Chapter VIII: 'Playing Together'

> Hands would go up eagerly, and she would smile, they would both smile, and say how wonderful it was - Joseph would be pleased, Mary would be pleased, and the angels in heaven would be pleased. Then the next question would be "Now how many of you didn't go to church yesterday"? My hand of course would have to go up because being a Protestant - I was just going there for the first year, and I went with the Catholic children around - when it came to this putting your hand up it was an awful ordeal. They would frown and say "Oh Joseph and Mary will be weeping, Joseph was very sad", they really rubbed it in - looked as though you were going to be burning in hell . . . When I was going home at midday for my lunch on a hot day, one day, I remember thinking well I better walk in the shade - get all the coolness I can have now - because I'm going to have a lot of heat to put up with later on.[170]

Religion made a deep impression on Catholic children in New Zealand and Britain taught religion at church, school and often home. Mary Sherry recalled that she turned her playhouse into a chapel 'so it shows you how religious we were and during Lent I'd hold my services there'.[171] Most of her leisure activities were centred on the church, including the debating society, Catholic drama club, and numerous concerts.[172] Although Jackson's study of religion in New Zealand discovered that church attendance had declined steadily between 1880 and 1930, obviously religion still played an important part in the lives of most children. Even if parents did not attend church, many made their children attend Sunday school.[173]

Despite growing popularity, scouts and guides were far less common in children's lives than organised religion. Authorities believed that the scouting and Boy's Brigade movements especially, gave children excellent training. Christchurch social workers told Harris that the scout movement trained boys in 'habits of self reliance, honesty and thoughtfulness for others'.[174] By the 1920s and 1930s these groups had become highly organised. Children under 11 years of age became cubs or brownies while those over 11 and under 16 became scouts and guides and the over 16-age group, Rovers and Rangers.[175] The YWCA also ran a Girl's Citizen Group for girls over the age of 14. An examination of their code encapsulates the intentions of such groups:

> This is the code to Which Girl Citizens strive to be loyal, that through Beauty and Truth they might help to build the spirit of their country:-
>
> The 1st Civic Law is the Law of Health
>
> The 2nd Civic Law is the Law of Self-Control
>
> The 3rd Civic Law is the Law of Self-Respect
>
> The 4th Civic Law is the Law of Knowledge

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[170]David Moore, 29.3.95, p.10.
[171]Mary Sherry, 19.4.95, p.8.
[172]ibid, pp.7,15.
[173]Jackson, *Churches and People,* pp.116-117.
[174]Harris, 'The Boy just left school', p.215.
[175]Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children ,' p.21.

Bob Bastings, as school cadet. All secondary school boys had to be a school cadet, and the government hoped that they would teach boys duty and obedience, and train a fighting force for future wars. Late 1920s. Courtesy of Mada Bastings.

Nan Buchanan at her dancing class, 1920s. She is seated behind the two girls in the middle, third from the right. Courtesy of Nan Buchanan. Dancing classes were extremely popular for girls during the 1920s and 1930s, and expressed part of the ethos of health and exercise.

Chapter VIII: 'Playing Together'

The 5th Civic Law is the Law of Honour

The 6th Civic Law is the Law of Co-operation

The 7th Civic Law is the Law of Courage

The 8th Civic Law is the Law of Duty

It's jolly

To play basketball and other team games.

To have parties and learn to run them yourself.

To go for tramps and picnics on Saturdays and holidays!

To learn folk dancing.

To go to camp and live in a house full of Girl Citizens.

To make a fire and cook over it.[176]

Only five out of the thirteen men in this study attended scouts, and four of twenty-four women attended guides. None recorded belonging to groups such as Boy's Brigade or Girl Citizens. Hart acknowledged that cost proved a major barrier to participation since children were required to purchase an expensive uniform.[177] The small proportion of people that attended one of these organisations appear to have enjoyed the experience.[178] Jack Ford enjoyed scouts. He went to a scout camp with the Reverend Thorpe. 'A very good man too with the scouts and we'd cook our damper (that's flour and water wrapped round a stick) and think it was wonderful . . . you had your uniform, your hat and your tie, you thought you were soldiers I think really, which we wanted to be'.[179] Some observers disliked the military overtones of scouts, but this attracted boys like Jack. Boys and girls who joined these organisations absorbed the values of honour, obedience and duty. David Moore explained that Scouts, Boys Brigade and military training at high school taught them discipline and politeness. He remembered that they sincerely tried to do a good deed whenever they could.[180]

Middle class children, especially girls, often took improving lessons, learning the accomplishments of music, dancing, and art.[181] Hart discovered that 35 per cent. of the children in her study took private lessons in music, singing, dancing or elocution.[182] Joan

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[176]Pamphlet, 'The Girl Citizen Code', included in Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children' (not paginated).

[177]ibid, pp.65-66.

[178]Scouts and guides marched in parades and were often included in official visits, conferring a sense of importance on participants. Reg Williams explained that scouts attended the borough council on special occasions. He recalled that it felt like an honour. See p.14, and David Moore, p.13 where he discusses training and discipline.

[179]Jack Ford, 7.4.95, p.22.

[180]David Moore, 12.4.95, p.13.

[181] For example, Mada Bastings and Mavis Benson learnt elocution, Margaret Anderson, John Allison, Marjorie Walker, and Frances Denniston learnt music and Joan Wicks and Nan Buchanan learnt dancing.

[182]Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.59. She discovered that Catholic schools placed greater emphasis on teaching music.

Wicks explained that they were encouraged to have hobbies: they learnt music, and her parents gave her brother a little workshop when he as quite young and Joan a sewing machine when she was 17.[183]

The huge popularity among children of organised sport seems to have been one of the major developments of the interwar years. The interest in sport emerges in interviews relating to this period in stark contrast to interviewees from an earlier one. Sport became hugely popular in schools, competing with the more varied traditional playground games. A survey of 600 boys in 1926 revealed that only 22 expressed no interest in sport, although it is probable that these responses reflect a sense of duty as well as genuine interest. Of these boys '400 claimed football as their chief sport; cricket was followed by 255 boys, and swimming by 126', even though sixty per cent. of boys in the sixth standard could swim.[184] Harris thought involvement in sport taught excellent values and feared that non-participants did not 'receive the physical, moral and social training which is given by games'.[185]

Table 16: Participation in Sport

Group	Number in group	Football	Hockey	Cricket	Swimming	Tennis	Other	No. taking no active part in games.
High School	74	27	4	11	12	33	9	17 (23 %)
Technical	103	37	4	15	14	16	6	35 (34 %)
Primary 'Sample Hundred'	100	22	11	8	3	2	4	52 (52 %

Source: The Boy Just Left School, p.220.

