeanised elephant, "gives his derby hat to Cornelius", an African elephant "as a symbol of the transference of power" (Kohl 23). The conclusion of *The Secret Mountain* similarly involves the bestowing of gifts and objects on an African character to symbolise a transfer of power. The African child Mafumu has undergone a colonial education during the adventure: the English group teach him English and introduce him to English customs. At the conclusion of the tale, Prince Paul's bodyguard, Ranni, reflects on the African child, saying, "I shouldn't be surprised if some day he is made chief of his tribe – he is brave and intelligent and has all the makings of a fine leader" (135). He is gifted a pocket knife, a pencil, a notebook, and a photograph of the English children, who he adores. When Mafumu is reunited with the rest of his tribe, the narrator explains the change and the increased confidence in Mafumu's character as due to his affiliation with the English protagonists: Mafumu "held himself proudly. Was he not friends with these people?... He felt a real king that day" (136). Mafumu's power and sense of authority are due to the kindness and intervention of the ultimate holders of power – the

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[3] Blyton published a retelling of *Babar* in 1941.

English protagonists, who transfer part of their power to Mafumu upon their departure from Africa in order for the child, the text implies, to influence and bring changes to his African society. The group has exerted their influence on the African tribe by inducing Mafumu into an English way of life. The English group respects the child and grants him objects that elevate him above the rest of his tribe. He has illustrated his reverence of Englishness and recognises England's supremacy over his own culture, people, and national identity. In this text, the British Empire is still viewed as a catalyst for positive change, and the protagonists are satisfied with the seeds of change their visit has planted.

Blyton's *The River of Adventure* was published in 1955, fourteen years after *The Secret Mountain* and eight years after the first "implosion" of the Empire, which included the departure of the British army from Palestine. According to both MacKenzie and Ward, it was not until the late 1950s, after the Suez crisis of 1956, that the politically and culturally contrived illusion of imperial strength and continuity began to erode. The Suez crisis of 1956 marks "the point when the very idea of the 'end of Empire' began to emerge more fully into the public arena" (Ward "Introduction" 8) and is identified by MacKenzie as the start of "implosion number two" between 1956 and 1957 (22). Shortly after the Suez crisis, the "massive waves of decolonisation… throughout Africa in the years 1961-65" marked the "third implosion of empire", and MacKenzie believes it was this implosion that forced British "popular and intellectual culture" to confront the reality of the end of empire (MacKenzie 22, 32). Although published before the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, *The River of Adventure* was published during this second critical stage of imperial decline in the mid-1950s. Consequently, the text reflects this broader national and cultural shift in attitudes towards the Empire and exhibits signs of lost opportunities due to a dwindling of imperial power. The book reinforces the theory that Blyton's *Adventure* series reflects an awareness of the diminishing power of the Empire and that this awareness of imperial decline leads to a narrowed focus on English national identity.

In *The River of Adventure*, the English characters exhibit a desire to maintain power and control over the Middle Eastern characters, and the text reflects a fear of colonial insurgence. Power over adult indigenous characters is more challenging to maintain than power over child indigenous characters, but the protagonists use their wealth and status to ensure adult male characters remain under the control of the English group. At a dangerous point of the adventure in Barira, Tala challenges an order from the English children, which the narrator is horrified by, and asks, “Surely Tala was not going to be difficult at this important moment?” (72). The narrator, clearly evoking the language of colonial rule, calls his actions “mutinous and obstinate” and proceeds to explain the importance of bringing Tala back under the control of the English children, telling the reader: “They could not give way to him. He would consider himself on top then, and any other decision they made might also be put aside by Tala” (72). Tala threatens to subvert the power structures of the text by dictating the group’s course of action, overriding the commands of the English male characters. In response to Tala’s disobedience, Philip tries to reassert his authority by treating and speaking to the adult man like a child: “Tala! Do as you’re told!” (72). Blyton illustrates the criticalness of maintaining power over colonised subjects and the importance of stabilising a hierarchy that insists upon the self-subordination of non-English characters. Oola, the cooperative native, steps in and successfully forces the mutinous native to carry out the orders of the English group, proudly declaring: “Oola make Tala obey lord!” (72). Through Oola’s obedience and loyalty to Philip, Tala is forced to do what Philip wants him to do. Consequently, the correct order is reinstated, and the hierarchy remains intact. This fictional interaction is in response to the reality of a declining Empire and Britain's increasingly tentative hold over colonies and colonised subjects.

Castle's assessment of post-war children's magazines was discussed earlier in the chapter, where she states there is "evidence in the papers of a sense that the duties of empire could be safely abandoned" (Castle 152). In *The River of Adventure*, the child protagonists are fully cognisant of the duties of Empire but simultaneously feel a sense of powerlessness to fulfil these duties. Lucy-Ann, the youngest protagonist, asks if they can "take" Oola back with them to their boat, to which Philip, one of the male leaders of the group, replies:

> We can't collect all the poor, ill-used animals or children we see here – that mangy dog over there, the poor donkey I saw today, with sores all over it – the little baby, so thin and tiny, that we saw lying on a dirty rug… They each want help and friends – but we can't collect them all. (32)

The conversation reflects an awareness of the white man's burden, with Philip's response reflecting the English protagonists' inability to fulfil this burden. Indigenous children and animals are again aligned, and although the protagonists feel sympathy for the vulnerable, wretched inhabitants of Barira, the most the children can do is temporarily and reluctantly offer respite to one child, Oola, who is abandoned at the conclusion of the story.

Rather than the duties of Empire being "safely abandoned", they go unfulfilled in Blyton's *Adventure* series. The protagonists demonstrate the order, rationality, wisdom and altruism they could introduce to unfortunate lands, but they remain distant and abandon lands and their inhabitants at the end of their adventure. Unlike the end of *The Secret Mountain*, there is no sense of a meaningful change in society initiated by the intervention of the English group. Unlike the African child Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain*, the adopted indigenous child of *The River of Adventure* is not bestowed gifts and power with which to elevate his society. There is minor change on an individual level only, with Oola promising the English family he will “go to school” and “keep clean” (158). There is, furthermore, a complete lack of concern for the child, despite the fact his only adult carer is his abusive uncle. Mrs Mannering, Dinah and Philip’s mother, tells Oola he is “a good little boy” and that “we shall never forget you” (158). Oola directly asks Philip, his temporary rescuer, if “My lord remember Oola too?” (158). The narrator tells the reader that Oola has “love in his eyes” when he asks this question of Philip, illustrating his continuing loyalty and devotion to the English child (158). The indigenous child character personifies a lament for the loss of empire: he witnesses and experiences the benefits of English rule and guidance, but the happiness he enjoys while under the care of the English family is fleeting. The belief conveyed in the conclusion of this text is that the Middle Eastern nation would benefit from a prolonged English presence, which is represented by the child character’s disappointment at the English protagonists’ departure. In this text, Blyton simultaneously romanticises the relationship between coloniser and colonised and illustrates the opportunities for improvement lost by the disintegration of the Empire.

In having her protagonists abandon the duties of Empire, Blyton retains the stark differences between Englishness and other nations emphasised throughout the texts. By the end of *The Secret Mountain*, Mafumu has become more like the English protagonists, achieving a higher place in the social hierarchy by imitating the English characters. In contrast, the gap between the English protagonists and the Scottish Tassie, the Welsh David, and the Middle Eastern Oola is unchanged by the end of the stories. Efforts to civilise the Scottish Tassie fail in *The Castle of Adventure*, and there is a similar absence of a sense of growth or change in Oola’s character in *The River of Adventure*. The non-English children occupy the same hierarchical position at the end of the text as they did at the beginning, as do the English protagonists, who are positioned at the very top of the global, racial hierarchy.

Conclusion

Founded firmly upon an imperial belief in the supremacy of the English nation, Blyton’s post-war *Adventure* series positions England and Englishness as the ideal to which all other countries and nationalities aspire. The transition from wartime British national unity to a post-war focus on English national identity is explained in part by the end of the Second World War and the removal of the necessity of portraying a united Britain. Despite MacKenzie and Ward’s arguments regarding the timeline of implosions and the national illusion of imperial strength, which only faltered in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Blyton’s 1944-1955 *Adventure* series illustrates signs of concern regarding the future of the Empire and a sense of opportunities lost due to imperial decline. These concerns for the Empire, coupled with the ending of the Second World War, resulted in a post-war modelling of Englishness instead of a celebration of a secure and united British national identity.

In Blyton’s realistic imperial adventure texts, we find the author’s ideal model of national identity: this model is restricted to Englishness rather than Britishness and is founded upon a belief in the supremacy of whiteness. Furthermore, it is a model of national identity that celebrates white English masculinity and an ideal reinforced by interactions with non-white, effeminate (but not necessarily female), non-English characters. The English male protagonists of the imperial adventure texts embody this ideal model of Englishness. The male protagonists’ rationality, bravery, and independence are contrasted against three distinct categories of characters: first, the female protagonists of *The Secret Mountain* and the *Adventure* series; second, the non-European characters and societies encountered in *The Secret Mountain, The Island of Adventure,* and *The River of Adventure*; and third, the male European Princes who accompany the English group.

The portrayal of England and Englishness presented in Blyton's work was and continues to be disseminated globally, with her books enjoying particular success in Britain's former colonies. In Singh's book, *Goodly is our Heritage*, she talks of the familiarity of "young readers in the Indian sub-continent, Australia and New Zealand, and former British colonies in Africa and the West Indies" with Blyton's series and states that "Blyton is still widely read in Britain's former colonies" and so "the concept of ideal character she propounds still propagated, even to children who would not be expected to participate in it because they lack the right racial pedigree" (200). For nations outside of Britain, the importation of Blyton's books goes beyond the simple importation of "a commodity" to the importation of "an ideology" (Singh 201). Kutzer argues that twentieth-century children's texts "not only influenced child readers in the past, but continue to influence contemporary children, through both their continued availability in print and, even more importantly, in their strong influence upon writers of more contemporary texts that children today are likely to read" (140-141). Two authors from former British colonies have commented on the effects Blyton's books had on their writing, and more significantly, the effects Blyton's books had on their sense of identities: in an interview with *The New York Times*, the Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie recalled her first attempts at writing, and said: "When I started to write, I was writing Enid Blyton stories, even though I had never been to England. I didn't think it was possible for people like me to be in books" (*New York Times*). Rohinton Mistry, an Indian-Canadian author, published *Family Matters* in 2002, which focuses on a family living in Bombay and features a young boy, Johangir, who loves reading Blyton's books. Johangir's father, however, remembers the conflict of identity caused by his reading of Blyton's fiction: the books "encouraged children to grow up without attachment to the place where they belonged, made them hate themselves for being who they were, created confusion about their identity. He said he had read the same books when he was small, and they had made him yearn to become a little Englishman of a type that even England did not have" (84). Blyton's idyllic construction of Englishness, and the dissemination of this idealised version of national identity, is, first and foremost, white. In the following chapter, I compare twenty-first century contemporary editions of Blyton's books with the original twentieth-century texts, examining publishers' retention of Blyton's construction of Englishness as fundamentally white. The final chapter argues that despite extensive revisions, publishers and editors have failed to dismantle, or even challenge, the colonial and imperial power structures outlined throughout this chapter on Englishness, colonialism, and the decline of the Empire.

In the 1960s, while Blyton was still writing and publishing, her books began to be criticised for their racist content, in particular, the "Noddy" series and the infamous story of "The Little Black Doll" (1937[4]). In her biography on Blyton, Stoney writes that by "the end of the fifties scarcely a day passed without one newspaper or another giving publicity to the banning of Enid's books by librarians – not only in Britain but in New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere" and Stoney cites "racial discrimination" due to the "use of black golliwogs as the villains in one of the Toyland tales" as one of the main reasons given for the banning of Blyton's books (158). Despite the presence of non-white human characters in texts such as

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[4] Lana Jeger published an article in *The Guardian* in 1966 in which she criticised the story of *The Little Black Doll*.

The Island of Adventure and *The River of Adventure*, discussions on race in Blyton's fiction rarely include the *Adventure* series. The colonial racial hierarchies of the imperial adventure texts outlined in this chapter persist in modern revisions of Blyton's texts, perpetuating an Anglocentric worldview that continues to position whiteness and Englishness as the superior race and nation.

Chapter Four: Whiteness and Race: Blyton in the Twenty-First Century

The previous chapter on Englishness and the Empire focused on the contrasts between nationalities and Blyton's reliance on contrasts to construct a sense of Englishness. A fundamental but unstated element of this construction of Englishness is whiteness, a whiteness which the reader is constantly, subconsciously reminded of through the positioning of the English protagonists in contrast with clearly described dark-skinned, non-white characters. In this chapter on whiteness and race, I examine the inextricable link between Englishness and whiteness in Blyton's texts. Blyton's *Adventure* texts and *The Secret Mountain* adhere to colonial racial hierarchies where white characters are positioned as 'naturally' dominant and superior. Colonial racial hierarchies survive in twenty-first century, revised versions of Blyton's texts, texts that appear racially inoffensive due to contemporary publishers' removal of references to skin colour. The two primary publishers of Blyton's work in the twenty-first century are Hachette and Macmillan's Children's Books. Hachette acquired the world rights to "the literary estate" of Enid Blyton in 2012. Hachette' website contains information, including editorial information on Blyton's *Adventure* series but this series is managed and published by Macmillan's Children's Books. In editing Blyton's work, these publishers focus only on minor, superficial details rather than addressing the texts' underlying racial ideologies. Consequently, the texts' colonial and imperial ideologies are unaffected by publishers' edits and this results in modern editions of Blyton's work continuing to present and disseminate the author's original construction of Englishness as fundamentally white. Ultimately, twenty-first century editions of Blyton's texts successfully continue to perpetuate a vision of Englishness as intrinsically white and inherently superior.

The chapter first examines the depiction of white and non-white characters in Blyton's realist and non-realist tales published in *Sunny Stories*. Through this examination, the discussion of race and racism in Blyton's work is expanded beyond the figure of the Golliwog, who in contemporary discourse dominates conversations on race in Blyton's fiction. A clear contrast emerges between Blyton's approach to whiteness and blackness in her fantasy, non-realist fiction and whiteness and non-whiteness in her realist fiction. In non-realist, fantasy texts, blackness is positioned as unconventional, while whiteness is presented as the norm. Although whiteness is considered the default in Blyton's fantasy texts, Blyton encourages readers to consider blackness as equal to whiteness. Characters are criticised for discriminating against black protagonists, illustrating a surprising objective of Blyton's work to impart lessons on inclusion and acceptance. However, stories featuring white and non-white characters in realistic settings exhibit a significantly different attitude towards race and racial equality. In realist texts, white and non-white characters are assigned clear positions in a racial hierarchy, with whiteness positioned at the pinnacle of this racial hierarchy. The difference in approaches is explained by the presence of human English characters. In *Sunny Stories* tales featuring human protagonists, whiteness and non-whiteness are no longer equal, rather whiteness becomes a racial identity threatened by blackness.

Twenty-first century publishers revise Blyton's books in an attempt to align the texts more comfortably with the ideologies and ideals of modern British society. A significant part of the twenty-first century modernisation of the Blyton brand involves an attempted re-modelling of her as a racially inoffensive author whose works now feature a racially diverse cast of characters. The 2020 BBC adaptation of *Malory Towers* features a more diverse cast of characters than the original series, and Patrice Lawrence's new story for the *Malory*

Towers series introduced Marietta, the first black character in the fictional boarding school. Lawrence explained her motivation to introduce a black character into the previously all-white school: “It was the thought that with this relaunch any young woman could really imagine the possibility of being there… not just by doing the ethnic jump we’ve done most of our lives, that you have to pretend you’re white, but to actually see yourself there” (Flood “Old school, new pupils”).

