Winner of the 2005 Article Prize


Her article examines dozens of letters from India written by Minnie Blaine and her husband, Archibald Wood, to Minnie’s mother in England between 1856 and 1861. These letters and those associated with a military investigation into the couple’s relationship in the 1860s detail the connections between the breakdown of the East India Company’s rule in India and Minnie Blane’s marriage. In particular, this correspondence shows some of the ways in which bourgeois identities were constructed in relationship to money and objects, place and race. It also exposes the fissures between family members, allowing us to see the gender, generational and cultural conflicts within such imperial families. The article raises concerns about the ways in which personal letters have been used as documents in the study of European women’s imperial history.