New Zealanders took deep pride in sporting prowess and children shared this enthusiasm. Rugby aroused the greatest national pride. Twenty children from the West Lyttelton school requested that the Council improve their sports ground and one little girl wrote 'we have already turned out two All Blacks and we want the opportunity of turning out more'.[186] Sportsmen, local and national, provided male role models, stimulated local and national pride, and as a result furthered the gendering process. Thomas Ryan collected cigarette cards as a boy. He collected a set and sent away for a picture and got a photograph of one of the 1924 All Blacks. 'This was pinned up on the wall this 1924 All Blacks, the great George Nepia and all the rest of them. They were quite a thing in those days you know, we were pretty avid followers of the local heroes.'[187] One can also speculate that the presence of Maori sporting heroes may have made a positive contribution to race relations. Reg Williams

[183]Joan Wicks, 23.3.95, pp.22,9.

[184]'Youth's Future'. Christchurch Boys' Hobbies', The *Press,* 7 July 1926, p.10.

[185] Harris, 'The boy just left school', pp.31-32.

[186]Lyttelton, The *Press,* 25 July 1925, p.20.

[187]Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.13. Basil Grether also loved hockey. The Indians came to play hockey once and Sid Holland shouted Basil and Jeff (his son) to see the hockey match. Basil Grether , 29.11.94, p.2.

recalled that the All Blacks went to Britain in 1924 when he was just getting interested in rugby. 'They weren't beaten once'. His father sent him to find out the score on Thursday and Sunday mornings.[188] Some regional variation in sports may have existed since Thomas Ryan recalled that hockey seemed more popular than rugby in Dannevirke. His father took him to see the Indians play a hockey match in the 1930s.[189] An enthusiasm for sport emerges among the British sample as well, although the working-class sample enjoyed unstructured street football, and did not appear to take part in organised school sport in such great numbers. The main contrast to this occurred in the private school sample. They were almost fanatical about sport and their recollections sometimes mirror accounts in the *Boy's Own Annual*. Maurice Finbow still meets up with members of his old football time in an annual reunion and recalled that when he was young 'I think sport to me, was more important than anything else'.[190]

Sport became extremely competitive in the interwar years. Dennis Kemp recalled competing with other boys in primary school. 'They were certainly pretty intense games, you wanted to win'. They also had inter-house competitions at Rotorua School.

> For rugby we used to have sugar sacks with the neck cut out and the arms cut out and piping around the cut-outs . . . There were four houses in the school and if you were playing for your house you had this sugar sack with the yellow piping or the red piping depending on the house you were in, and also usually a yellow sash or band, diagonally across the sack, or around the waist of the sack. But when we played for the school we had black and yellow jerseys.[191]

When Dennis moved to the prosperous suburb of Khandallah in Wellington better sporting facilities encouraged him to become heavily involved in various sports at the primary school there and at Technical College. He played rugby competitively on Saturday mornings and attended rugby coaching after school, as well as playing midget soccer.[192]

Team sports dominated boys' play since they encapsulated inter-war masculinity. Sport taught comradeship and competition, and above all made boys tough. Girls never played rugby so it acquired a very strong aura of masculinity.[193] Fathers watched their sons' performances and pushed them to be rough and physical. Reg Williams recalled his father watching his first game for the school. At the time he only weighed under five stone seven. 'I remember my father was rather disgusted because I didn't touch the ball all the game'. In the late thirties Reg's brother Claude became an All Black, which created a great sense of pride in

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[188]Reg Williams, 14.10.94, p.9.

[189]Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.16.

[190]Maurice Finbow, 12.2.96, p.4.

[191]Dennis Kemp, 26.7.94, p.15.

[192]ibid.

[193]Jack Ford recalled that teachers made the boys play basketball against the girls 'which we didn't like you know she didn't make them play rugby so why should we play basketball, we thought this was a bit on [off?]' Jack Ford, 2.3.95, p.11.

the family. 'We were sports mad really'.[194] Successful boys became heroes to admire. Thomas Ryan recalled frequent rugby competitions between his Catholic Boarding School (Sacred Heart) and other boys' schools. 'The first fifteen were looked upon as heroes, if they won a game they all got clapped at night when they came in to have a meal.' [195]

Moralists believed sport taught excellent values, but may not have realised that sport also introduced boys to less wholesome aspects of male culture. Thomas Ryan, Kevin McNeil, and Bill Gillespie explained that they were introduced to alcohol when they started playing sport after they left school.[196] Thomas commented that from the age of fifteen:

> I started playing rugby with a lot of older people, was just a country team, and we go in to the pub, actually we used to go in the pub for changing. We were allowed to use a room in the pub to change and have a shower. Of course you would go down into the bar, it didn't matter what age you were, so I was taught to drink when I was about 16.[197]

Girls participated in the competitive sporting atmosphere of the interwar years, although less frequently. Only one woman in the study did not play sport as a girl, but fewer than a quarter of the women recalled sport with great fervour. One exception was Joyce Musgrave who travelled to Auckland and Hamilton with the school netball team and won the athletic championship for her school three years running. She trained with her brother every morning.[198]

Although this discussion of sport can only roughly depict trends at the time, it must be emphasised that sport played an extremely important part in children's leisure in the interwar years. No other leisure activity matched sport's influence, although reading, cinema and the wireless became very popular.

Authorities greeted the popularity of cinema and radio with dismay, fearing they could corrupt morals, promote passivity, and in the case of the cinema, damage eyesight. The intelligentsia also feared such entertainments would destroy their children's creativity.[199] Educationalists were united in disapproval of the cinema despite the effort of film companies to promote educational aspects of films.[200] The committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives

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[194]Reg Williams, 20.12.94, p.19.

[195]Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.13.