As well as diversifying Blyton’s original cast of characters, publishers remove obvious instances of racism from the original texts: racist terminology, such as the use of ‘ni***r’ in reference to a black character in *The Mountain of Adventure*. In the 1990s, the controversial figure of the Golliwog - the black doll who features prominently in Blyton’s stories for young readers but whose appearance closely resembles that of minstrel performers - was removed and replaced by other characters. Collectively, these efforts are an attempt to maintain the popularity and relevance of the Enid Blyton brand within the modern children’s literary market. Despite the introduction of new, non-white characters in series such as *Malory Towers*, the Blyton brand remains overwhelmingly white, with the cosmetic changes made to non-white characters enhancing the overall whiteness of her work. According to the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, “only 7% of the children’s books published in the UK over the last 3 years feature characters of colour” (“Reflecting Realities”). Blyton’s updated texts, therefore, fit comfortably within Britain’s contemporary, predominantly white twenty-first century children’s literary marketplace.

Modern publishers of Blyton’s books removed visual and textual descriptors of characters’ non-whiteness, but despite these modifications, the original adventure texts’ colonial racial hierarchies survived. I argue that the twenty-first century modifications to

Blyton's original texts conceal the original texts' racialised power systems, power systems based on colonial racial hierarchies which position white characters as dominant and superior. This chapter draws upon critical race theory and critical white studies' understanding of whiteness as a system to analyse the systemic whiteness of Enid Blyton's work. Through a critical lens of whiteness and through employing critical white studies, I seek to look beyond the surface-level of the predominantly white cast of characters to illustrate how whiteness functions to structure the social systems of Blyton's texts. I examine the decreasing visibility of whiteness as a structuring property in evolving versions of Blyton's series: whiteness becomes more implicit and more invisible as modifications are made to the original texts, which relates to one of the central tenets of critical white studies: whiteness's invisibility, and the necessity of making whiteness visible. This chapter argues that the concealment of characters' non-whiteness impacts the visibility of the protagonists' whiteness and consequently the visibility of whiteness as a power system.

Scholarship on revised classic children's texts often focuses on the appropriateness of editing texts from the past, in addition to scholars questioning the potential educational value of unedited twentieth-century children's books. A question often raised is: can twentieth-century children's texts be used to teach child readers about the ideologies of the past, in environments where critical literacy is fostered through discussion of the text and explanation of the text's historical and social context? These are important discussion topics, but they draw attention away from the format in which these texts currently exist and are accessible and read by children. A reversion to the original texts of Blyton's series is unlikely, given the popularity and success of Blyton's work in its current format. Therefore, this chapter includes detailed analysis of Blyton's texts in their modernised, updated versions. Specifically, the chapter focuses on a topic which is rarely included in scholarship on revised children's texts: the impact of editorial changes on the visibility of whiteness and the visibility of racialised power systems. Through analysing the evolving versions of Blyton's fiction, this chapter demonstrates how applying critical white studies to children's literature allows us to move beyond the surface-level pervasive whiteness of children's fiction to facilitate a deeper understanding of the ways in which whiteness structures and determines social hierarchies in children's texts.

Twenty-First Century British Context

As with the Second World War, and the mid-twentieth century disintegration of the Empire, Britain's decision to leave the EU in 2016 marked a critical point in the nation's history. Kathy Burrell and Peter Hopkins state that "for researchers of race and migration Brexit has come to mark a pivotal point in the UK's identity and practice as a multicultural country" (4). Brexit, Akwugo Emejulu writes, "really is about race", and explains in her essay "On the Hideous Whiteness Of Brexit", that it is also about whiteness: "an unstated campaign strategy of the Leave campaign", Emejulu argues, "was to re-imagine Britain and Britishness (but really Englishness) as white in order to make particular kinds of claims to victimhood" (*Verso*). The Blyton brand, a brand representative of a nostalgic vision of white Englishness, was parodically used to comment on Britain's departure from the EU. In 2016, Bruno Vincent began re-purposing Blyton's *Famous Five* series for adult readers, publishing *Five go Gluten Free* (2016) and *Five go Absolutely Nowhere* – in response to the Covid-19 global restrictions - in 2020. Vincent's first re-configured Blyton book was *Five on Brexit Island*, published in 2016, which was followed by *Five Escape Brexit Island* in 2017. Although written for comedy, it is significant that the Blyton brand was chosen to comment on a national political decision which effects UK's national identity and was, as Emejulu, Burrell, and Hopkins argue, influenced by questions of race and whiteness. The conflict between retaining a traditional sense of national identity - one that is implicitly white - while simultaneously existing in a modern, multicultural and multinational Britain has striking parallels with the existence of Blyton's twentieth-century texts within a modern children's literary market that strives towards diversity and racial equality.

Blyton's *Adventure* series (1944-1955) comprises the primary material of this chapter as the series features non-white characters, remains in circulation, and has undergone substantial editing by modern publishers. The other central text of the previous chapter, the African-set *The Secret Mountain* (1941) is excluded from new Hachette editions of Blyton's *Secret* series and is therefore not discussed in detail in this chapter. While the *Adventure* series remains the focus of this chapter, Blyton's *Noddy* series, and *Sunny Stories* tales which feature Golliwogs - the black doll with fuzzy black hair and large, red lips - or which centre on characters' skin colour, contribute to this chapter's discussion of race and whiteness. The figure of the Golliwog – especially as he appears in the *Noddy* series – is dominant in conversations on race and racism in Blyton's fiction. The black doll's existence deflects attention away from other non-white characters, including racially stereotyped non-white human characters. In this chapter, the discussion of race and racism is expanded beyond the Golliwog, and includes analysis of both fantasy and realistic texts which feature non-white characters.

Updating Children's Texts

Updating children's books is a common but contentious issue within children's literature, and an issue that reaches beyond academia into mainstream media and public discourse. The contentiousness of the debate surrounding revisions, race and children's literature was brought to the fore with the controversial decision in March 2021 by the Dr Seuss estate to cease publication of six Dr Seuss titles due to their racist portrayals of African and Asian characters. Accusations of ‘cancellation’ from Republican politicians and right-wing US media were heard, with the House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy accusing the Democrats of “outlawing Dr Seuss” (Westenfeld). These claims were counteracted by the children’s literature scholars Philip Nel and Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, who spoke about the decision as an act of “curation… not cancellation” (Westenfeld).

For both Rudd and Hunt, the editing and updating of children’s classics should be understood as simply an effort to maintain a text’s popularity and relevance within the modern literary marketplace. Due in part to being categorised as a prolific writer of popular literature, the language of Blyton’s series is considered trivial and secondary to the plot. The language of many Blyton’s texts, including *The Faraway Tree* series and the *Adventure* series, have consequently been subjected to major editorial changes since the series’ first publication in the mid-twentieth century. Rather than interpreting the practice of revision as a violation of an author’s works, Hunt wonders if “revisionism” could instead be understood as highlighting “the importance of the books in the culture” (*Introduction* 26). Classic children’s books are updated so new generations of readers can understand and enjoy these works. Otherwise, they would gradually fade from the literary marketplace. The priority for Hunt is the survival of these stories. If editing, revising, updating, and sanitising nineteenth and twentieth-century children’s texts - such as Blyton’s fantasy series, Beatrix Potter’s *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), and Hugh Lofting’s *Doctor Dolittle* series - results in their continuing popularity with modern readers, then the original language of the texts can justifiably be sacrificed.

In his evaluation of Blyton's collection, Rudd's explication of the advantages of revising children's texts is similar to Hunt's position on the subject. In *Enid Blyton and the Mystery of Children's Literature*, Rudd focuses predominantly on Blyton's "Noddy" books, and discusses the removal of references to the golliwog in modern editions of Blyton's work. Rudd questions the decision to remove racist elements of Blyton's texts, and Rudd refers to the decision as an example of "presentism": the past being "brought up to date" to better align with twenty-first century ideals (146-147). Despite highlighting the ethical issues associated with the process of censoring and updating, Rudd confidently assumes that Blyton would have accepted the need to adapt her texts in order to remain culturally relevant. Although in favour of the effort made by Blyton's publishers to maintain the author's cultural popularity and relevance, Rudd acknowledges the loss of quality and the "weakening" of Blyton's "distinctive voice" following the updating of her texts (203). However, Rudd comes to the same conclusion as Hunt: a story's continuing popularity and accessibility for a modern young readership takes precedence over the language in which the author first chose to tell the story. Through curation and extensive editing, Blyton's books have remained culturally relevant and commercially successful in the twenty-first century, but there are significant issues with the manner with which Blyton's have been revised: first, the editing process has entailed a removal of non-white characters, or a 'downplaying' of race, and second, the lack of transparency regarding the changes made to Blyton's original work.

Critical White Studies: Whiteness as a System

Whiteness dominates children's literature. The pervasiveness of whiteness is discussed extensively by critics and scholars, with Nancy Larrick's 1965 article on "The All-

White World of Children's Literature" one of the first studies to analyse the implications of this all-white world for child readers of colour and for white child readers. In referring to the dominance of whiteness, many scholars' objective is to highlight the dismal lack of representation of people of colour in children's books, or the inaccurate and stereotyped portrayal of people of colour. Statistics compiled by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) clearly illustrate the severe lack of characters of colour in modern children's fiction. The organisation's "Reflecting Realities" report is published annually, and "identifies and evaluates representation within picture books, fiction and non-fiction for ages 3–11" (*CLPE*). Scholarship on whiteness, therefore, is largely focused on the lack of representation and the lack of diversity within children's literature: it is largely focused on non-whiteness, and the absence of non-whiteness. Bringing readers and consumers' attention to the absence of characters of colour in children's literature, and to portrayals of characters of colour which may seem benign but which perpetuate racist stereotypes, is crucial to improving depictions of people of colour in contemporary fiction. Indeed, this chapter includes a detailed analysis of the racially offensive portrayals of non-white characters in modified, contemporary versions of Blyton's *Adventure* series, because an examination of the changes made to these characters is needed in order to study the decreasing visibility of whiteness. While the pervasive whiteness of children's literature is frequently stated in scholarship - how most if not all of the characters are white - whiteness itself is rarely interrogated: how whiteness is constructed and presented; how in its ubiquity and pervasiveness it becomes invisible; and how it is maintained as dominant. In this examination of modified versions of Blyton's texts, therefore, I analyse the system of whiteness which dictates the social positions of white and non-white characters. Through examining whiteness as a system, a more thorough understanding of inequality and racism can be achieved, for whiteness “structures racism and racial inequality” and scholars of whiteness “argue that without examining whiteness per se, we ignore the construct on which race, racism, and racial inequality are built” (Doane 24). Therefore, it is important that we also observe whiteness, for it is only through “looking at whiteness” that it can be dislodged “from its centrality and authority” (Dyer *White* xvii).

Numerous definitions of whiteness are provided in critical white studies scholarship, but underlying various definitions is the understanding of whiteness as a system. Steve Garner in *Whiteness: An Introduction* (2007) conceives of whiteness and racism as systems of power relations; McIntosh, in her seminal article on “White Privilege”, discusses racism and white privilege in terms of “hidden systems of advantage” and systems of power. Whiteness is referred to as an ideology in David Owen’s article “Towards a critical theory of whiteness” and by Reni Eddo-Lodge, who clarifies the distinction between “every individual white person” and “whiteness as a political ideology” (*Why I’m No Longer* 115). Owen’s theories of whiteness in modern society as “an implicit, invisible ideology that legitimates (and structures) the social order” coincides with Garner and McIntosh’s theories, but speaks of whiteness as a structuring property of a social system, or social structure, rather than a system in itself (209). Within this social system, elements are not simply situated “relative to one another” but placed “into a hierarchical relationship of superiority and subordination” (208). Whiteness positions and “locates whites in a structural position of superiority and advantage” and conversely, whiteness locates “non-whites in a structural position of inferiority, subordination and disadvantage” (207). What is more, Owen argues that a critical theory of whiteness can help to unmask the structures of whiteness and subsequently disrupt and dismantle these structures. It is this theory of whiteness as an ideology and as a structuring property of a racialised social system that I use to examine and unmask the power relations, the social hierarchies, and the ordering of characters in Blyton's modified texts.

Before discussing the US-centricity of whiteness studies, it is important to explain my choice in adopting the term 'non-white' while acknowledging the flaws with this term. In *White,* Dyer argues that despite the problems with the term 'non-white', the term "people of colour reiterates the notion that some people have colour and others, whites, do not" (11). He explains that "we need to recognise white as a colour too, and just one among many, and we cannot do that if we keep using a term that reserves colour for anyone other than white people" (11). Therefore, Dyer chooses "non-white" even though it is "problematic because of its negativity" (11). This chapter examines whiteness as a constructed racial category: using the term "people of colour" would, I believe, undermine the understanding of whiteness as a colour in itself. However, the term 'non-white' does define people in relation to whiteness, and I envision my terminology changing as new scholarship is published within whiteness studies.

US Centred, and the British Scholarship

Critical race theory and critical white studies are predominantly US-centred research areas. The majority of scholars address whiteness as the legacy of a "racially-fraught" US history of enslavement, and a concept which must be understood within America's pre- and post-civil rights era (Owen 209). For example, Donnarae MacCann's book, *White Supremacy in Children's Literature* (2000), analyses the depiction of African-American characters in children's books, and while the book is theoretically valuable, the text concentrates on American children's literature. This chapter discusses the nuances of whiteness in Britain as a legacy of the British Empire and colonialism. Through studying theories of whiteness in

Blyton’s work, the scholarship of critical white studies is transported to a British children’s literary context which in turn offers reflections on British whiteness.

Research by British scholars include Richard Dyer’s *White* (1997), which examines whiteness in both a US and British context, and Helen Victoria Young’s work, *Race and Popular Fantasy* (2018) which also examines whiteness in the works of British and American fantasy authors. Young’s book unfortunately does not include analysis of fantasy works for child readers. In addition to being US- centred, the scholarship on critical white studies is predominantly conducted by sociologists, legal studies scholars, educationalists (scholarship on literacy, and scholarship by English language teachers), activists, and historians. It is difficult to find research that employs critical white studies to examine works of children’s literature, especially British children’s literature. Philip Nel’s book *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?* (2017) does incorporate Dyer’s theories of whiteness, and Nel’s research on Dr Seuss and modernised children’s literature is an insightful study on the presence of race in texts where “it seems to be absent” (4). Nel analyses the retention of racial, colonial, and imperial ideologies in both American and British revised children’s books, including books written by Dr Seuss, Roald Dahl, and Hugh Lofting. *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?* includes explanations on the practise of whitewashing, a discussion on the dominance of whiteness within the publishing industry, the invisibility of whiteness due to its ubiquity, and the promotion of whiteness as normative. I incorporate Nel’s arguments in my examination of Blyton’s modernised texts, but my research employs a conception of whiteness as a system, drawn from scholarship in critical white studies. Furthermore, although Nel’s research encompasses British-authored children’s texts, the book is primarily focused on the US author Dr Seuss, with the book’s main chapter on whiteness focusing on the US-published

The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore (2012), a story about Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

Rebecca Rogers and June Christian's article, "'What could I say?' A critical discourse analysis of the construction of race in children's literature", discusses the construction of whiteness in American children's literature. Rogers and Christian use responses from teachers in a book club setting to evaluate the ideas of whiteness present in four American children's texts. In an article published in 2007, Rohan Jowallah identified the lack of analysis of "texts in England using the theory of whiteness", and although entitled "Whiteness and Racism in Post-Colonial British Children's Literature in England", Jowallah states that the "absence of relevant contemporary academic literature on 'whiteness' and racism within children's literature in England has resulted in my reading of academic literature on whiteness from other countries" (136). Jowallah's research focuses on critical literacy and uses a case study of a single child's response to race in three texts to evaluate the effectiveness of critical literacy "in highlighting issues of whiteness and racism within books used by a child" (137). Both Rogers and Christian's article and Jowallah's article are useful, but a more extensive study of whiteness in children's literature is needed, one that fully contextualises whiteness as a legacy of Britain's imperial and colonial past. Blyton's original texts, as products of mid-twentieth century Britain and as part of the genre of British imperial adventure fiction, provide an opportunity to examine ideas of whiteness from a wholly British, post-imperial perspective.