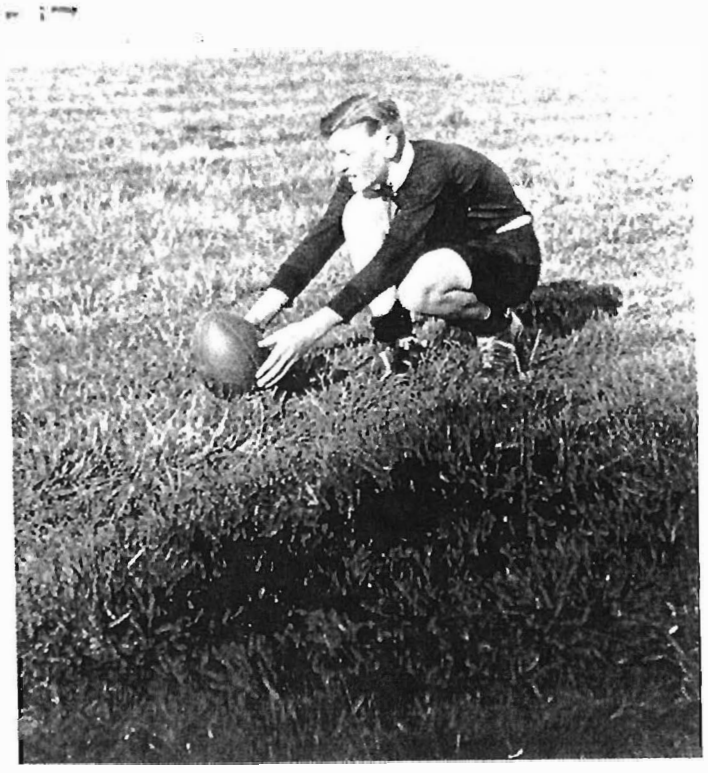
[196]Kevin McNeil also started drinking after he began to play club rugby for Methven at the age of sixteen. But his father, an ex-publican, taught him how to drink properly. He started off drinking shandies until his father 'said you want to stop drinking lemonade and just drink straight beer. Well eventually I did'. Kevin McNeil, 25.5.95, p.8.

[197]Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.15.

[198]Joyce Musgrave, 6.4.96, p.2.

[199]Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure,* pp.179-180.

[200]Some schools in New Zealand showed educational films or took children to see educational films in this period. The 'Educational Picture Company of New Zealand' promoted its programme in the early 1920s.



Bill Gillespie in his rugby uniform, at Southland. 1930s. Courtesy of Bill Gillespie.

The tennis court at Joan Maudsley's boarding school in the central North Island. Courtesy of Joan Maudsley.

and Sexual Offenders regarded the cinema as a major threat to the nation. 'There is every reason for regarding the habit of "going to the pictures" without adequate restrictions as contributing seriously to precocious sexuality, and also to weakening the powers of inhibition and self-control in other directions'. The committee proposed stricter censorship and proper safeguards for the morals of children and young persons.[201] Such strictures against the cinema may have influenced some middle class parents but did nothing to dispel its popularity. It is interesting that very poor children, children in remote areas, and the children of urban intellectuals seldom attended the pictures. John Johnson explained 'my parents who were fairly well-educated and probably better-off than a lot of the others reckoned sending your kids to the pictures was a waste of money - whereas some other families who were perhaps less well-off the kids would be at the pictures every Saturday'.[202] The cinema was the third most popular leisure activity after sport and reading. Much to the despair of Shelley's students who investigated the habits of children in this period, it remained the most popular form of mass entertainment. Hart discovered that both boys and girls preferred adventure films such as Westerns, Dracula-type thrillers, or comedies, rather than cartoons or improving narratives.[203] The weekly serials promoted regular attendance, but moralist's fears seem unduly alarmist. The pictures seem to have been a treat rather than a regular occurrence. A third of Harris's sample attended the pictures once or twice a month and only three boys attended twelve or more times in a month. Hart's study revealed that boys attended the cinema much more regularly than girls, a figure that also emerged in my study.

Table 17: Cinema attendance

Group	No answering this question	Times a month 0-1	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7 or 8	12 or 13
High school	62	25 (37 %)	24	10	3	-	-
Technical	97	35 (36 %)	41	18	2	1	-
Primary Sample 100	89	7 (%)	33	36	8	2	3

'Source: Harris, 'The Boy just left school, p.240.

Educational programme number two included such topics as 'The Wonderful Maoris *Manufacture of Body Mats, Floor Mats, and Baskets from New Zealand Flax,'* 'Our rural friends', and 'The manufacture of Tapioca'. Teachers seem to have been aware of the educational value of visual images and hoped that these films would satisfy children's appetites for the cinema. E.Laws of Wanganui East School wrote 'We want, if possible, that our plant be the pioneer, and that other schools will follow us in such numbers that, not only will the rising generation be taught by motion picture, but the children will see so much of the "movies" at school that they will no longer desire to see the programme at the picture theatres'. E.Laws to Mr J.Caughley, Director of Education, April 28th 1923, Education Department Series 2, Educational Films 1922-1923, E2 1924 /1f.

[201] 1925 H-31A Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders. Report of the Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Hon. Sir Maui Pomare, K.B.E., C.M.G., Minister of Health, p.7.

[202] John Johnson, 3.11.94, p.20.

[203] Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.57. She thought that the low place given to cartoons was surprising since Mickey Mouse was very popular and one theatre arranged a special matinee annually to honour Mickey Mouse's birthday, p.58.

Table 18: Frequency of attendance at the cinema, Boys and Girls

Frequency	Boys	Girls
Twice a week	8	4
Once a week	47	33
Twice a month	41	33
Once a month	47	38
Three or four time a year	39	48
Hardly ever	34	44
Never	3	4

Source: Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children outside the school', p.56.

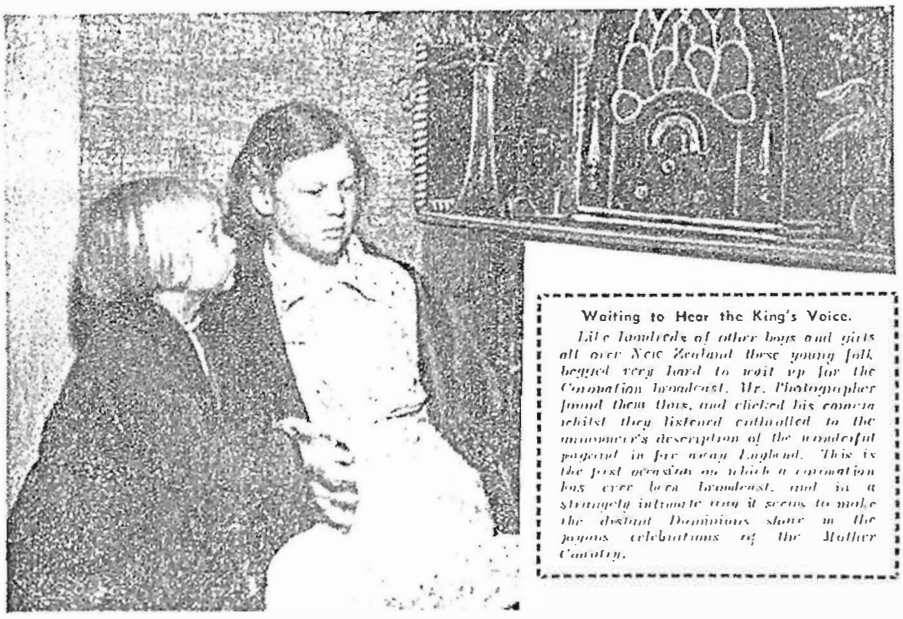
In the interwar years the radio became increasingly important for children. Elliott Atkinson recalled that 'you started off with the old crystal set, and then the great day came when you got a radio with valves in it, and that was your whole source of entertainment.' Radio stations developed a few children's programmes. Nimmos, a Wellington music store, sponsored a children's show hosted by Grandma Lolla: 'oh she had a great following with the kids.' At a celebration in the 1930s Elliott took part, dressed up as a page boy. 'I was only a bit of a kid and I just walked round behind her. . . and every kid in Wellington was there I think.' [204] Christchurch also had a children's hour and its popularity can be gauged by the presence of 14,000 children in Canterbury on the children's hour birthday list. About one third of Hart's sample listened to the radio regularly. They listened to the children's programmes, wrestling contests, orchestral music and sports broadcasts. Radio started 'fads': after yodelling featured on the radio, Hart commented wryly that 'Christchurch's eardrums are shattered by the yodelling of its young'.[205]

Brian Sutton Smith lamented the decline of childhood as a separate and independent culture. He saw the end of the First World War as a watershed for the development of children's play, an argument that fits neatly with the argument in this thesis that modern ideals of childhood became firmly established in New Zealand during the interwar years. He claimed that from '1920 onward the tremendous influence of the toy business on children's free activities, the great import attributed to organised sports and recreation for children and the urban structure of the modern world, all led to the speedy demise of the great majority of the older traditional games'. He noted that in the period after the First World War the number of traditional games diminished and children's play interests became removed from 'the world of their own play objects to a world of play objects contrived by adults, partly out of a realisation of the needs of children and partly for commercial purposes'.[206] Certainly the

[204]Elliott Atkinson, 25.6.94, p.10.

[205]Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', pp.54-55. Radio 3ZM ran a children's club for boys which met on three evenings a week. Boys worked on wireless sets, and rehearsed plays 'and on Wednesday evenings from a quarter to six until half-past seven, they supply the program from the station, ibid, p.203.

[206]Brian Sutton Smith, *The Games of New Zealand Children,* University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1988, p.4.



Waiting to Hear the King's Voice.

Like hundreds of other boys and girls all over New Zealand these young folk begged very hard to wait up for the Coronation broadcast. Mr. Photographer found them thus, and clicked his camera whilst they listened enthralled to the announcer's description of the wonderful pageant in far away England. This is the first occasion on which a coronation has ever been broadcast, and in a strangely intimate way it seems to make the distant Dominions share in the joyous celebrations of the Mother Country.

Children listening to the Coronation broadcast in 1937. This photo shows the importance that radio played in leisure patterns. *NZ Farmer*.

Margaret Anderson (in the top hat and tails) dressing up in the 1920s. Courtesy of Margaret Anderson.

evidence in this study supports rather than contradicts Smith's argument.

The chapter has shown that family leisure became increasingly important in the interwar years. There seems to be considerable evidence to support the argument that 'modem' families, that is urban middle class families played rather than worked together. Certainly the urban middle-class family played rather than worked together. Ideology encouraged the development of home-centred values, and urban parents took their children for outings and holidays, read them stories and occasionally played games with their children. Men and women based their leisure activities around home and children. A class variation emerged, and poorer families often lacked the time and the money to enjoy these activities with their children. Wealthier parents could afford to enjoy leisure activities outside the home, and appeared less home orientated than middle-class families. The Buchanans for example, travelled to Europe and Australia confident that boarding schools and servants were caring for their two daughters. Despite family togetherness a substantial gender difference emerged in the enjoyment of leisure. Men enjoyed activities outside the home, while women organised leisure around their children. They spent much of their leisure time in domestic activities such as sewing and knitting, visiting friends, attending church or participating in women's organisations. Men's leisure tended to be idiosyncratic and independent. Children's leisure became more regulated in the interwar years. Educational leisure, organised entertainments such as the cinema and the radio, and organisations such as scouts and guides, became very influential. Despite greater hedonism, the moral dimension of leisure activities did not disappear. Middle class parents in particular, absorbed the rather Calvinist ideology that leisure should be morally improving. Parents played with their children but often regarded suitable leisure as enhancing children's skills. Mrs Wicks taught her two children to play crib 'at a very young age . . . because mother decided - and correctly - it taught you to count'.[207] Middle class children frequently learnt extra-curricular activities as well so their time tended to be more compartmentalised and controlled by adults. In the modern family children developed moral values through leisure rather than work. Leisure patterns did not develop uniformly among the population, however. Modem leisure developments affected both working-class families and rural families, but to a lesser extent. Although concerns about the morality of leisure emerged most strongly in urban middle-class families they also appeared among the urban working class. The skilled working class showed an appreciation for the familial and educational values of leisure, though working class families tended to be more authoritarian and there are fewer descriptions of parents playing with children. On farms, or in overcrowded urban houses, parents often regarded activities such as reading as time-wasting, and encouraged their children to work or to play outdoors. As a result country girls experienced greater freedom than urban girls. Rural families in particular followed older traditions, and greater gender differentiation in leisure activities emerged. The values of

[207]Joan Wicks, 1.3.95, p.17.

mateship dominated among country men.

Contrasts with British leisure patterns emerge. There was greater gender differentiation in adult leisure patterns in New Zealand, but children's leisure patterns, while still strongly divided, were less differentiated by sex. British pubs, for example, often included men and women, and in working-class areas anyway, descriptions of community leisure included men and women. The British sample attended church more regularly than the New Zealand group. New Zealand families appear to have had greater access to private transport. Adult New Zealand leisure whether working-class or middle class tended to be more interior and restrained. New Zealand girls, in these two samples, enjoyed the out doors to a greater extent, and were more likely to be tomboys. They swam, walked, played sport, cycled and climbed trees as well as playing houses and nursing dolls. Most differences, as with Australia, emerge as subtle rather than obvious but do they indicate that New Zealanders were developing unique leisure patterns. They were at once more restrained, more puritan, but also orientated around family and home.

Some continuities with the past remained but the evidence in this chapter suggests that during the interwar years distinctive changes occurred in leisure patterns in New Zealand. Technological change in the form of the motor car, better public transport, the cinema and the radio provided the means for such changes. The new ideology of childhood and the emphasis on the family man meant that family leisure became a central part of family life. Leisure became the defining feature of the modern family; its expansion during the interwar years showed that the modern family had finally arrived.