Before analysing the modernised versions of Blyton's texts and the retention of colonial racial hierarchies, I first provide an overview of the portrayal of non-white characters in Blyton's texts, beginning with characters in her fantasy, non-realist texts published in *Sunny Stories*. Analysis of these stories - the majority of which are unavailable in twenty-first century collections of Blyton's work – includes a study of the figure of the Golliwog, but also extends the conversation on race and racism in Blyton's work beyond the Golliwog, who often dominates conversations on racism in Blyton's fiction. Through analysing depictions of non-white characters in Blyton's fantasy, non-realist texts, it is possible to contrast these characters against depictions of non-white characters in realist texts. The comparison displays clear differences between the construction of white and black characters in fantasy settings compared to the construction of white and black characters in realistic settings. Analysis of Blyton's realist and fantasy texts illustrates a clear difference in the treatment of non-white characters in fantasy texts compared to the realist texts, with black characters presented as equal to white characters in the non-realist texts. The existence of these contrasts demonstrate how fundamental whiteness is to human, English characters in Blyton's realist texts.

Expanding Scope of Conversation about Race in Blyton's Work

Chapter One examined Blyton's early writing career and her retelling of national and international folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends. Compared to Blyton's later publications, in particular the *Adventure* series, Blyton's early retellings illustrate a respect for and a recognition of the autonomy and independence of other cultures and other nations. In retellings, Blyton recognises an independent culture and a system of social organising that operates on its own hierarchy. In Blyton's adaptations and retellings of Native American, Middle Eastern, and Asian stories, the protagonists are portrayed as powerful, heroic, and altruistic. For example, the Native American leader Hiawatha is presented as an admirable, honourable leader. The countries and cultures that Blyton drew upon for folk tales, fairy tales, and legends in her early career are later used in Blyton’s texts as contrasts to civilised, technologically advanced, white Englishness. As Blyton moves away from retellings and stories told from the perspective of non-English protagonists, her approach to non-English, non-white cultures becomes more strongly informed by colonial and imperial ideologies. Consequently, as Blyton’s writing moves away from retellings and she begins to publish her own adventure fiction, non-English characters are relied upon to provide contrasts against which Englishness is constructed.

A mythological explanation for “negroes” is provided in Blyton’s retelling of “The Boy Who Tried to Drive the Sun-Horses”: when the chariot of sun-horses becomes too powerful for Apollo’s son to control, the horses fly too close to the surface of the earth so that “the people in some lands were burnt to a black colour as are the skins of negroes even now” (V 10, 25). This explanation implies black people’s prior whiteness, and this notion of ‘turning’ black, or changing skin-colour appears again in Blyton’s original writing, with being ‘turned black’ presented as a punishment in later stories published in *Sunny Stories*.

Although Blyton exhibits a respect for other nations’ legends, myths, and folklore, the stories published in the earliest volumes of *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* in 1926 and 1927 illustrate a conscious categorisation and hierarchisation of characters based on skin colour. Certain characters within non-English tales are portrayed as ‘Other’ due to their non-whiteness, with black characters in “Sindbad the Sailor”, “The King of the Black Isles” and “Aladdin” marked as different and as inferior to the primary protagonists. ‘Othering’, therefore, occurs within non-English stories, as well as the tales themselves functioning as a contrast against tales of English heroes and English culture. In “Sindbad the Sailor” and “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp” neither Sindbad nor Aladdin’s race or skin colour is disclosed to the reader. Sindbad refers to “Bagdad, my own city” in the retelling in *Sunny Stories,* which means the sailor is Arabian and Middle Eastern. Aladdin, likewise, is Middle Eastern. In “Sindbad”, “Aladdin”, and “The King of the Black Isles”, black characters are positioned as subordinate to the Middle Eastern protagonists, and a hierarchy strongly based on race as well as class emerges. In “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp”, published in the first issue of *Sunny Stories*, Aladdin’s mother devises a plan to impress the Princess Badroul-Badour, which involves bringing vast amounts of treasure to the Princess. “Six hundred black slaves” are conjured by the Genie, who are portrayed as subordinate to the protagonists, signifying a racial hierarchy in which the society of the tale’s culture operates (V 1, 20). In other versions of “Aladdin”, including Andrew Lang’s version published in *The Arabian Nights’ Entertainments* in 1898, and Henry William Dulcken, Edward Dalziel and George Dalziel’s *Dalziels’ Illustrated Arabian Nights’ Entertainments*, the Genie conjures “forty black slaves, led by as many white ones” (612). Blyton omits the reference to white slaves in her version of ‘Aladdin’ which heightens the distinction between the protagonists and the “black slaves”(V 1). Slaves are again explicitly identified as black in “The King of the Black Isles: A Story from the Arabian Nights”: an “enormous black slave” enters the Sultan’s house, which again creates a distinction between the protagonists of the tale and the slave’s racial identity (V 25, 18).

Slaves are racially identified as black, as are the villains of both “The King of the Black Isles” and “Sindbad the Sailor”. In “The King of the Black Isles”, the Queen of the tale works with “a black enchanter” to usurp the King (V 25, 24). Blyton emphasises the villain’s skin-colour, repeatedly describing him as “the black enchanter”, the “black man”, and also refers to him as a “monster” (24-26). The villain, “the evil monster”, is eventually killed by the Sultan (28). Similarly, the monstrous villain of “Sindbad the Sailor” is described by the narrator as “a great black man” and portrayed as a demonic combination of human and animal features: “his front teeth were very long and sharp, and stuck out of his mouth, which was as wide and deep as a horse’s. His ears were like those of an elephant, and fell to his shoulders, whilst his nails were as long and as crooked as the talons of an eagle” (V 5, 21). In comparison with Lang’s version of this story, “black” is listed as one of the giant’s physical features: “the door of the hall was violently burst open and a horrible giant entered. He was as tall as a palm tree, and perfectly black, and had one eye” (142) but Blyton identifies and introduces the monster to the reader as “a great black man” (21).

A sense of Otherness pervades Blyton’s original writing, with Blyton using characters of different nationalities and ethnicities to reassert the superiority of white Englishness. In Blyton’s later adventure texts, wherein English child protagonists travel to Africa and the Middle East, contrasts are created between the whiteness of the protagonists and the non-whiteness of the country’s inhabitants. Racial hierarchies in Blyton’s *Adventure* series and in *The Secret Mountain* determine characters’ social positions, with power lying invariably with the white protagonists. These racial contrasts and racial hierarchies are found in Blyton’s early published tales in *Sunny Stories*. In stories adapted from *The Arabian Nights*, contrasts are created between the racial identities of the texts’ characters. With these retellings of Arabian tales, we see Blyton emphasising racial differences, and moreover, stressing the hierarchically inferior position of non-white characters.

The portrayal of white and non-white characters differs depending on whether the setting is realistic or based in a fantasy world. In non-realist, fantasy stories such as “The White Golliwog” and *The Wishing Chair Again* (1950), black characters are integrated citizens of society and occupy roles as authoritative leaders. In *The Wishing Chair Again*, Mister Blacky, a Golliwog, is “the very much respected and admired” head of Golliwog village (104). The children are told that “Mister Blacky has very great influence in Toy-land”, and has “ruled over” Golliwog village “for nearly a hundred years” (104). The authoritative Golliwog offers to help the child protagonists retrieve their stolen possessions, offering to battle the children’s enemy on their behalf. He organises an army to march on the enemy’s land, and while the battle ensues, the protagonists “hover over the battle and watch” (104). Following Mister Blacky and his army’s success, Mollie and Peter admire and praise the Golliwog, telling him, “Thank you… You and your army have done very, very well” (109). The Golliwog leader is placed in a position of power and is characterised as wise, authoritative and influential. While the portrayal of the Golliwog is positive, and he is positioned as a wise leader, the Golliwog’s only objective in *The Wishing Chair Again* is to assist and serve the white protagonists. However, the fantasy black character occupies a position of leadership, and his leadership is recognised and respected by the white protagonists. No such leadership position is granted to non-white characters in Blyton’s realist texts. Male, non-white characters’ authority and power – such as the African tribesman in *The Secret Mountain* - is consistently undermined by the white English protagonists in the realist texts.

In two *Sunny Stories* tales, “The White Golliwog” and “The Black Sheep”, Blyton educates readers on the persecution individuals experience because of their skin colour. The respect shown to Mister Blacky in *The Wishing Chair Again* is mirrored in Blyton’s short story, “The White Golliwog” (republished in *Now for a Story* in 1948). Despite the misleading title, the Golliwog of the story is black, and his position as leader is respected by the original characters within the tale. The Golliwog of the story, like Mister Blacky, is a much admired figure who assumes the responsibility of welcoming new arrivals into the nursery and making “them feel at home” (81). He is authoritative, and his position as leader and manager is fully accepted by the original inhabitants of the nursery: he informs “new dolls where to sleep” and also tells the “new animals how to behave” (81). The story illustrates another significant difference between Blyton’s realist and fantasy texts: in this short non-realist story, the discrimination of non-human, non-white characters is condemned. A conflict arises when new toys arrive to the nursery and challenge the Golliwog’s position as leader. The new toys take umbrage at being told what to do by a black doll, responding to his kind hospitality by telling him: “Thank you, Golly, but we can look after ourselves!” (82). The toys reject the Golliwog’s leadership position on grounds of race, using unambiguously racist rhetoric while speaking to the black character, calling him a “dirty, black-faced creature!” and telling him to “Go back to your own corner” (82). In order to gain acceptance from the new toys, the Golliwog paints his face white. The Golliwog is initially a character confident in his identity as black, but the disapproval and rejection he experiences leads him to reject his own black identity. With this tale, Blyton communicates a strong anti-discriminatory message by placing the fault of the conflict and tension with the white toy characters of the story. Through descriptions of the Golliwog hiding in a dark corner “all alone” Blyton intends to evoke sympathy for the Golliwog from the reader (83): the reader is intended to sympathise with the ostracised black character and share in the narrator’s admonishment of the bigoted white characters. Resolution is achieved when the original toys of the nursery remove the white paint from the Golliwog and return him to his “dear old self again” (86). The story admonishes the characters who ostracise on the basis of colour, which is surprising when this story and its message is compared to the treatment of non-white characters in Blyton’s *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain*: the ridiculing of characters like Jo-Jo and the African tribes-man, and the texts’ subordination of these characters to the white protagonists is in large part due to these characters’ non-whiteness.

A number of fantasy, non-realist *Sunny Stories* tales for young child readers associate whiteness with cleanliness, and non-whiteness with non-cleanliness. These associations appear again in realist series for older readers. Although no longer published, these short non-realist magazine tales offer further insight into Blyton's construction of whiteness and her perception of non-whiteness. In "The White Golliwog", the new toys are repulsed by the Golliwog, and their repulsion is attributed to their impression that black skin is simply unwashed skin: "I'm not used to people who don't wash their faces! If I had a face as black as yours I'd scrub it with yellow soap!" (82). The association between whiteness and cleanliness, and non-whiteness and non-cleanliness is, here, refuted by the Golliwog, who tells the characters that Golliwogs' faces are "*meant* to be black" (82). However, the notion of intentional blackness confounds the other toys. A white doll asks in response to the Golliwog's explanation, "why should they be?... Why shouldn't they have clean white faces like ours?" and reiterates "It's just laziness on their part… they won't wash!" (82). In this instance, the story rebukes the conflation between blackness, dirt, and laziness, but in other cases Blyton uncritically associates whiteness with cleanliness and purity, and non-whiteness with impurity and dirt. In the *Sunny Stories* short tale "The Black Sheep", we see this association between whiteness and purity despite Blyton's attempt to teach readers, once again, a message of acceptance and inclusivity.

"The Black Sheep" is similar to "The White Golliwog" in that the message of the story relates to the unfair and cruel ostracization of a black character. Once again, we see the discrimination of a non-human, non-white character criticised by both the narrator and the 'good' characters of the story. A new toy - a black sheep - enters the nursery and is immediately disliked and excluded by the other toys, including, interestingly, by a Golliwog. The other toys' instant dislike of the sheep is unequivocally due to his colour, which they find unnatural given that all the sheep they know are white. A “snow-white woolly lamb” distances himself from the black sheep, proudly reminding the other characters that “all my family are as white as I am” (V 170, 9). Blackness is characterised as an unfortunate characteristic of one’s identity, with the narrator explaining to the reader that the sheep was “quite a nice creature… and it wasn’t his fault that he was black” (10). The route to the story’s concluding moral is not without issue, as the sheep is only able to prove his kindness and value after he accidentally turns himself white. Even though the story is intended to teach a lesson in equality and acceptance of difference, whiteness is still associated with purity and beauty: the sheep falls into a “bucket of whitewash” and emerges “as white as snow” (11). The narrator informs the reader that the sheep now “looked most beautiful” (11). Nevertheless, the story succeeds in explaining prejudice to readers through comparing the reaction of the other toys to the black and later whitewashed sheep. After the toy sheep becomes white, he is immediately welcomed by the other toys: the toys’ positive disposition towards whiteness is contrasted with the welcome the black sheep first received. The other toys instinctively regard the white sheep as “a fine fellow”, and repeatedly compare him to his “rude”, “horrid” black counterpart (12). Once they discover the truth, it is the Golliwog who reconciles the divide between the white nursery and the black sheep: the Golliwog offers his apologies and tells the sheep “I feel ashamed of myself for having been horrid before” (13). The story concludes with the sheep asking: “Surely if I am nice when I am white, I must be nice when I am black? I’m just the same inside” (13).

While well meaning, the story’s anti-discrimination and anti-prejudice message is tainted by the association between whiteness and beauty/purity, and, by the narrative path towards acceptance which relies on the character temporarily hiding his blackness. The concluding sentence asks the reader, “Wasn’t it a good thing the sheep fell into the pail of whitewash!" (13). The exclamation mark rather than a question mark leaves little room for the reader to question the story's moral: the question is rhetorical, with the narrator essentially telling the reader it was a "good thing" the sheep was able to disguise his blackness. The concluding message that "I'm just the same inside" differs drastically to the presentation of white and non-white characters in Blyton's realist texts, wherein the fundamental differences between white and non-white characters are emphasised. Fictional fantasy societies undermine the racial hierarchies of Blyton's realist texts. Racial equality is presented as possible in Blyton's fantasy texts, with the texts promoting the idea of an egalitarian society. Adventure stories set in realistic locations, however, accept and adhere to colonial racial hierarchies. For Blyton, an egalitarian society in which individuals are treated equally regardless of the colour of their skin can only be conceived of in a fantasy story. In fantasy societies, skin-colour is presented as an arbitrary difference between characters, and those who use differences in skin-colour to bully, ostracise, or belittle non-white/black characters are positioned as the 'bad' characters of the text. In adventure texts set in a realistic location, skin colour becomes a signifier of inherent racial difference. In Blyton's realist texts, the sentiment that characters of diverse races are "just the same" as white characters is wholly absent.