Chapter IX
'Everybody helped one another': Kinship and Community in New Zealand and Britain during the Interwar years

> As the girls and boys began to grow up and move into settings outside the family, other institutions and people became increasingly important as mediators - namely, the neighborhood, school, church, peers, popular culture and the workplace. Thus the historian, in assessing influences on childhood, must adopt an age specific perspective on childhood development.[1]

Outside influences had an increasing impact on children once they grew older. Children grew into the community, and the community shaped their lives. Kinship ties, and neighbourhood, school, church and peers became as important as the conjugal family.[2] Kinship relationships had little to do with the 'modern family' that developed in the early twentieth century. Child-rearing experts such as Truby King ignored the role of the extended families, especially grandmothers, in bringing up children, regarding them as representing a threat to progress. King often expounded against the forces of 'unreasoning custom'.[3] The 1936 edition of *Feeding and Care of Baby,* included a picture encaptioned 'Nurse Imitating a Fond Relation', which creates the impression that King regarded the extended family as an intrusion on the sacred bond between mother and child. Overindulgence by relations might result in 'the seeds of feebleness and instability' being sown in the child'.[4] In one sense kinship and community bear little relation to the theme of modernity in family life but their very importance reveals the complexity of family relationships.

It is important to define exactly what we mean by kinship and community. Essentially kin means 'one's relatives or family'. Family included blood relatives and also relatives by marriage. Consanguineous relations can be divided into lineal and collateral relationships. Lineal relatives are one's own grandparents, parents, or children, while collateral relatives are brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, or grandparent's siblings. Another system of classifying kinship, 'the network concept' defines kin in relation to the individual studied.

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[1] William M. Tuttle Jnr., 'America's home front children in World War One,' in Glen Jr. Elder, John Modell, & Ross D. Parke, (eds.), *Children in Time and Place: Developmental and Historical Insights*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Emotional Development, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p.31.

[2] Schoolteachers also influenced children's lives and although this group cannot be included in this chapter their importance should be noted. They were a link with the world of prescriptive ideas, government ideals and modernity. Some interviewees recalled that a teacher's faith in their abilities influenced their aspirations for themselves, and for their children. This influence is not one that would show up on any traditional study of social mobility but was nonetheless important. I noted this influence in both New Zealand and England. See interviews with Madeline Smith and Edna Partridge in particular.

[3] Truby King, *Feeding and Care of Baby*, Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd, Auckland, 1937, p.181.

[4] ibid, p.79.

> *Primary kin* are identified by links between an Ego and the members of his or her families of birth and marriage; *Secondary kin* are identified as those who are primary kin of primary kin (that is grandparents, aunts, uncles, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nephews, nieces, parents-in-law, sons-law; *Tertiary kin* are identified as those who are primary kin of secondary kin.[5]

Within these biological and legal relationships kinship ties can encompass many different dimensions because, as Toynbee notes, kinship:

> is about social relationships. This is apparent in the legal and religious rules associated with it, with inheritance,[6] with the practice of adoption and with the multiplicity of ways in which kinship also implies social expectations and obligations. Kinship practices are deeply entrenched in our social life, but assumed to be 'natural' since we tend to take them for granted. They differ widely from society to society and even within a single society.[7]

Society's definitions of kinship vary in their range of inclusiveness. Some families may include only first cousins, aunts, uncles and grand-parents while others encompass family members to the second, third, even fourth degrees. Constructions of kin groupings vary in time, and within families. Family sanctions or feuds can lead to some family members being excluded from the kinship group. Kinship performed a series of functions for children and their families, but these have varied historically. By providing a wider social network for children, kin give security and variety to their lives. Kin are important economically, providing financial assistance or child care for parents. Kin groups define children's social class and religious affiliation.

Communities provide further social context for children's lives. Technically a community is defined as 'all the people living in a specific locality', and implies a sense of social bonding and mutual support within an area.[8] Members of a community consist of neighbours, and often include social groupings or associations such as church congregations. Friends and kin might form part of a community or be outside the local community. Community members (eg. neighbours, friends or church groups) provide financial or social

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[5] A.Plakans, *Kinship in the past: An Anthropology of European Family Life 1500-1900*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1984, p.229.

[6] Originally English law followed the principle that private individuals could have complete freedom when they decided on the disposal of their property, but in the twentieth century legal practise has modified this freedom. Wills should make fair provision for people who have certain types of relationships with the deceased, mostly in relation to kin. Janet Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* Polity Press, Cambridge, 1989, p.18. However, the only strict rules occur in the case when a person dies intestate, then their estate reverts to their nearest relatives, children and spouse, then brothers, sisters and parents.

[7] Claire Toynbee, *Her Work and His: Family, Kin and community in New Zealand 1900-1930*, Victoria University Press, 1995, Wellington, pp.105-6.

[8] *The Oxford Encyclopaedic Dictionary.*

assistance to each other, as well as fulfilling desires of sociability. They sometimes supplement kinship roles by acting as substitute grandparents, aunts and uncles. Neighbours and communities exercise social control over children, reporting wrongdoing or distributing punishment.

Although extensive studies (in England, but not in New Zealand) have been made about kin ties and social groups, less attention has been paid to the role of the wider family in the life of children.[9] Historians of childhood, such as Linda Pollock, have explored the evolution of the relationship between parent and child throughout the centuries, while historians such as Harry Hendrick and Hugh Cunningham have examined children's relationships with authority, particularly with the state. Sociologists and historians who have studied kinship are seldom child-focused. Children feature in studies such as Plakans' *Kinship in the Past,* Marilyn Strathern's *Kinship at the core,* or Miles Fairburn's *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies,* largely in their role as dependents, but their own construction of kin and community relationships do not emerge. The few exceptions to this rule occur in the work of oral historians such as Elizabeth Roberts and Claire Toynbee, who have begun to explore the relationships between children and their kin. There is no comprehensive study on kinship and community in New Zealand but historians have published some valuable local studies. Carolyn Daley's study of Taradale, and Pearson's work on Johnsonville both provide valuable insights into local community but cannot really examine wider kinship networks. Maureen Molloy's work on kinship among Nova Scotian immigrants to New Zealand revealed extremely strong kinship groups and cohesion within Waipu, but mass migrations of this kind were relatively uncommon in New Zealand.[10] Until historians and sociologists have

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[9] Originally anthropologists became interested in studying kinship and community in exotic locations, among other races, but in Europe from the 1950s in particular, a range of studies emerged that dealt with questions of kinship locally. These studies range from theoretical models of kinship, to detailed local studies. See A. Plakans, *Kinship in the Past: An Anthropology of European Family Life 1500-1900*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1984, Marilyn Strathern's *Kinship at the core An anthropology of Elmdon, a village in north-west Essex in the nineteen-sixties,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, which carefully depicts kinship and community relationships, M.Young and P.Willmott's *Family and Kinship in East London,* Routledge, Kegan & Paul, London, 1957, and for a more recent study: Barry Reay's *Microhistories Demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996. The few studies that do discuss children and kinship include E.Roberts in *A Woman's Place,* who provides a fascinating view of social networks in Britain. She discusses the importance of social networks in familial life. Volume II of International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories *Between Generations Family Models, Myths and Memories,* includes a number of studies on kin relationships, and the rich material they contain inspired some of the material in this chapter. In New Zealand Claire Toynbee also tackles the issues of kin and community in *Her work and his.* Miles Fairburn's *The Ideal Society and its Enemies* inspired a number of articles on kinship (see footnote 6), and Maureen Molloy, an American Studies academic, has also published two local studies on kinship. Maureen Molloy, 'Friends, neighbors, and relations: The Practice of kinship in Waipu, New Zealand, 1857-1917', *Journal of Family History,* Vol. 14, No.4, 1989.

[10] Maureen Molloy, 'Friends, neighbors, and relations: The Practice of kinship in Waipu, New Zealand, 1857-1917', *Journal of Family History,* Vol. 14, No.4, 1989. Fairburn suggests that only about a dozen block migrations occurred in New Zealand. M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900,* Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1989, p.165. Dalziel observes that mass migrations were relatively uncommon anyway in British settlement, and the lack of block migrations

investigated further it is difficult to ascertain how representative these communities are. The chapter will attempt to redress this balance by examining the role that kinship and community played in children's lives.

The chapter will concentrate on two strands of kinship and community because although they are disparate, both make a contribution to an understanding of childhood and New Zealand society in the interwar years. Firstly, a debate has emerged over the strength of kinship and community ties in New Zealand. A prominent New Zealand historian, Miles Fairburn, aroused vigorous historical debate after the publication of *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies* in 1989. He argues that in the nineteenth century, the newly-established colony had become an 'atomised society' characterised by high mobility and lack of close familial or community ties.[11] He acknowledges, however, that complex community associations existed by the interwar period, as Somerset's study of Littledene revealed. While Fairburn's discussion does not extend into the twentieth century it attains resonance because it expresses an enduring perception about the loneliness of New Zealand society, exemplified by Chapman's analysis of New Zealand literature in *Landfall* in the 1950s. Did New Zealand, as a recently established country, develop as an atomised and lonely society? This hypothesis will be tested by comparing the New Zealand and British samples. Since England was an older and more stable society one would expect, at least in some areas, for there to be stronger kinship and neighbourhood ties. What importance did family ties and community ties play in the lives of British families studied there? Was there a real difference between Britain and New Zealand, as the recently colonised country still undergoing considerable migration, both external and internal?[12] The second theme in this chapter is closely linked to the first: what part did kinship play in the lives of children and their families? These two are complementary because kinship and community shaped and defined family life, and determined the quality of children's lives. It would be impossible to determine the importance of such ties without evaluating how kin and community functioned in society, and oral evidence provides the material for such evaluation.

Oral testimonies provide qualitative data that allows us to examine closely how kinship works. Social historians have faced considerable difficulties in attempting to

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does not necessarily imply low degrees of affinity among immigrants. R.Dalziel, 'Emigration and Kinship Migrants to New Plymouth 1840-1843', *NZJH,* vol.25, no.2, October 1991, p.113.

[11] Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*, pp.162-187. Not all historians have agreed with Fairburn. John Hirst believes that he has exaggerated the extent of atomisation in the nineteenth century and stresses that rural communities made strong efforts to establish community ties. John Hirst, 'Australia, Argentina and Atomization', *NZJH,* Vol.25, No.2, October 1991, pp.91-97. See also Clyde Griffen, 'Fairburn's New Zealand From a Vantage of North American Studies, Raewyn Dalziel, 'Emigration and kinship: Migrants to New Plymouth 1840-1843', Caroline Daley, 'Taradale Meets the Ideal Society and its Enemies', Duncan Mackay, 'The Orderly Frontier: The World of The Kauri Bushman 1860-1925', *NZJH,* Vol.25, No.2, October 1991.

[12] In some ways it is difficult to compare New Zealand and England in this period because the great migrations of the nineteenth century (both internal and external) had passed and interwar Britain emerges as a reasonably static society when compared its recent past.

correlate levels of affinity between kin. While street directories and electoral rolls give evidence of movements and kinship relationships, oral histories reveal more intimate details. Oral testimonies of kinship are of course not entirely accurate. Details about names and relationships might be vague, and friends or neighbours might become included in the list of kin, but they give the impression of how people defined their relationships with kin. Since kinship is after all about 'social relationships', and it can only be defined socially.

Fairburn's work has formed the basis for a local historical debate on kinship, but the question of the atomisation of New Zealand must be seen in the context of the wider historiography of kinship. Kinship studies began amongst European anthropologists, and their studies of tight kinship bonds among native peoples have provided the basis for the analysis of kinship. When these anthropologists and sociologists began to study their own societies they inevitably made comparisons with previous studies, and found their own societies lacking. A belief emerged that richer community and kinship bonds appeared in the past, a kind of golden age, but later studies dispelled that impression, and appeared to confirm that the nuclear family, rather than the extended family, predominated in Western Europe by the end of the medieval period. But later studies have revealed that these theories have evolved in a simplistic fashion that ignores the considerable diversity in family life, and the constant state of flux in family forms.[13] Historians have suggested that migratory patterns during the industrial revolution further weakened kinship bonds and community ties. One sociologist wrote that if a hypothetical visitor arrived in nineteenth century England, they would observe that 'kinship seemed very weak; people were early dependent of parental power and most relied on their own efforts . . . The weakness of kinship showed itself in the household structure; this was nuclear, on the whole, with few joint or extended families'.[14]

A rich historiographical debate exists about the nature of family structure and kin networks in the past.[15] Barry Reay, in his study of rural England between 1800-1930, critiques what he describes as the rapidly developing sociological orthodoxy that stresses the dominance of the 'autonomous nuclear family'. Sociologists and historians have concentrated on household size and structure, a methodology that ignores links between households. As a result, historians have assumed that since extended family households were rare, English society did not have strong cohesive kin relations.[16] Barry Reay and Elizabeth Roberts,

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[13]'Introduction', K.Boh, M.Bak, C.Clason, M.Pankratova, J.Qvortrup, G.B.Sgritta and K.Waerness, *Changing Patterns of European Family Life A Comparative Analysis of 14 European Countries,* Routledge, London and New York, 1989, p.7.