The two fantasy stories discussed – "The White Golliwog" and "The Black Sheep" – are located entirely within a fantasy, toy world. In moving from fantasy settings to real-world settings, a change in attitude towards black characters and blackness emerges. The cautionary tale of "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck!" (reprinted in *Eight O' Clock Tales* in 1944) features an intrusion of fantasy into the real world, and the story of "Mr Twiddle and the Sweep" is set in the real world. The predominance of a real-world setting signals a change in how blackness is presented, with blackness presented as a punishment in "He Wouldn't

Wash his Neck", and a perceived black character causing fear for the white protagonist of "Mr Twiddle and the Sweep". In both stories, blackness is uncritically and degradingly associated with uncleanliness and impurity, and contrasted against clean whiteness. Blackness is furthermore presented as frightening and positioned as a threat to the safety and purity of white characters.

"He Wouldn't Wash his Neck" was published in *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* in 1933. The story is one of many fantasy intrusion tales written by Blyton, in which the supernatural and the impossible disrupt the protagonist's primary world (Grenby *Children's* Literature 144). In Blyton's high-fantasy stories, in which the story takes place entirely within a secondary world, characters are rebuked for their suspicion and fear of black characters. "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck" is low-fantasy, as the human child protagonist's primary world is disrupted by the supernatural. In transitioning from high- to low-fantasy (Grenby 144), and with the presence of a human child protagonist, characters are no longer criticised for their fear of blackness, but rather blackness is presented as something to rightly fear. The correlation between blackness and dirt found in other Blyton texts is clearly displayed in "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck", in which dirt is presented as the explanation for blackness. The story is a cautionary tale: its intended purpose is to encourage readers to wash properly, with neglecting to wash potentially resulting in being turned permanently black. Jimmy, the young English boy of the story, is kidnapped by goblins for the purposes of conducting a spell which requires a young boy with a "dirty neck" (*Eight* 108). The recipient of the spell is the goblins' enemy, the King, who the goblins wish "to punish… for chasing us out of Fairyland" by "turning him black" (114). Blackness becomes a punishment, as well as retaining its previous established associations with uncleanliness. The young protagonist's horrified response to the goblins' plan reinforces the story's association between blackness, degradation, and punishment, for due to the child’s strong moral character he refuses to partake in “such a dreadful thing”: “He didn’t care WHAT happened, he wasn’t going to do it” (114). The threat of blackness is then directed at Jimmy for his non-compliance, and in doing so the connection between black skin and unwashed, dirty skin is reiterated. The goblins’ logic, they explain, is if they turn the child black he “won’t ever have to wash [his] neck again because nobody will see if it is dirty or clean” (112). The narrator interjects and heightens the sense of fear and horror felt by the young boy, asking the reader “what would his mother say if she had a little black boy instead of a white one?” (112). The story concludes happily, with the goblins imprisoned for their wicked behaviour and the King triumphantly declaring in a “golden voice” to the goblins’ astonishment and disappointment that “I am as white as ever I was!”, which is a great relief to all (118). At the end of the story, Jimmy communicates the lesson he has learned to his friends, telling them to “mind, boys, whatever you do, don’t forget to wash your necks every day, in case you get caught like me!” (120-121).

In “Mr Twiddle and the Sweep”, published in *Enid Blyton’s Sunny Stories* in 1944, the basis of the story is dependent on the association between blackness and dirtiness. The protagonist, an elderly English man called Mr Twiddle (who in the accompanying illustrations closely resembles Winston Churchill) mistakes a soot-covered chimney sweep for a black man, and consequently refuses to let the man enter his house. The distress caused to Mr Twiddle by the perceived presence of a “black man” outside his house forms the basis of the story’s humour (V 334). From Twiddle’s perspective, the black chimney sweep poses a threat to him, whose home is in danger of being violated by an unknown black man. For Twiddle to welcome a black man into his home is inconceivable, and he tells the sweep that “not even in dreams do I open the door to black men like you” (4). Twiddle, to reassure himself of his safety, continues to believe the encounter must be part of a dream: he refuses to believe in the existence of the black man and tells him: “I’ve met bad dreams like you before. Only generally you are bears or snakes or dragons. Go away. I don’t believe in you” (4). To Mr Twiddle, a black man is as unlikely and as preposterous, but also as dangerous and as disturbing, as a dragon or a bear outside a white British home. Throughout the story, Twiddle’s foolishness is emphasised, and the reader is expected to laugh at the silly, confused character. Although the narrator labels Twiddle as “mad… unkind” and “completely silly” (6), the narrator simultaneously sympathises with the protagonist at the end of the story, and attempts to evoke sympathy in the reader for the “silly” man (7). The narrator does not criticise the white protagonist’s attitude towards the black man, but rather criticises the protagonist’s foolishness in mistaking the sweep as black. The remonstration of prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour found in the fantasy story “The White Golliwog” is missing from this realist tale. As with “He Wouldn’t Wash his Neck”, fear is again the dominant emotion in a story which centres on blackness. Whereas Mr Twiddle’s fear stems from the prospect of a black man breaching the safe boundaries of his white English home, in “He Wouldn’t Wash his Neck”, the protagonist fears becoming black and losing his whiteness. The suspicion of black men found in “Mr Twiddle” mirrors white child protagonists’ attitudes towards non-white adult males in Blyton’s realist series for older readers, particularly in *The Island of Adventure* and the protagonists’ suspicion of the black servant, Jo-Jo. The fantasy and humour of both tales veils the underlying urgency of maintaining whiteness: for Mr Twiddle, the urgency to protect his home from the intrusion of a black character, and for the child protagonist in “He Wouldn’t Wash his Neck”, to protect his white identity. Furthermore, both stories contain ideas about blackness which served to degrade black people and connect, in readers’ minds, blackness and black people with impurity, laziness, and fear. We see these characteristics used again in the construction of non-white characters in Blyton's *Adventure* series – and these negative qualities are preserved in modernised editions of the *Adventure* series to retain non-white characters' sense of Otherness.

Second to Blyton's *Noddy* stories, the book *The Little Black Doll* is the most cited text in conversations on race and racism in Blyton's fiction. Published in 1937, the story involves a young black character with an "ugly black face" who is washed pink by enchanted rain. Following this 'cleansing', the once ostracised doll is welcomed back and accepted by the other characters, including his human owner. The story conflicts with the message of "The White Golliwog", "The Black Sheep", and even a second story entitled "The Little Black Doll" published in *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories* in 1943: in this later version, the other toys realise their cruelty, and welcome the black doll back into the nursery, telling him, "We don't like you because you are black or because you are white… We like you because you are kind and friendly and good. You can be any colour you like. We don't really care" (V 308). The 1943 version mirrors the anti-prejudice, anti-discrimination messages of Blyton's other fantasy short stories. The 1937 book *The Little Black Doll* was removed from circulation in the 1970s. Unsurprisingly, stories such as "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck" are not selected for inclusion in modern collections of Blyton's short stories. The story first appeared in *Sunny Stories* in 1933. It was included in a collection of tales entitled *Eight O' Clock Tales* in 1944. Hachette UK's most recent edition of *Eight O' Clock Tales* was published in 2017 and excludes "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck". The stories are removed from circulation, and generally forgotten about. Confining *The Little Black Doll* and short stories such as "He Wouldn't Wash his Neck" to the twentieth century was a straightforward, easy solution to the stories' problematic existence. The figure of the Golliwog proved a more difficult problem, as the figure pervades

Blyton’s fantasy fiction, and is a central character in several *Noddy* texts. Books such as *The Three Golliwogs* simply stopped being published in the late twentieth-century, but in books where Golliwogs feature as secondary characters, such as the *Noddy* books, Golliwogs were removed from the text and from the illustrations and replaced by other characters. The black dolls were substituted with a variety of individuals, including white human characters, teddy bears, monkeys and goblins. In his book *Enid Blyton and The Mystery of Children’s Literature*, Rudd writes that “the centrality of racism in general, and the golliwog in particular, to any discussion of Blyton” necessitates an addressing of the topic in a study of her work (153). The Golliwog is, as Rudd states, a crucial element in a discussion of race and racism in Blyton’s work. The Golliwog is a particularly important figure in analysing the modifications made to Blyton’s books as the solution to the problem of the Golliwog’s presence was to remove the character from all of Blyton’s texts: erasure subsequently became the preferred method for dealing with other non-white characters in Blyton’s fiction.

Erasing the Golliwog

The figure of the Golliwog existed before Blyton’s publications: Florence Kate Upton is credited as the creator of the Golliwogg (Upton’s spelling with two ‘g’s) character, which was inspired by a “blackface minstrel doll she had played with as a child in the United States” (Nel *Was the Cat* 12). The close resemblance of the Golliwog doll to minstrel dolls and minstrel performers is the primary issue with Upton and Blyton’s Golliwog characters. Minstrelsy is defined by Ishizuka and Stephens as shows which “exploited Black stereotypes for profit and mocked African Americans and Black culture” (“The Cat is Out of the Bag” 23). Minstrel performers “mimicked White perceptions of the attributes and function of Black people as subservient, ignorant, buffoonish, and performing at the pleasure of and profit for Whites" (23). Minstrel shows were performed in Britain throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, with the BBC's television programme "The Black and White Minstrel Show" running from 1958 to 1978 (Hendy "History of the BBC"). According to the BBC website, in the 1960s, "The Black and White Minstrel Show" was "getting audiences of 16 million" and were popular at a time when "tens of thousands of black people had long been settled in Britain" ("History of the BBC"). In Upton's early twentieth-century stories, the Golliwogg is occasionally figured as a European colonial explorer, and while this complicates the association between Golliwog(g)s and black people, the doll's appearance and the appearance of minstrel performers share "striking features, such as the big red lips, the huge round eyes and the wild hair" leading to the conclusion that both minstrels and Golliwoggs "seem to derive from a collective history of stereotypically racialised representation" (Reichl 174).

The Golliwog character in Blyton's books was condemned as a "distorted representation of a black person" (Rudd 136), and although the Golliwog is now absent from her fiction, the character still features prominently in discussions on race and racism in Blyton's work. The claim that the Golliwogs were representative of, or associated in any way with black people was adamantly refuted by Blyton: "Golliwogs are merely lovable black toys, not Negroes" (Stoney 158). Yet, the names of the three Golliwogs in "The Three Golliwogs and the Cats" are "Golly, Woggie, and Nigger" (V 280). In the 1950s and 1960s, the primary target of criticism was Blyton's "Noddy" series, particularly the 1951 *Here Comes Noddy Again*, in which a group of Golliwogs ambush Noddy in the forest to steal his clothes and car. The story was controversial for its depiction of Golliwogs as criminals, but Blyton responded to criticism of racial discrimination by "saying that she had written far more good golliwogs into her stories than bad" (Stoney 158). David Rudd analysed the characterisation of Golliwogs in 323 stories which were "randomly selected" to provide evidence for Blyton's claim, that 'good' Golliwogs outnumbered "naughty" Golliwogs: he found that 9% of the 323 stories featured Golliwogs, and of these, only four Golliwogs were "bad" and indeed in this selection of stories, "the golliwog is often a character that comes up with solutions to problems" (*Enid Blyton* 152). Furthermore, Rudd conducts interviews with young readers of Blyton's books and the responses to questions posed about the Golliwog character serve to corroborate Blyton's claim that the characters are "merely lovable black toys": none of the children interviewed thought of the Golliwogs as associated with black people (147). While in agreement with the need to contextualise Blyton's work, and for modern readers to understand that "Blyton was a product of an age we now consider racist", Rudd believes Blyton "would have been the first to retell her stories without golliwogs" and moreover, "would have updated her language from those rather passé days of 'queer' and 'gay' abandon." (153, 202). Rudd's presumptions are complicated by Blyton's loyalty to the Golliwog character, and her assured response to critics that the Golliwog character was entirely disconnected from caricatures of black people. Although Blyton modified and edited folk narratives for publication in *Sunny Stories*, we cannot be certain she would approve of the modifications made to her own work.

In the early 1990s, Blyton's publishers "made certain text changes to her work" and despite Blyton's insistence that the Golliwogs were merely toys, the characters were removed from the books as part of an overall editing process "to bring her stories into line with modern thought and sensitivities" (Stoney 175). The decision was made to publish Blyton's immensely popular *Noddy* series without the Golliwog, a decision which Gillian Baverstock, Blyton's daughter, considered a necessary change. In an interview with *The*

Telegraph in 1996, Baverstock said that her mother "didn't know the golliwog would become politically incorrect", and to Blyton, the Golliwog "was a toy in the nursery when she wrote the books" ("Gillian Baverstock"). Golliwogs were replaced with animals, or with fantasy figures in revised versions of Blyton's books: goblins were used as the replacement criminals for *Here Comes Noddy Again*. In some cases, the replacement of Golliwogs increases the number of white characters in Blyton's fictional worlds, enhancing the overall whiteness of the texts. For example, in *Hurrah for Little Noddy*, the Golliwog character's role is replaced by Mr Sparks, a white man. In *Noddy Goes to Toyland*, which was first published in 1949, Noddy arrives in "Golliwog Town", which in the original text is illustrated by Hamsen van der Beek. Hodder Children's Books, a publisher within Hachette UK published a new edition of *Noddy Goes to Toyland* in 2016 (*Publishers Weekly*). In this version, "Golliwog Town" is replaced with "Monkey Town", and the accompanying illustration shows groups of anthropomorphised monkeys dressed in clothes and families with young monkeys in prams. The statue of the Golliwog in the original illustration is replaced with a statue of a monkey dressed in a top-hat and suit. Criticism of Blyton and criticism of the Golliwog focuses primarily on the perception of the Golliwog as an offensive caricature of black people. Given the history of racial discourse surrounding black people as inhuman, subhuman, and less evolved as white people, it is a striking oversight to choose monkeys as suitable substitutions for Golliwogs in modern editions.

In addition to issues of content, the Hodder/Hachette 2016 edition of *Noddy Goes to Toyland* highlights a separate issue concerning authenticity. On Hachette UK's website, the webpage on *Noddy Goes to Toyland* states: "First published in 1949, this edition contains the original text by Enid Blyton and illustrations by Hamsen van der Beek" (*Hachette*). When the original books are compared to the twenty-first century editions, it is clear that both the original text and van der Beek's illustrations have been modified. Besides changes made to the Golliwog character, children of colour are inserted into the illustrations in a superficial nod to diversity and inclusion. However, these characters are present in illustrations, only: they are not part of the story, and are not given speaking roles. Van der Beek's illustrations are clearly modified, yet modern editions of the series still bear Beek's signature at the bottom of illustrations. Hachette present these texts as the authentic versions, concealing the controversial histories of these stories by quietly altering the language and illustrations of the originals.

The *Noddy* books are one of many Blyton series revised by Hachette, Macmillan, and other publishers: *The Magic Faraway Tree*, *The Wishing Chair*, the *Secret* series, and the *Adventure* series have all been similarly edited. In Chapter One, I examined Blyton's editing and revising of national and international folk tales, fairy tales, myths and legends for publication in her magazine *Sunny Stories for Little Folks*. Blyton's own work has been subjected to a similar process of modification: publishers have revised the language of Blyton's texts, modernising character names and terms to bring the story forward in time, similar to Blyton's modernisation of "Goldenhair and the Three Bears", "Sleeping Beauty", and "Cinderella". Hachette and Macmillan have conducted both textual and visual modifications to Blyton's texts: for example, the protagonists of Blyton's *The Faraway Tree* are no longer Jo, Bessie, and Fanny, but Joe, Beth, and Frannie. Food and names for meals are updated: 'tea' becomes 'meal'; 'buns' become 'cakes' (205 [2008]). Unhealthy habits such as smoking and drinking are removed from the *Adventure* series: Bill Smugs' cigarette before bed is changed to "a glass of lime juice" (*River* 54 [2014]). As well as minor updates to modernise the texts, Hachette and Macmillan have edited the texts to remove indicators of Blyton and Britain's racially problematic past.

The short, transient *Sunny Stories* tales of “The Black Sheep”, “The White Golliwog”, and “He Wouldn’t Wash his Neck”, illustrate Blyton’s contrasting attitudes to blackness, but it is the texts which display negative and degrading opinions of non-white characters that survive into the twenty-first century. In new editions of the *Adventure* series, modern publishers’ edits primarily focus on the moderation of the original texts’ racist and offensive portrayal of non-white characters. However, non-white characters who were clearly depicted as non-white in the original texts are still Othered. Furthermore, the characterisation of non-white characters is still based on offensive stereotypes.

The solution to the existence of the Golliwog in Blyton’s fantasy, non-realist texts – namely the removal of the character entirely – was not a viable option for the realist texts. In the realist texts, rather than the entire non-white character being removed, publishers remove references to non-white characters’ skin colour. Recent edits mainly consist of visually and textually concealing the racial identities of non-white characters, resulting in the surface-level of revised texts no longer ‘seeing’ race or explicitly acknowledging racial differences[1]. Visually, non-white characters are removed from cover illustrations of books, and Blyton’s current publishers of the *Adventure* series, Macmillan, have opted for illustration-free texts. Blyton’s *Adventure* series was created upon imperial and colonial ideological foundations, and as such, race and whiteness are principal factors in determining who has power and who ought to have power. This aspect of power determination is de-emphasised in modern editions of the series, as it is too stark an evocation of Britain’s colonial history for the twenty-first century children’s literary market and for the modern

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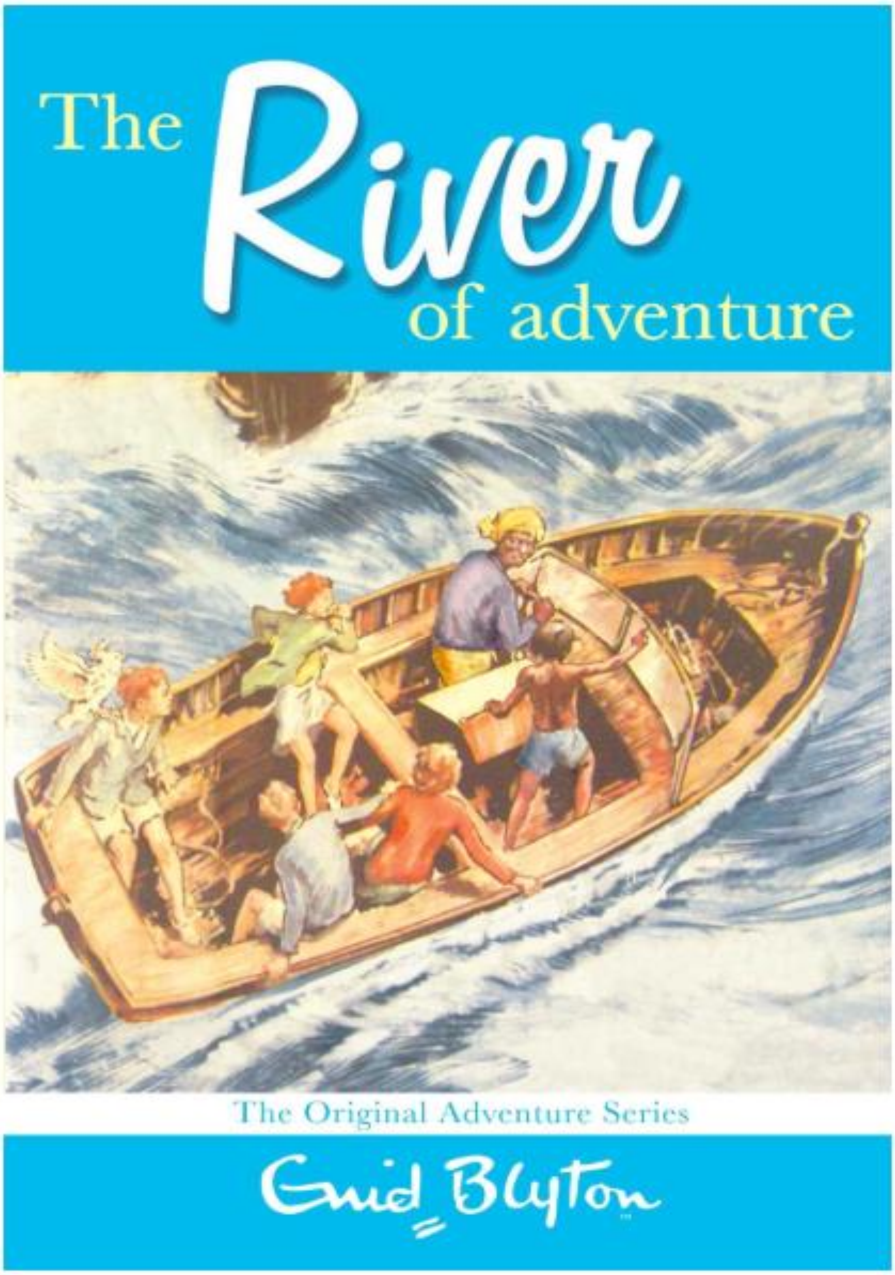
[1] Removal of references to skin-colour occur with other Blyton series, too: in the original *Five Fall into Adventure*, the villain is described as having a dark face and suspected of being a “black man” (30). References to the “black man” and to the man’s “very dark” face are removed from Hachette’s 2014 edition of the text.

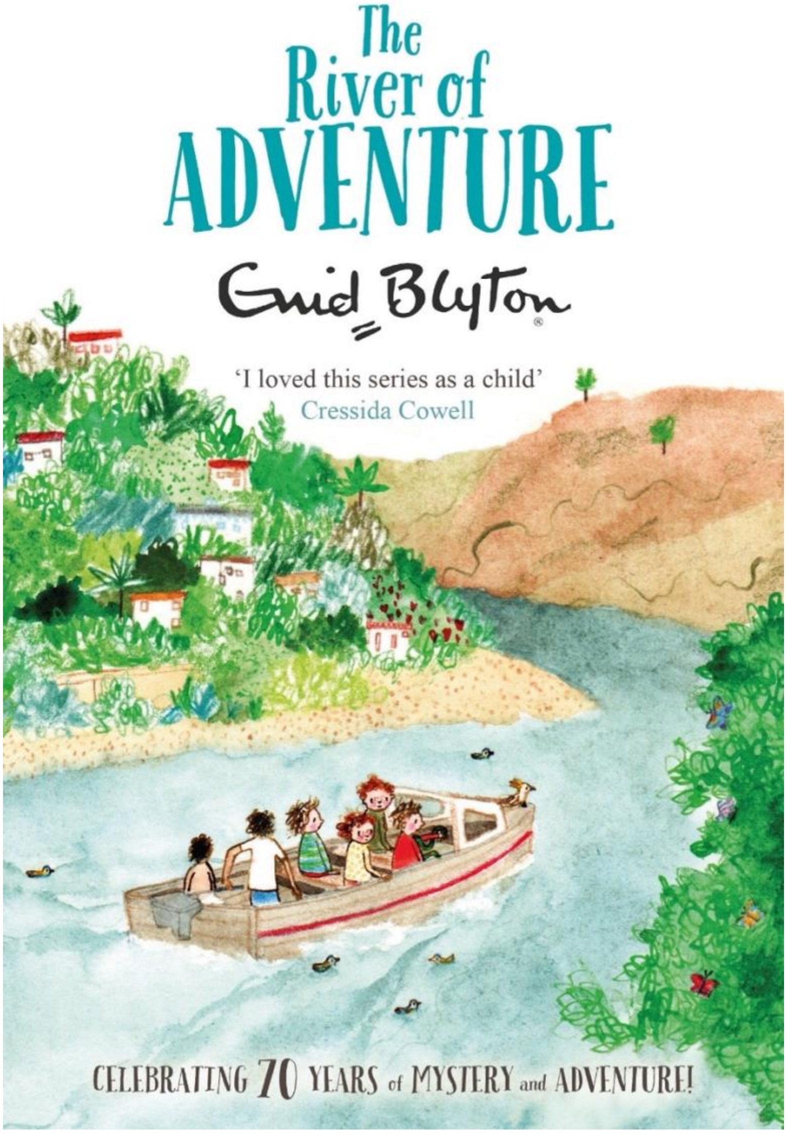
Blyton brand. The relationship between race, power and dominance is downplayed through the removal of references to black skin or dark-skin. In Blyton's original work, characters such as Mafumu in *The Secret Mountain*, Jo-Jo in *The Island of Adventure*, and Tala and Oola in *The River of Adventure* are clearly shown and clearly described as dark-skinned. The original cover illustration for *The River of Adventure*, published in 1955, shows the four child protagonists of the series in a boat with two dark-skinned people: one older man, one young child. The story is set in the imaginary country Barira, which readers are informed neighbours Syria. Inhabitants of Barira, we are informed by Jack in the original 1955 edition, "look like Arabs" and these textual descriptions are reflected in Stuart Tresilian's illustrations throughout the text (13). On the cover image, the four English children wear shirts and shorts, while the dark-skinned man and child both wear a covering around their waist, and the man wears a turban-like head covering. The obvious racial differences between the Barira people and the English protagonists are clear. Macmillan Children's Books released an edition of *The River* in 2007 with the same cover image, but the young dark-skinned boy now wears shorts, rather than a tied piece of cloth, and the older dark-skinned man wears a jersey-top similar to those worn by the English children.



The River of adventure
The Original Adventure Series
Enid Blyton

Macmillan's 2007 cover image of The River of Adventure

Macmillan's 2014 version has a completely new cover image, and there are no illustrations within the text (Blyton's original text was illustrated). The style of the new cover illustration is more simplistic and cartoonish than the original, and the two originally dark-skinned characters – Tala and Oola - now have a much lighter-coloured skin tone, and appear simply as tanned. Furthermore, while each of the four English children's faces are clearly seen, as they are turned toward the viewer, Tala and Oola both have their backs turned, leaving only their arms visible to the viewer. From this intentionally limited view of the two characters, the cover image obscures their non-whiteness, while simultaneously ensuring the clear visibility of the four white protagonists.


The River of ADVENTURE
Enid Blyton
'I loved this series as a child'
Cressida Cowell
CELEBRATING 70 YEARS of MYSTERY and ADVENTURE!

Macmillan's 2014 cover image of The River of Adventure

The original illustrations of the *Adventure* series are not included, and they are not replaced by new illustrations. Therefore, in Macmillan's new edition of *The River*, non-white characters do not clearly feature on the book cover, in illustrations, or in the text. This is despite the story being set in a Middle Eastern country which neighbours Syria. McGillis chronologically examines editions of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess*, and finds a similar 'softening' of colonial themes through the visible reduction of the presence of Ram Dass, the story's central Indian character. In analysis of two new editions of *A Little Princess*, the texts have only one visual depiction of Ram Dass each and both are from a distance (*A Little Princess* 55-56). "Our first experience of a book", McGillis writes, "must be its cover and what we see begins to affect how we think, even unconsciously, about the book" (*A Little Princess* 51). Newer editions of Blyton's *Adventure* series omit the original in-text illustrations and therefore the only visual markers are the new illustrations on the cover.

Visual whitewashing is a common occurrence in children's and young adult publishing. Blyton's publishers use this practise in conjunction with textual whitewashing to conceal and make ambiguous the skin colour of non-white characters. At the beginning of *The River*, the English family arrive in Barira where they are greeted by "a very brown-skinned man" (12 [1975]): this description becomes "a man" in Macmillan's 2014 edition (21). All references to the skin-colour of Tala and Oola, the characters who accompany the family on their adventure through Barira, are erased. *The River of Adventure* retains only two references to skin colour, one in relation to the "dark skinned" actors the protagonists see on a film set in Barira, and second, in relation to the whiteness of expert archaeologists. On a film set in Barira, the child protagonists see "a kind of bed on which lay a very beautiful woman, carried by four slaves, tall, strong and dark skinned" (33). It is not made clear if the actors are from Barira, but it is significant that the only time dark-skin is referred to in

Macmillan’s 2014 edition is in reference to slavery. At the end of the tale, the protagonists discover treasure belonging to the ancient kings of the region. Bill Smugs, the detective who marries Philip and Dinah’s mother, explains to the children that in order to safely unearth the treasure, “a digging outfit, composed perhaps of fifty or so workmen, and a good sprinkling of white experts” is required (81 [2014]). The original edition states “fifty or so natives”, which modern editors changed to the less colonial “workmen”, but in retaining “white experts” Macmillan preserve the distinction between the locals and the trained, intellectually superior white archaeologists (58).

Across different series, and even across titles of the same series, there are inconsistencies in publishers’ editing policies. For example, referring to a black character as a ‘servant’ in *The Island of Adventure* is not acceptable and consequently removed, but is permitted in *The River of Adventure*. The referring of a white character by a black character as “Missy” has enough racist connotations to warrant its removal in *The Mountain of Adventure* but is considered acceptable in *The River of Adventure*. The haphazardness of the editing process is drawn attention to in Katrina Marshall's PhD on revisions to Blyton’s *Famous Five* series. Marshall’s research focuses on the portrayal of sex and gender in Blyton’s work, and Marshall states: “Hodder’s inconsistency seems partially because so many issues are deeply embedded in the narrative, making them difficult (if not impossible) to neatly extricate” (*Britannia's Children* 154). Blyton’s beliefs concerning gender and gender roles are, like her racial and colonial ideologies, not easily excisable.

Other characters of colour, such as the originally black Jo-Jo in the *Adventure* series, have their race and skin colour toned down in revised editions of the texts, to the point where their non-whiteness is no longer visually or descriptively represented. *The Island of*

Adventure, the first book of the *Adventure* series, features the character Jo-Jo, who in the original story is described as follows: “Jack and Lucy-Ann saw a coloured man coming towards them. His skin was black, his teeth were very white, and he rolled his eyes in a peculiar way” (14). In revised editions, Jo-Jo is ‘Joe’, and instead of being a coloured man he is “a strange man”, whose “skin was lined, his teeth were very white, and his eyes darted from side to side as he looked at them” (22 [2014]). In the original edition, illustrations are included of Jo-Jo, one of which is of him hitting two of the child protagonists, Jack and Philip. The illustration echoes the text’s description of “the big powerful body of the black man” (35). Macmillan’s 2014 edition is unillustrated, and the cover image is of the four white English children, only. Visually, Jo-Jo is erased, and within the text, his blackness is never directly stated. Another black character’s racial identity is edited out of *The Mountain of Adventure*: the original text includes a description of a “negro” who the children discover hiding in a tree, trying to escape the pursuit of vicious dogs (82 [1975]). Blyton’s original description of Sam is a racist stereotype of black people: he has “black, woolly hair… very white teeth and thick lips” which resembles the depiction of Blyton’s Golliwogs (82). Blyton’s attempt to write in a black, African American dialect for Sam’s character results in an offensive speech style, which is similar to but far worse than Jo-Jo’s language in *The Island of Adventure*. Sam pleads with Lucy-Ann, telling her: “You not make a sound, little missy… You not say I here. I poor nigger, little missy… I been in bad mountain… I get away. But poor nigger nowhere to go – he afraid of dem big dogs. He stay here in big tree” (82 [1975]). In 2007, Macmillan published an edition of *The Mountain of Adventure* in which Sam remains a black character, but the physical description of the man is altered, and his speech is no longer an offensive, poor replication of an African American dialect. Instead of “black, woolly hair”, Sam now has “black, thick hair, and… bright eyes and a cheerful expression" (112). When speaking to Lucy-Ann, Sam tells her "Don't you make a sound, l'il gal… Don't you say I'm here. I'm just a poor man. L'il gal, you gotta git away from here. It's a no-good mountain, full of bad men. They'll git you if you don't git away. There's bad things here, l'il gal" (112). Sam is characterised as vulnerable, and he is dependent on a young girl's silence for his safety which mirrors the helpless, subordinate positions other non-white characters are placed in throughout the *Adventure* series. Macmillan's 2014 edition uses the 2007's edition's revised speech style for Sam, but removes any reference to his blackness: the "negro" who became "a black man!" in Macmillan's 2007 edition, and is now simply "a man!" in the 2014 version (69). Descriptions of Sam's blackness are removed entirely: the character is deracinated.