[14]Barry Reay, *Microhistories: demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930,* Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.157.

[15]Recent studies have concluded that different models of kinship have existed simultaneously in Western society, 'we are as yet in no position to say unambiguously, with respect to kinship, at which point in the individual histories of the various European societies the 'corporate kin group' ceased to be a relevant model for kinship inquiry, although the fact that such cessation did take place cannot be doubted'. Plakans, *Kinship in the past,* p.128.

[16] Reay, *Microhistories,* pp.156-157.

among others, have questioned these assumptions. Although co-residence or extended family households were not the norm, families maintained strong ties. In the village of Hernhill in Kent, for example, Reay found that in 1851 sixty per cent. of households were related to other households through parents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins.[17] Historians and sociologists have also debated as to whether kinship or community are more important in the lives of individuals. It has been argued that if 'kinship was an important organizing principle in village society we would expect to find kin in a wide variety of relationships, ranging from informal assistance to cooperation between relatives in economic activities'. If, in contrast, the community 'were functionally more important than kin we would expect kin to figure infrequently amongst the usual village acts of aid and assistance'. When we assess the relative importance of each group, it is important not to make too artificial a distinction between kinship and community. In some areas kin and community were synonymous, as, for example, when relatives lived in the same street or area. Kinship and community are not, as Barry Reay emphasises, completely separate and isolated entities.[18]

Various studies have examined how migration affects kinship and community ties. This is a subject central to any discussion about the role of kinship in New Zealand society. Studies in the 1950s and 1960s by sociologists suggested that movement may 'distort or destroy kinship associations, with possible personal and social deprivation'.[19] Later studies however, have stressed that while movement is disruptive, people develop strategies to deal with dislocation. Judith Smith studied Jewish and Italian immigrant families in Providence, America, and discovered that people formed compensatory ties to replace relationships lost by migration. She notes that families retained reliance on others, and kept their traditional strategies of economic interdependence, 'altering but not abandoning them in the face of technological and occupational change'. They reinforced the kin ties that existed and used neighbours and friends as substitutes to kin relationships. 'Mutual benefit organizations reflected these values of economic collectivity and expanded exchange. Fraternal associations were particularly resonant with the dominance of siblings in networks of immigrant kin.'[20] British settlers, with their values of independence and self-reliance, may not have relied so heavily on others, but Smith's work shows that immigration does not necessarily result in dislocation of all family ties. Kinship bonds shifted and rearranged themselves.

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[17] ibid, p.164.

[18] ibid, pp.168-173.

[19] Young, & Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London,* p.141.

[20] J.Smith, *Family Connections: A History of Italian and Jewish Immigrant Lives in Providence, Rhode Island 1900-1940*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1985, p.166. This economic interdependence diminished somewhat in the 1940s, as modern capitalisation and greater prosperity reduced the need for economic assistance between kin. Kin networks focused on providing aid between parents and children rather than between siblings or neighbours, ibid, p.167.

Chapter IX: Kinship and Community

Social and economic factors also affected the way in which the extended family functioned in society. Historians of family life have emphasised that the extended family probably played a more important part in people's lives in the early twentieth century than it does today.[21] The development of the welfare state, and the mobile, nuclear family have diminished the importance of kinship, and to some extent, community, in the lives of families in the late twentieth century. In the early twentieth century both the New Zealand and English governments expected kin to take responsibility for relatives. In Britain the law enforced the bonds of kinship. English welfare law derived from the Poor Law Acts of 1601, which required families to care for their members. Grandparents had to take care of orphaned grandchildren, men and women to look after their parents, and their children.[22] Changes in legislation, especially from the beginning of the twentieth century, brought in other welfare provisions such as old age pensions, but the substantial burden of responsibility remained with the family, till the British Labour government passed the Public Assistance Act in 1946. A British sociologist, Janet Finch, noted in her study of kinship, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* that caring for kin involved both a legal and moral imperative. 'Where social policies are designed to encourage a particular version of family responsibilities, they are in fact seeking to create a particular moral order which may or may not accord with what people themselves actually feel is proper'.[23] Government policies drew the boundaries between state and family but in times of economic hardship the state attempted to widen the boundaries of family responsibility.[24]

One must conclude from a study of these debates that the way in which kin and community function varies over time and space. Within New Zealand and Britain the forces of social and economic change have tightened or loosened community and family ties. Smith noted in her study of immigrants in America that economic interdependence in migrant families weakened in the prosperous twenties but became stronger during the Great Depression of the 1930s.[25] Poverty, migration, and the role of the state in providing welfare affected the economic and social bonds of kinship. What is true in one period may be untrue or only partially true at another period. Therefore, any study of kinship and community must recognise that the family 'has been regarded not only as a fundamental group in society, but also as a *stable* and stabilising entity in a *changing* society . . . and yet the family has itself undergone dramatic changes'.[26]

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[21] See Toynbee, *Her work and his,* pp.200-204, also Roberts, *A Women's Place,* p.181.

[22] Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.171.

[23] Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* p.8.

[24] ibid, p.9.

[25] Smith, *Family Connections,* p.80.

[26] Jens Qvortrup, 'Comparative Research and Its Problems', in K.Boh et al, *Changing Patterns of European Family Life,* pp.25-26.

Chapter IX: Kinship and Community

I

Family Ties in New Zealand and England

> They were sort of part of the family in those days, more so than they are today I think . . . so that sort of kept a close family unit as it were. I think we used to like our grandparents possibly as much as we liked our parents, or sometimes even more, we looked upon them as the - what shall I say - the stability of the family. [27]

New Zealand society reached social maturity during the interwar years. Gender ratios evened out. In 1881 New Zealand had only 817 females to every 1000 males but by 1921 there were 956 women to 1000 men.[28] By the 1920s over half of non-Maori New Zealanders were born here. In 1924 46 per cent. of people who died had been born in New Zealand.[29] Still, in this study nearly half of the respondents had at least one parent born overseas. They were far more likely than the English sample to have a parent who lived at a distance and so would seem to fit in with the stereotype of familial isolation. Those who had left family behind in Great Britain or Australia (the other major source of immigration to New Zealand) seldom, unless relatively wealthy, saw family again. This did produce a wrench from family that may have induced a sense of isolation, especially in women.[30]

Arguments by Fairburn and others about isolation and atomisation in New Zealand rest on this dislocation with kin. Fairburn thought that one of the reasons for Plunket's dominance in New Zealand might be the lack of grandparents. This, he argued, would break the continuity of advice from mother to daughter, leading to women's greater reliance on outside advice for child-rearing. 'The isolation helps to account for the rapid growth of the Plunket Society after its foundation in 1907 . . . With its body of alternative dogma and enthusiastic precept, the 'Plunket system' filled an intellectual vacuum and was readily accepted'.[31] There seems little evidence to support Fairburn's conjecture that New Zealanders adopted Plunket early because of the lack of older women. Three-quarters of the mothers in this study had access to their own mothers. For example, Flora Goodyear lived next door to her mother but still became an enthusiastic supporter of Plunket. One must not

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[27] Jack Ford, 21.3.95, p.15.