By concealing and making ambiguous the race and skin-colour of non-white characters, contemporary publishers of Blyton's books hope to avoid accusations of racism from critics and prolong the literary market success of the Blyton brand. Blyton is by no means the only author whose books have been revised in an attempt to prolong their literary lifelines. Erasure, replacement, and concealment are the primary methods employed by authors and publishers to mitigate the racism of twentieth-century children's texts. Nancy Larrick highlights the problem of publishers using invisibility and exclusion as a method to appease critics and avoid accusations of racism in American children's literature. Larrick uses the example of *The Rooster Crows: A Book of American Rhymes and Jingles* which was first published in 1945 and originally contained illustrations of black children "with great bunions feet, coal black skin, and bulging eyes" alongside "a dilapidated cabin with a black, gun-toting, barefoot adult" (Larrick 65). White children in *The Rooster Crows*, on the other hand, are portrayed as "nothing less than cherubic" (65). After almost two decades of complaints, the publishers of the award-winning book decided "the book would be improved by deleting the illustrations of Negro children" with a new edition of the story released containing "only white children" (65). The whiteness of the story is consequently enhanced, rather than publishers' deciding to re-illustrate the book with more realistic, non-stereotyped depictions of black American children. In Britain, P.L. Travers rewrote the original "Bad Tuesday" chapter of *Mary Poppins* twice to moderate the chapter's overt racism: the original chapter had a "negro", a Chinese man and an "Indian boy" speaking in dialect to the two English child protagonists (Nel *Was the Cat* 69). In 1967, Travers removed the dialect, and, in 1981, she replaced the characters with animals: Polar Bears replace Eskimos, a Hyacinth Macaw replaces the "negro" family, a Panda replaces the old "Mandarin" Chinese man, and a Dolphin and her son replace Chief Sun- at- Noonday and the "Indian boy" (Nel 69). Edits were posthumously made to Hugh Lofting's *Doctor Dolittle* tales in 1988 by the publisher Dell. All "references to characters' skin colour" were removed, so that in the revised version of *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*, "Dolittle is no longer described as a white man, or the King of Golliginki as a black man" (Bradford "Race, Ethnicity" 43). Bradford makes a similar argument about the ineffectiveness of the edits to Lofting's work as Nel makes in relation to Dahl's revised *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*: Bradford writes, "when publishers sanitize older texts in this way through the removal of surface features – words such as 'black' and 'nigger' – they leave intact hierarchies of race and maintain narrative outcomes which promote the superiority of European culture" ("Race, Ethnicity" 43). Similarly, in 1973, Roald Dahl revised *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* to enhance the fantasy elements of the story, replacing the original black African pygmies working in Wonka's chocolate factory with the more fantastical Oompa-Loompas from Loompaland (Nel *Was the Cat* 69). Joseph Schindelman, the illustrator of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, changed the Pygmies/Oompa-Loompas' colour from black to white, distancing the text from its links with British colonialism. However, as Philip Nel argues, the colonial ideologies of Dahl's original text are preserved in the revised edition as "the Oompa-Loompas still live in 'thick jungles infested by the most dangerous beasts in the entire world,' and are still a 'tribe' who do not learn English until they come to Britain" ("Can Censoring a Children's Book"). The revisions do not "alter the ideological assumptions of the original," rather "the new versions… more subtly encode the same racial and colonial messages of the original versions" ("Can Censoring a Children's Book").

Twenty-first century publishers of Blyton's texts are cognisant of the books' nostalgic appeal for adult readers and adult consumers and they have therefore chosen to conceal the fact that modern editions of Blyton's books are modified versions of the originals. The practice of curating authors' collections and revising classic and popular children's books often provokes the ire of fans and the media. The response to the announcement from the Dr Seuss estate on the ceasing of publication of six of Dr Seuss' books is a perfect example of the controversy that can be created by modifying children's books. To avoid a potential controversial backlash, publishers of Blyton's books have covertly curated and revised Blyton's twentieth-century texts. The *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain* are, as illustrated in the previous chapter, based within the tradition of imperial adventure fiction. The texts, furthermore, are products of an author who firmly believed in the ideologies and objectives of British imperialism. In order to survive the transition into the twenty-first century, it was necessary for publishers to distance certain texts in the *Adventure* series from their original colonial context, and to omit *The Secret Mountain* entirely from the modern Blyton collection. Hachette UK omitted the African-set *The Secret Mountain* from its 2016 edition of the *Secret* series, presumably because the book was deemed unsalvageable due to the racist portrayals of African people. In contrast to the announcement from Dr

Seuss' estate in 2021 regarding the ceasing of publication of six Dr Seuss books, Hachette UK quietly, covertly curated Blyton's collection, removing a text which no longer fit with the twenty-first century version of the Blyton brand. Other Blyton texts were revised and modified rather than omitted from re-published series: *The Island of Adventure* and *The River of Adventure* are two such texts wherein portrayals of non-white characters are modified to mitigate the racism of the original texts.

As well as quietly removing books from modern collections of Blyton's series, Hachette and Macmillan actively try to conceal the fact that changes have been made to the new editions. Hachette's webpages on individual titles clearly state the retainment of the original editions' scripts: the webpage for *The Enchanted Wood* states that the first edition of the book was published in 1939 and that Hachette's 2015 edition "contains the original text" (*Hachette UK*). Differences in the language of the two editions, the names of characters, and modifications to the texts' gender dynamics disprove Hachette's statement that their edition contains the original text. The same statement is included on the webpages for the sequels to *The Enchanted Wood*, *The Magic Faraway Tree,* and *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*. With Blyton's other main fantasy series, *The Wishing Chair*, Hachette acknowledge the name change of the protagonists' pixie companion from Chinky to Binky, but erroneously state that this is the only change: "this edition contains the classic text, except that the pixie character's name has been changed to Binky" (*Hachette UK*). Similar edits to those seen in *The Faraway Tree* series are made to the language of *The Wishing Chair* and its sequel, *The Wishing Chair Again*: the dialogue is revised, the narrator's text is modified, and other characters' names are altered. Hachette make the same claim for Macmillan's published 2014 version of the *Adventure* series: the statement "this edition contains the original text" is included on the webpages for both *The Island of Adventure* and

The River of Adventure. Modifications were also made to Blyton's *Adventure* and *Secret* series by Macmillan and Hachette. In re-working the brand for a modern readership, it was deemed necessary to remove or modify characters whose original portrayals were based on racially offensive stereotypes of African, African American, Middle Eastern and Japanese people and cultures. The statements on Hachette's website pertaining to the preservation of the original texts' language denies the consumer and the reader the knowledge of the texts' explicitly racist history and conceals the former presence of explicitly non-white characters.

The edits made to Blyton's books are similar to the methods employed by Dahl, Travers, and the publishers of Lofting's *Dolittle* books to mitigate the racism of their original, explicitly racist texts. The edits made to Blyton's books are minor, confined to superficial changes which fail to alter the texts' ideological foundations. The removal of references to dark and black skin are ineffective in addressing the underlying racial and colonial ideologies of the texts because the revisions amount to a literary colour-blind approach to the problem of racism. Colour-blindness as a policy is challenged and criticised by scholars of critical race theory for its futility and ineffectiveness in resolving the problems of racism. While this approach is perceived as a straightforward, non-disruptive way to prolong the lifeline of children's texts, the implications of erasing or concealing the racial identities of non-white characters are ignored by publishers and editors of twentieth-century children's books. Through analysing Blyton's revised *Adventure* series, it becomes immediately clear that a colour-blind approach to racially problematic twentieth-century children's texts is not only an ineffective response but a response which facilitates the perpetuation of a racialised power system structured by whiteness. The cosmetic removal of race and racism first facilitates the texts' survival and successful transition into the twenty-first century, and second, facilitates the preservation of whiteness as an invisible, implicit ideology.

Modernised editions of Blyton's books implicitly rather than explicitly racialise non-white characters. In this implicit form, non-whiteness continues to function as an inferior other against which whiteness is constructed as intellectually and morally superior. Scholars of critical white studies argue that non-whiteness is necessary for the construction and existence of whiteness, for one cannot exist without the other. Whiteness, Garner argues, is constructed "only in relation to Others" and "constructed historically as an exploitative set of power relations" (*Whiteness* 8). Abby Ferber's argument that "white identity defines itself in opposition to inferior others" clearly aligns with Garner's, but Ferber states the necessary role racism performs in the "maintenance of white identity", arguing "the construction of whiteness is maintained through racist and misogynist discourse" (60). In Blyton's fictional worlds, non-white, non-English characters fulfil the role of Other, an Other against which white Englishness is constructed and proven to be superior. The fictional worlds of Blyton's series construct and present whiteness as intellectually and morally superior through placing the white protagonists in opposition to childlike, irrational African, African American, Middle Eastern, and Asian characters. The original texts' racist discourse is preserved, but in modernised editions this discourse is made less obvious by the visual erasure of non-whiteness and the removal of references to dark skin colour.

Due to editorial modifications, it becomes far less obvious that Jo-Jo in *The Island of Adventure* is black and Tala and Oola in *The River of Adventure* are dark-skinned and racialised as non-white. However, race is still present in modernised editions of Blyton's children's fiction, as skin colour is not the sole signifier of race or racial difference. Unlike

Dahl’s revisions of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* in 1973, where the factory’s once black African pygmy workers became white Oompa-Loompas, Blyton’s once black and brown characters do not become white in modernised editions: whiteness remains a privileged position for the English protagonists. Nor do these characters become entirely raceless. Instead, they are implicitly racialised as non-white in modern editions, and explicitly marked as Other. In *The Island of Adventure* and *The River of Adventure*, Jo-Jo, Oola, and Tala are contrasted and marked as different to the white English protagonists through descriptions of the characters’ dress, language, cultural differences, and through information regarding geographical location. The most straightforward indication of non-whiteness in *The River of Adventure* is the description of the country in which the adventure takes place: Barira, the imaginary country of the text, neighbours Syria, and is hence located somewhere in the Middle East. From this information alone, it is possible for a reader to infer Tala and Oola’s non-whiteness.

Whiteness and non-whiteness can also be inferred through language and dialect. Whiteness is presented as the norm through neutral, standard English: alternative sentence structures and accented language is used in modernised Blyton texts to signify Otherness, which contrasts with the ordinary, ‘correct’ speech style of the white English protagonists. For example, with the portrayal of the Japanese “servants” in *The Mountain of Adventure* (140), references to the nationality or race of the characters are erased in modern editions, but the characters still speak with an accent, differentiating them from the English protagonists whose speech is characterised as neutral. Originally, Blyton’s Japanese characters confuse ‘l’ with ‘r’, for example: “You be caleful of dogs… They much bitee. You be caleful!” (136 [1975]). In modernised editions, the characters’ accent is moderated to a simplistic speech style: “You be careful of dogs… They bite hard. You be careful” (112

[2014]). The Japanese servants' speech is mocked by the child protagonists in the original edition, and this ridiculing of non-native English speakers' accent and difficulty with English is retained in modernised editions. The Japanese men bring water and blankets for the captured children, but no food. Jack asks the men about food, to which they respond: "No blingee… Master say no blingee" (137 [1975]). Jack then mocks their accent, replying: "Your master no nicee… Your master plenty nasty" (137). Hachette's revised edition modifies this exchange to "Not bring… Master say not bring" and Jack responds "Your master not nice… Your master very nasty" (113 [2014]). Blyton attempts to mimic an African American dialect for Jo-Jo's character in *The Island of Adventure*, indicated by the use of double negatives. This variant of English is preserved in modernised editions of the text: "Miss Polly, she didn't say nothing about any friends, no, she didn't" (14 [2014]) and "Miss Polly shouldn't use this room… No, that she shouldn't, and I've telled her so. It's a bad room" (20). Tala and Oola in *The River of Adventure* likewise speak broken English with the narrator explaining to readers that "Tala found many English words difficult to say!" (17 [2014]).

In order to signify non-whiteness, without explicitly illustrating or describing characters' non-whiteness, publishers of Blyton's modernised editions also retained degrading, negative stereotypical associations between blackness and uncleanliness, childlikeness, laziness and superstition. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, a number of Blyton's fantasy tales for young child readers published in her magazine *Sunny Stories* draw associations between whiteness and cleanliness, and non-whiteness and non-cleanliness. These associations appear again in *The River of Adventure* and are preserved in modernised editions of the text. The people of Barira's lack of personal hygiene is repeatedly commented upon by the protagonists of *The River of Adventure* and in modern editions of the text, words such as "dirty" and "smelly" are removed, but the understanding that people of Barira are unclean is retained. Civilisation in Barira is still presented as primitive in modernised versions of the story with the reader informed by Bill Smugs of the country's stunted development: "in some ways the people and their villages too have not changed a great deal, except for modern amenities that have crept in – the radio… and wrist-watches, and modern sanitation *some*times" (16 [2014]). While deciding whether or not to 'keep' Oola - the child character the protagonists rescued from an abusive uncle - one of the two female protagonists, Dinah, agrees that they should keep Oola but wishes "he was cleaner and not so smelly" (43 [1975]). In Hachette's 2014 edition, "not so smelly" is changed to "not so skinny", but Dinah still wishes "he was cleaner" (62). Following this agreed stipulation, Tala, the protagonists' boatman and guide, is told in the original story to make sure Oola cleans himself because "he smells" (44 [1975]). This episode of the text is discussed in the previous chapter on Englishness and Empire: here, the original passage is compared to the 2014, revised version of the text. The perspective at this point in the story switches to Tala, who pretends to be aware of Oola's dirtiness, but in fact "hadn't even realised that Oola had an unpleasant smell" (44 [1975]). Tala desires approval from the white, English protagonists, and therefore aligns himself with the white family by pretending "that he could smell something horrid" and "wrinkled up his nose in disdain" (44 [1975]). The people of Barira are being judged by English standards, and the sentiment Blyton wishes to convey to readers is that the "natives" of Barira are dirty and smelly, but furthermore, completely unaware of their unclean, unhygienic state. The 2014 edition still describes Oola as unclean, but rather than being in a constant state of uncleanliness, the modern edition explains "that Oola was dirty from his journey" (64). However the edit is ineffective in altering the sentiment of the original text, for the revised edition retains Tala's unawareness of Oola's unclean state. The edits make Oola dirty just from his journey, but Tala's unawareness of Oola's dirtiness is the key issue and this is not altered by modern publishers: "This was news to Tala. He hadn't realised that Oola was dirty from his journey. He looked in his direction at once and pretended that he could see something horrid. He wrinkled up his nose in disdain" (64 [2014]). Retaining this element of Tala and Oola's characters in modernised editions retains the distinction between the clean, pure English protagonists, and the dirty, impure people of the Middle Eastern Barira.

Jo-Jo's (who is renamed Joe in modern editions) warning to "Miss Polly" about the "bad room" in *The Island of Adventure* relates to additional methods employed by Blyton to enhance a sense of 'Otherness' in her creation of non-white characters (20). Non-white, non-English characters are often characterised as irrational, superstitious, intellectually inferior, and childlike in Blyton's original writing and in British imperial adventure fiction in general. In his study of Europe's perception of the Orient, Said identifies irrationality and childlikeness as attributes assigned to the Oriental, which contrasts with the calm rationality of white Europeans (*Orientalism* 40). Tala and Oola in *The River of Adventure* are both portrayed as childlike: Tala is an adult man, but both he and Oola vie for approval from the young white English protagonists and are jealous when the other receives praise: Philip tells Tala he can carry "as much as a camel". Oola is "jealous of any praise of Tala from his lord" and tells Philip - "Oola carry like camel too" (126 [1975]). Philip placates the boy by telling him "Oh, Oola carry like *two* camels" and then the "plucky little boy was happy at once" (126). While travelling on the river, Tala prevents a disastrous accident from happening by deftly steering the boat safely out of danger, and receives praise from the two male British children, Jack and Philip, in return:

> Philip: ‘I suppose Tala must have been deliberately looking out for some break in the cliff… He must have eyes like a cat!’
>
> Tala: ‘Tala eyes good, very good’, agreed Tala, pleased at the interest he had caused. ‘Tala see much, much. Tala save everybody. Tala good man’. Tala looked as if he would burst with pride at being such a ‘good man’. Jack reached over and patted him on the back.
>
> Jack: ‘Tala, you’re a marvel!’ he said. ‘Shake hands!’ This idea delighted Tala enormously. (*The River* 76)

The interaction is unchanged in the newer edition, apart from “Tala save everybodys” changed to “everybody” (105 [2014]. Preserving these characteristics of superstition, childlikeness, and volatility functions as a coded way of racialising characters as non-white, without directly mentioning their non-whiteness.

Blyton draws upon similar characteristics to create Jo-Jo’s disguised identity in *The Island*, portraying the “servant” as a superstitious, irrational “stupid” black man (10). Jo-Jo/Joe remains a character representing Otherness, and there remains a clear distinction between the rational, moral, ‘normal’ English children and the irrational, superstitious, volatile, and violent servant who speaks in an African American dialect. Jo-Jo’s identity as such is a pretence, a performance to hide his true criminal intentions, but Blyton creates this pretence based on stereotypical associations between black people and subservience, irrationality, and violence. Rudd implies that the book’s early portrayal of Jo-Jo as a half-mad, foolish black man is acceptable given that this was a performance to conceal his true criminal intentions (“Blyton and Blighty” 130). Edwards takes a similar stance with regard to Blyton’s characterisation of Jo-Jo, and he too praises the cleverly constructed, deceptive character, referring to him as “the best villain she produced” (593). Jo-Jo, according to Edwards, exploits the white British characters’ presumptions about black people in order to disguise himself as a foolish black man. There is a consistent trend in Blyton’s work to portray black characters as superstitious, as foolish, and as primitive, and so within the wider context of Blyton’s work, Edwards’ argument falters. Furthermore, while it is true that Jo-Jo assumes the identity of a stereotypical black man in order to trick the white family, his deception points to a fear of infiltration of a white English family’s home. Jo-Jo’s true identity as an intelligent criminal capable of murdering children does not excuse the racially stereotyped character he initially assumes to conceal his identity. Instead, it increases the fear evoked by the black character’s presence. If the suspicions of the white protagonists were proven incorrect, and Jo-Jo/Joe was revealed to be an innocent man who was discriminated against unfairly, then the text is exploiting the assumptions of white English characters. However, Blyton’s criminalisation of Jo-Jo/Joe builds upon the fear and suspicion which already surrounds the black character. The white English children are immediately and consistently suspicious and disdainful of the black man in his servant disguise, without any evidence or justification to warrant their suspicions. The white protagonists’ hatred of the black man, and their constant surveillance of his actions are justified actions in light of the text’s ending and the revelation of Jo-Jo’s true criminal identity. At the conclusion of the tale, Jo-Jo’s manipulation of the white characters is punished, and the black man is incarcerated. Although revealed to be an intelligent character, Bill Smugs’ explanation that Jo-Jo is in fact “as clever as a bagful of monkeys” is a description which maintains the text’s association between the black man and animals (166).

Characters are further implicitly racialised through the social locations they are assigned. In social hierarchies structured by whiteness and in power systems structured by whiteness, non-white people occupy positions of disadvantage and subordination. In modernised editions, the racial grounds for characters' assigned social locations are concealed, but crucially, secondary characters who are now implicitly racialised as non-white still occupy these social locations of disadvantage and subordination. Therefore, despite the omission of clear descriptions of the characters' dark-skin, their nonwhiteness is implied by the social structures of the text. Non-whiteness, therefore, becomes coded in modernised editions of the *Adventure* series. In the series, the implicit racialisation of Jo-Jo, Oola, and Tala that replaces the original, explicit racialisation of these characters transforms the power system of the text from one explicitly dictated by race and whiteness into one implicitly dictated by race and whiteness. Significantly, the implicit racialisation of non-white characters - through language, the use of stereotypes, geographical information – also effects the textual visibility of the white protagonists, which in turn further conceals the racialised power systems of the texts.

Characters, therefore, who were originally explicitly described as non-white are implicitly racialised in modernised versions of the texts, and furthermore remain subordinate to the white English protagonists. The surface level of revised colour-blind editions of the texts does not 'see' race: the contrast between white and non-white characters is diminished by the absence of references to skin colour. While this could be interpreted as a positive, progressive step, an example of post-racial, egalitarian children's literature, the texts still operate within a racialised social system. The inconspicuousness of whiteness in modernised editions facilitates the survival of a social system imperceptibly ordered by whiteness. The white English children still occupy positions of power, and non-white, non-English characters still occupy positions of inferiority and subordination. Structurally, and in terms of relationships, nothing has changed as a result of the modifications, and certainly nothing has improved. Unequal power relations still exist in the modern, revised texts, but the racial stratification and racial hierarchy informing the positioning of white characters as inherently superior and dominant, and conversely non-white characters as subordinate, is concealed by editors. The connection on one side between privilege, power, dominance, and whiteness, and on the other side between disadvantage, subordination, and nonwhiteness is obscured, but the modified texts continue to operate on racialised power divisions.

Concealing Whiteness

As illustrated above, the publishers of twenty-first century editions of Enid Blyton's series rely on a colour-blind approach to mitigate the racism of the original texts. An approach based on the policies of colour-blindness necessitates the removal of references to skin-colour, but the publishers' policy does not extend to whiteness, illustrating a conception of whiteness as normative and as a "non-racialised identity" (Garner 37). Whiteness as a skin-colour remains visible to readers, as the white English protagonists are clearly featured on cover illustrations of modernised editions. However, while whiteness remains visible in cover illustrations, it is an "unremarkable" racial category, unnoticeable because of its ubiquity and status as "normal" (Rogers and Christian 32). Garner argues that treating whiteness as a non-racialised identity "conceals racialised power relations and the ideas and practices that sustain them" (37), which, I argue, is precisely the effect achieved by the treatment of whiteness as the 'default' race, coupled with the concealment of non-whiteness in modernised versions of Blyton's texts.

Bradford noted in a brief discussion of whiteness in Blyton's *Noddy* stories that the Golliwogs, along with other "non-white and working-class figures" function as "markers or signs of the legitimacy of a natural order where whiteness is preferred and rewarded" ("Race, Ethnicity and Colonialism" 49). In fantasy texts with Golliwogs and other non-human characters, whiteness is viewed as the default, rather than "preferred and rewarded": black characters change their skin colour to conform to the dominant whiteness of their fictional society, but in "The White Golliwog" and "The Black Sheep" this colour change is presented as a mistake. The wish to change one's skin colour is viewed as a problem, with the stories emphasising the equality of characters with black skin. Whiteness is the default of Blyton's realist texts, and within the realist texts, whiteness is certainly preferred. Readers of the realist texts are actively encouraged to conceive of whiteness as dominant, and as superior. In Chapter Three, the colonial and imperial ideologies underpinning Blyton's adventure texts were examined. The racial differences between the English protagonists and the non-English characters were noted, but the chapter focused more upon the distinctions created between nationalities and cultures. The previous chapter discussed the range of nationalities Blyton chose to position as contrasts against Englishness, with the English child protagonists presented as superior to Scottish, Japanese, African, Middle Eastern, European, and Welsh characters. As with nationalities, the racial identities of the characters contrasted against the English protagonists varies, but each one of Blyton's English protagonists is white, which contributes to the presentation of whiteness as the 'default' in the fictional worlds of Enid Blyton. As well as whiteness presented as the default, whiteness is linked inextricably to Blyton's construction of Englishness.

The pinnacle of whiteness for Blyton is English whiteness, and this is illustrated clearly throughout the *Adventure* series. As JPB Gerald states in his research on decentring whiteness in English language teaching, "Whiteness… is an ideology that depends upon exclusion" ("Worth the Risk" 44) and in Blyton's fiction, it is occasionally white characters who are excluded from the ideal of English whiteness. Whiteness in Blyton's fiction is a fluid, changing category, which occasionally intersects with class and nationality to exclude European, and even British 'white' characters. This understanding of the category of whiteness as dependent on other factors, such as class and nationality, reflects a central tenet of critical race theory and critical white studies: neither race nor whiteness are static, fixed entities, and scholars caution against the reification and essentialising of race. The complexity and fluidity of racial categories is discussed in Garner's book *Whiteness*, in which he states that "'Whiteness' is to do with cultural and political power and those who appear phenotypically white are not equally incorporated into the dominant groups" (65). In the nineteenth century, European immigrants in the US "were not immediately accepted socially and culturally as white": Irish and Italian migrants, among other European immigrants, were "denigrated" and considered "different and lesser 'white races'" (66). Although white, the Scottish and Welsh characters of Blyton's *Adventure* series occupy lower positions in the hierarchical structures of the texts due to their nationality and class, illustrating an intersection between whiteness, class, and nationality which results in an exclusion of these white characters from the ideal category of white Englishness. Lower-class, white Scottish and Welsh characters are positioned hierarchically alongside non-white, non-British characters. Scottish and Welsh characters are described as being unclean, as illiterate, and as willingly subordinate to the white English protagonists. In modern versions of the *Adventure* series, these descriptions are largely unchanged, resulting in a preservation of lower-class, non-English white characters as inferior to the white English protagonists.

Modernised editions of Blyton's work are literary examples of Dyer's theory that "Whites must be seen to be white, yet whiteness as race resides in invisible properties and whiteness as power is maintained by being unseen" (45). The protagonists' whiteness is known through cover illustrations on all of the titles of the *Adventure* series and inferred through the protagonists' quintessential Englishness. However, the textual visibility of the protagonists' whiteness is impacted by the erasure of descriptions of brown and black skin-colour, for the contrasting binary between white and non-white skin colour is erased in modern editions. In Blyton's original writing, repeated descriptions of characters' dark skin served as subconscious reminders to the reader of the protagonists' whiteness. The protagonists' whiteness becomes even less noticeable in revised versions, even less of a marked racial identity, which consequently advantages whiteness as a social system. In this less noticeable state, the mechanisms of power at play within the texts are concealed, in particular the power whiteness enacts on the texts' social systems.

In "Towards a Critical Theory of Whiteness", Owen argues that whiteness is "the legacy of a racially fraught past" (209). In his research, Owen is basing his theories on US modern social systems, but his arguments are equally applicable to modern Britain, and modern Britain's retention of a colonial legacy of racial inequality and racial oppression. Owen furthers his argument by stating that whiteness "functions in such a way that it maintains the legacy of racial inequality as a central aspect of modern social systems" (209). Writing from a European perspective, Joe Turner states, "The past comes back not just to haunt, but to structure and drive the contemporary operations of power" (766). In *Britannia's Children*, Castle writes that the "images of race" became "increasingly dissociated from the maintenance of a dwindling Empire" in the interwar years, but that "what remained… was the association of national and individual identity with racial superiority, and this was passed to generations of children as an active legacy of the imperial era" (181). Blyton's modernised texts retain the core values of imperialism - the supremacy of the white, English race and the rightful position of dominance white Englishness occupies - but in a modernised format which is ostensibly racially ‘colour-blind’. The system of whiteness in which the characters exist is a lingering of the texts’ own racially fraught imperial and colonial past, mirroring critical white studies theory of whiteness as a product of nations’ racially fraught histories. Blyton’s books are literary reflections of British society’s development/evolution from explicit colonial racial ideas to a subtle, implicit, invisible ideology of whiteness. An examination of Blyton’s revised texts - in which overt forms of racial prejudice are removed - provides insight, therefore, into how whiteness can function “behind the scenes” as a structuring property of modern (British) social systems (Owen 208).

Within the social hierarchies of Blyton’s texts, white characters occupy dominant positions and non-white characters are assigned subordinate roles. These locations within the racialised power systems of the texts are unaltered by the modifications made to Blyton’s work. What is altered is the visibility of this racialised power system and the visibility of whiteness as the structuring force dictating these social locations of dominance and subordinance. What has been altered in the revision process of Blyton’s work is the visibility of the texts’ racialised power systems and the visibility of whiteness as the structuring force dictating characters’ social locations of dominance and subordinance. Power, in modernised versions of the *Adventure* series, remains firmly in the hands of the white protagonists whose whiteness is now less conspicuous. In the 2014 revised edition of *The Island of Adventure*, power is still perceived as rightfully belonging to the white child protagonists. Although depicted as physically powerful, Jo-Jo is a “servant” of the family, and hence a subordinate of the white family. In the original edition, Jo-Jo is referred to in terms of a possession, with the children and their aunt explaining to the two new children that “we’ve had him for years” (59). The 2014 Hachette edition tones down the possessiveness of this statement, with Philip now explaining to the other children “He’s been with us for years” (89). However Jo-Jo/Joe still refers to Philip as “Master Philip”, and this role of Master is embraced by Philip and the other child protagonists (31). Initially, Jo-Jo/Joe tries to control the children’s actions by constantly observing and interfering in the children’s plans, but this power relationship is quickly subverted by the protagonists who turn the surveillance back on the “handyman” (37). Through their observations, the child protagonists learn how to trick and manipulate Jo-Jo/Joe and instate themselves as rightful Masters. The discovery of a secret passage allows the protagonists to fool Jo-Jo into thinking they have been trapped in an outside cave all night. The next morning, the protagonists gleefully taunt Jo-Jo, delighted to have an excuse to patronise the adult man: Philip condescendingly asks him, “Did you have a good night… Did you sleep all night long, like a good boy?” (57). Jack’s parrot, Kiki, reinforces the condescension of Philip’s condescending treatment of Jo-Jo: “Naughty boy!... Naughty, naughty boy! Go to bed at once, naughty boy!” (57). The repeated use of ‘boy’ functions as an assertion of the white child protagonists’ power and dominance over the implicitly racialised Joe.

Power, likewise, belongs to the white English family in *The River of Adventure*, with the power relationship between the white protagonists and the two central Middle Eastern characters – Tala and Oola – unchanged in modern editions of the text. Oola willingly subordinates himself to his white saviour, Philip, who he refers to originally as “lord” but in revised editions as “boss” (46 [2014]). While the religious aspect of Oola’s worship of the white child is diminished by the omittance of ‘Lord’, the power dynamic between the two characters is preserved by choosing ‘boss’ as the replacement term. In Blyton’s original edition, Oola pleads to be saved by Philip, and in his pleading promises that “Oola be servant, Oola work for you!" (31 [1975]). Here, 'servant' is edited out of the revised edition, but the replacement of "Oola be yours, Oola work for you!" retains the characterisation of Oola as property of Philip and the white children; Oola remains a subject willing to be owned (47 [2014]). White saviour narratives are retained in modernised editions of the series, including in *The River of Adventure* where the narrative of the benevolent white family rescuing an abused, non-white child reinforces the impression of Oola as a possession. Lucy-Ann sympathises with Oola, after witnessing the abuse he endures at the hands of his uncle, and asks Philip "Can't we take him…?" (47 [2014]). Oola is willingly subservient to the white family, and his character welcomes the social location the presence of whiteness creates for him: the social location of subordinance.

Other non-white characters in the text are initially reluctant to accept their 'rightful' position as subordinate to the white family, but the white child protagonists eventually succeed in asserting their superiority and dominance. The villain of the text, Raya Uma, orders his servant to trick the protagonists into following him away from the family's boat. The children become suspicious, and tell Raya Uma's servant they wish to return to the boat, but the servant refuses to lead the children back, telling them "I have orders" (91 [1975]). Philip forces a subversion of the current power dynamic between the children and the servant, to reinstate the white protagonists as dominant. He tells the servant: "*my* orders are that we go back… You *will* take us back… I have someone here who will *make* you take us back!", and Philip proceeds to threaten the man with his pet snake (87). The threat has its intended effect; the servant obeys Philip, and promises to return the children to the boat. In the original edition, the servant tells Philip "Master, I take you back… Mercy, master" (91). 'Master' is replaced with 'Sir' in revised editions, presumably because 'Master' is too strong an evocation of a colonial relationship: "Sir, I take you back… Mercy, sir" (87

[2014]). Interactions between the Middle Eastern characters and the white English family are edited to moderate the original text's colonial tone, removing 'Master' and 'Lord' and replacing these colonial and religious titles with the more modern 'Sir' and 'Boss'. Colonial terminology signifying superiority and power is replaced by contemporary, twenty-first century, socially acceptable terms of superiority and power. The language is modified to allow whiteness and the white protagonists to continue to occupy these positions of superiority and power.

Conclusion

By deflecting attention away from race, whiteness can operate behind the scenes, invisibly, to continue to structure the social systems and the power relations of Blyton's texts. Consequently, whiteness perseveres in structuring the hierarchies of the text: white English protagonists occupy positions of advantage and power and conversely, non-white, non-English characters are placed in positions of disadvantage and subordination. Whiteness continues to function in this way in texts which are, on the surface, colour-blind and racially inoffensive. The "idea of colorblindness", Bergerson argues, "allows racism to persist in more subtle ways" ("Critical Race Theory" 53). Doane contends that "color-blind ideology plays an important role in the maintenance of white hegemony" ("Rethinking Whiteness" 13). What is "overlooked" or "deliberately masked" in a colour-blind society is "the persistence of racial stratification" (13). Colour-blind policies facilitate the persistence of racial inequality, as illustrated with revised children's books in which references to race and skin-colour become almost taboo. The relationship between power and race is de-emphasised in modern editions, but in superficially raceless, colour-blind twenty-first century editions of the series, power remains firmly with the white English family and the white child protagonists, who enjoy the position of dominance and superiority their whiteness grants. Power relationships between white and implicitly non-white characters remain the same, with non-white characters still positioned as subordinate, and obedience of the white protagonists still expected.

Through a process of superficial editing, modification of cover illustrations, and the removal of in-text illustrations, Blyton's publishers have ensured a continuing popularity of Blyton's colonial, imperial adventure texts. In an interview with *The Bookseller*, Alex Antscherl, Hachette's editorial director for Blyton's books, explained that publishers have been "continually reviewing Enid Blyton's work for years" and that the publishing house's wish is to keep the author's books "at the heart of childhood" (Comerford). While this objective to protect Blyton's position within British children's culture is entirely reasonable, the methods used to achieve this continued popularity are problematic as Blyton's publishers are not transparent about their changes to the author's texts and make changes which conceal the racial identities of non-white characters.

With the BBC's adaptation of *Malory Towers* featuring a diverse cast of actors, and the new *Malory Towers* book written by Patrice Lawrence which features a black protagonist, efforts have been made to diversify the Enid Blyton franchise. As a whole, however, the brand remains overwhelmingly white, with Blyton's ideal sense of national character embodied by white English children.

Conclusion

In the twenty-first century, the Enid Blyton brand continues to be a successful, multimedia global franchise, with new BBC adaptations of her work created, new stories added to established series, and new cover illustrations for her books created by celebrated illustrators, including Quentin Blake and Oliver Jeffers. Posthumously, Blyton's fictional creations are modified and adapted for new stories for a contemporary, twenty-first century child readership. Blyton's characters have assumed a life beyond the author's own life with new stories written for *Malory Towers*, *The Secret Seven,* and *The Magic Faraway Tree*. Her fictional worlds continue to provide the background for the new twenty-first century adventures [1]. The Blyton brand has become part of England's cultural heritage, but the author's position within England's cultural and literary heritage is not without contention. Recent announcements by English organisations established to celebrate and promote national figures have provoked renewed conversations about Blyton's position and status as a celebrated figure of Englishness. Blyton's attitudes towards race and her portrayal of non-white characters are the primary points of contention in debates on the author's cultural status and legacy within twenty-first century Britain. In looking beyond the Golliwog and the Little Black Doll (the figures typically concentrated on in discussions of Blyton's work) and through conducting an extensive analysis of the human and non-human non-white characters featured in Blyton's novels and short stories, this thesis significantly expands the discourse on Blyton and race.

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[1] Including new stories added to Blyton's *St Clare's* series, written by Pamela Cox; new stories added to *The Naughtiest Girl* series, written by Anne Digby.

Furthermore, in closely examining the depiction of non-white characters within the context of the British Empire and colonial children's literature, I explain the ideologically colonial basis of Blyton's racially problematic depictions of non-white characters. In Chapter Three, "Englishness, Adventure, and an Empire in Decline", the examination of the colonial and imperial ideologies underpinning Blyton's realist and non-realist texts, including *The Faraway Tree* and the *Adventure* series, reveals whiteness as a fundamental component of Blyton's fictional construction of Englishness. Whiteness remains an intrinsic, irrevocable component of Englishness in modern, modified editions of Blyton's texts. Although new protagonists of colour have been introduced to the Blyton world, for example, Patrice Lawrence's new story for the *Malory Towers* series features a black protagonist, the world of Enid Blyton remains overwhelmingly white. The backlash to the charity organisation English Heritage's changes to Blyton's profile indicates an acceptance of Blyton's colonial racial attitudes and an aversion to changing Blyton's nostalgic vision of white Englishness.

In opting for a textual, literary-historical approach to Blyton's work, one which contextualises her work within multiple forms and literary genres, the thesis has demonstrated the value of Blyton's work to several areas of children's literature research. Through outlining Blyton's use of fairy tales, national legends, war fiction and imperial adventure fiction to construct and present an image of English national identity that is inherently masculine, white, and conceived of as superior to all other nationalities and racial identities, this thesis contributes to several research areas within children's literature scholarship. First and foremost, the thesis contributes to studies on Blyton's vast collection but also contributes to scholarship on socio-historical studies of children's literature; British wartime children's literature; representations of national identity in children's literature; British children's fantasy; and children's literature studies examining race, diversity, and whiteness.

The analysis of Blyton's early twentieth-century retellings of fairy tales, folk tales, myths, and national legends expands the research conducted on British folk narratives and the utilisation of British and English folk narratives for nationalistic purposes. Blyton, like Lang and Jacobs before her, approached the construction of a national canon of tales from an imperial standpoint. Blyton used narratives from the Empire to contrast Englishness against other, lesser national identities and cultures. Due to her imperial approach, Blyton's collection successfully celebrates the virtues and values which elevate English folk narrative protagonists – such as Robin Hood, King Arthur, Saint George - above their non-English counterparts.

Sunny Stories for Little Folks is an integral part of Blyton's retellings of folk narratives, and the dedication of the early years of the magazine to the adaptation of national and international tales marks the beginning of the magazine's work in constructing, defining, and re-defining a nationalistic vision of Englishness. The examination of the magazine's evolution from its inception in the interwar years through to the Second World War and post-war years contributes to juvenile periodical research and the under-researched area of wartime magazines for children. *Sunny Stories for Little Folks* is a significant but usually overlooked component of Blyton's writing career and a component of Blyton's writing that I believe warrants further examination. In addition to developing the scholarship on Blyton, the magazine also offers valuable insight into the understudied field of juvenile periodical research, particularly mixed-gender juvenile magazines for a younger demographic.

Scholarship on boys' periodicals and girls' periodicals has increased in the last decade with the publication of such works as Kristine Moruzi's *Constructing Girlhood through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915* and Robert Kirkpatrick's *From the Penny Dreadful to the Ha-Penny Dreadfuller: A Bibliographic History of the Boys' Periodical in Britain, 1762–1950*. This thesis contributes to the scholarship on children's magazines that bridged the gender divide so entrenched within the twentieth-century children's periodical industry.

Through examining the short stories published in the magazine during the Second World War along with Blyton's other wartime writing in the form of published novels, such as *The Children of Kidillin* and *The Adventurous Four*, this thesis has expanded the scholarship on wartime children's literature. *The Children of Kidillin*, *The Adventurous Four*, and the many short, realist and non-realist *Sunny Stories* tales published during the war demonstrate an engagement with the Second World War that challenges the perception of Blyton as a writer of escapist fiction and challenges the perception of juvenile periodicals for young child readers as primarily sources of distraction from the realities of the war. Blyton replicated the courage, chivalry, honesty, and patriotism of English legends – King Arthur, Saint George, and Robin Hood – in the protagonists she created in her original stories. In her wartime publications, these values and virtues are evident in English characters, but also in Welsh and Scottish characters, illustrating an expansion of the characteristics which comprise the ideal English character to a broader British national identity. However, this expansion and amalgamation of English and British national identity is temporary, incited by the threat posed to the whole British nation during the Second World War. Blyton reverts to a focus on Englishness in her post-war imperial adventure publications.

Through her realist and non-realist wartime stories, Blyton's fiction offered consolation and reassurance to child readers worried about the impact and outcome of the war. As well as offering reassurance, Blyton reframed the conflicts of the war into scenarios familiar and understandable to young child readers – for instance, the war against Germany and Hitler is reframed as a fairy tale in "The Strange Looking Glass" - thereby aiding their understanding of the war and Britain's role within it. Blyton's multiple forms of response to World War Two constitute significant material for studies of children's wartime literature, but apart from Owen Dudley Edwards' sporadic references to Blyton's work, her fiction has heretofore not been studied within the context of the war. Chapter Two, "The Second World War and British National Unity" provides evidence of Blyton's desire to create meaningful reading material for child readers during the war and her work illustrates the range of responses children's authors adopted to comfort and explain the conflict to children.

In Chapter Three, "Englishness, Adventure, and an Empire in Decline", I demonstrated the value of Blyton's imperial adventure fiction to colonial and post-colonial studies of children's literature. Blyton's post war *Adventure* series spans a crucial period of the Empire's history, and the individual texts of the series reflect the tensions of a nation and society that hoped for imperial longevity, but whose Empire was coming to an end. Through depicting other nationalities and cultures as primitive, particularly Middle Eastern and African societies in *The River of Adventure* and *The Secret Mountain*, Blyton creates distinct contrasts between English and non-English societies. Her work presents other nations as lagging far behind England's advanced level of civilisation: Wales, Scotland, and European countries are included in the collection of nations portrayed as less advanced and less civilised than England. Within the *Adventure* series, Scottish and Welsh characters are demoted to subordinates of the superior English protagonists in a substantial shift from the unity, equality, and camaraderie emphasised between all British characters in Blyton's wartime fiction.

The *Adventure* series and *The Secret Mountain* are built upon ideologically colonial foundations. As such, race is fundamental to the hierarchisation of characters, with white English characters presented as dominant and superior to all other racial and national identities. These imperial adventure texts are re-shaped (or removed in the case of *The Secret Mountain*) by twenty-first century publishers to retain the popularity and sales of Blyton's work in a world in which Britain is no longer a colonial power. The colonial underpinnings of the texts remain, but the surface-level reflections of these underlying colonial and imperial ideologies are removed: the stratification of characters based on race and skin colour is concealed by the removal of references to non-whiteness. The racial hierarchy determining white English characters' power and position within the texts is obscured, and this obscuring of racial identities and of whiteness is important for research on colonial and post-colonial children's literature, but also, as Chapter Four demonstrates, for literary analysis of children's texts which incorporate critical race theory and critical white studies. For critical white studies, whiteness is an element of children's texts that can be interrogated without the presence of non-whiteness. However, the evolution of Blyton's work from first publication to the contemporary, cosmetically all-white editions currently available offers particularly valuable content for critical race theory and critical white studies literary scholarship. The analysis of Blyton's work using theories drawn from critical race theory and critical white studies illustrates the necessity of analysing whiteness and non-whiteness within individual national contexts.

As an author who contributed to multiple genres and forms, including fantasy, non-fiction (nature books, educational books), plays, periodical writing, detective fiction, school stories, imperial adventure fiction, and fairy tales, the opportunities for further study on Blyton's work are endless. This thesis has focused on examining Blyton's fiction in the context of folk narratives, juvenile periodical publication, wartime writing for children, imperial adventure fiction, and finally, examining the author's work through a critical lens of whiteness. While research in each of these contexts could be expanded upon, there are two areas of particular importance that I hope to develop from this thesis. First, the facilitation of further *Sunny Stories* research and juvenile periodical publication through the digitisation of the magazine, and second, the use of critical white studies and critical race theory to examine other modified versions of British twentieth-century children's texts.

Blyton's *Sunny Stories* magazine comprises a large proportion of this thesis' primary material, and through examining different periods of the magazine's existence, this thesis has demonstrated the magazine's value to scholarship on Blyton, but also to twentieth-century juvenile periodical research and wartime children's fiction. In order to facilitate further research on the magazine and better facilitate other scholars' study of the magazine, a digitisation of the magazine volumes held in the British Library in London is essential[2]. The physical copies of the magazine are in poor condition: individual volumes have missing pages, the binding has disintegrated on many volumes, and many pages are loosely inserted into volumes and in danger of being lost. While additional examination of the magazine would undoubtedly be valuable to periodical research and research on Blyton's output, further examination of the physical copies may simultaneously cause further disintegration of the magazine. Digitising the volumes held in the British Library would ensure the safe preservation of the magazine and increase the accessibility of the magazine to children's literature scholars.

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[2] Volumes of *Sunny Stories* are also held in the Seven Stories centre in Newcastle, UK, but this is an incomplete collection.

As an author steeped in the values and ideologies of Empire whose edited works continue to be purchased by nostalgic adults and read by new generations of children, Blyton's twentieth-century fiction is an invaluable source of material with which to trace the evolution of explicit colonial racial hierarchies into a subtle, modern form of systemic whiteness. For this thesis, I chose the books and series which most explicitly engage with themes of Empire, but the scope of this analysis could be expanded to include other Blyton books and series which reflect themes of Empire in less obvious forms. Furthermore, expanding the use of critical race theory and critical white studies to analyse other nineteenth- and twentieth-century British children authors' modified works would offer further insight into the subtle perpetuation of harmful racial ideologies which are concealed through the removal or replacement of the texts' original non-white characters. Analysis of twentieth-century children's texts which reflect a colonial and imperial worldview, such as those written by Hugh Lofting and Roald Dahl, have been analysed for their retention of colonial ideologies. In terms of critical race theory and critical white studies, there are currently a very limited number of studies on children's literature which draw from these fields of scholarship. The studies which have been published are primarily focused on US-authored texts. Nel applies critical race theory to a contemporary, US-authored children's text, *William Joyce's The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* (2011). In Jowallah's 2007 article on whiteness in British children's texts, the "absence of relevant contemporary academic literature on 'whiteness' and racism within children's literature in England" forces him to draw on scholarship on whiteness from other countries (136). As a post-imperial, post-slave-trading nation, it is crucial that studies of whiteness in British children's literature are grounded within Britain's imperial and colonial history. Using critical race theory and critical white studies in conjunction with post-colonial literary theory in the analysis of twentieth-century British children's texts allows us to map the retention of colonial ideologies in modernised children's texts but also situate these twentieth-century ideas of race within twenty-first century discourses of systemic racism and systems of whiteness.

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