[28] *NZOYB,* 1926, p.80.

[29] ibid, p.144

[30] Interviews for my MA thesis produced some poignant stories of women who suffered from the decision to migrate. Agnes McGregor's mother had migrated in the 1870s but she never lost her sense of longing for her original country. Some thirty years later the Buchan sisters who migrated with their parents to New Zealand in 1908 recalled their mother's terrible grief. She survived, through her friendship with a Scottish woman.

[31] Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies,* p.166. As material in earlier chapters has revealed Plunket expanded rapidly in the 1920s, rather than directly after 1907, and the reasons for its expansion are more complex. Often Plunket appears to have provided an alternative for advice, rather than a replacement, and women could be selective in their adoption of Plunket's ideas.

over-exaggerate the contrasts between New Zealand and Britain in this period. Family dislocation could still occur in Britain because of death or migration, so Fairburn may have exaggerated the importance of grandparents in the old world. The Lancashire town of Barrow lost 16.2 per cent. of its population through migration, between 1921 to 1931.[32] Barrow and Lancaster had large migrant populations. Roberts found that if extended family migrated together, family ties were strengthened, but if a nuclear family migrated as a single unit, ties with the extended family could weaken or break.[33] One of her interviewees explained that when his family left Preston for Doncaster, where his father had a better job, the rich family network he grew up with dissipated. He complained, 'we did go to Doncaster and cut ourselves off'.[34] Furthermore, people died at a younger age than today. In New Zealand the average of death for men in 1924 was 51, and 49 for women, although these figures were inflated by high infant mortality, so that a male at birth could expect to live to 60 years of age.[35] In the boroughs of Barrow, Preston and Lancaster between only 4.4 and 6.4 per cent. of the population was aged 65 and over.[36] The early age of death reduced the possibility of grandparents playing a significant role in children's lives. Living in one's country of origin did not necessarily imply strong family support and community networks.

The following sections explore the nature of family ties in New Zealand and by comparing them with the British sample, assess the level of atomisation in New Zealand. As the opening quotation makes clear, relationships with the extended family were extremely important for children, and created the context of family life. Relationships with kin groups also affected the way families interacted with their wider community. Where a large group of family members was present, families interacted less with people outside their kinship group. Prosperous and poor also related to their kin differently. Wealthier families did not need to rely on kin for assistance but found maintaining contact with relations easier over distance. In contrast, poorer families relied on family assistance, and economic interdependence strengthened family ties. Gender shaped the focus of family relationships. Studies have shown that women played far more active roles in family life than men.[37] Family ties generally seemed more important for women, perhaps because they had less opportunity to meet others, they were less likely to be in paid employment, and because they bore the main burden of childcare.[38] But important as social class and gender are, the geographical

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[32] Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.181.

[33] ibid, p.167.

[34] Mr. B.9.P, interview courtesy of Elizabeth Roberts, North-West Centre for Regional Studies, University of Lancaster, p.18.

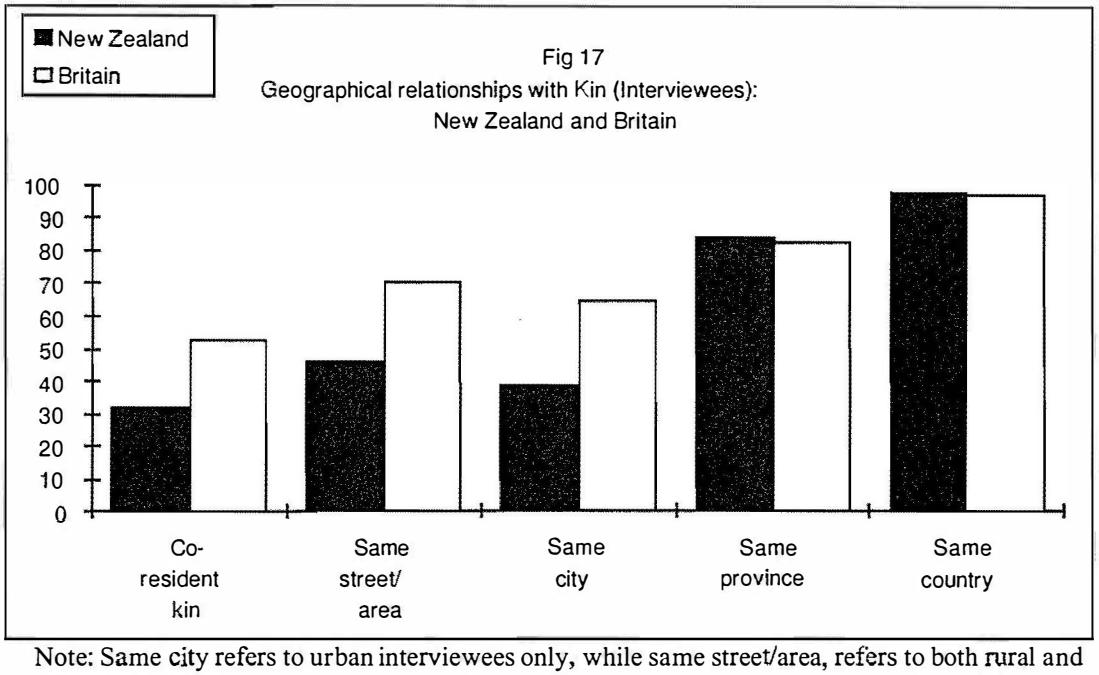
[35] *NZOYB,* 1926, p.140.

[36] Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.175.

[37] Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* p.40.

[38] See Toynbee, *Her work and his,* pp.132-133.

relationship to kin is perhaps the most important determinant of relationships between kin. The following graph explores geographical relationships with kin, and contrasts the experiences of New Zealand and British interviewees. Although it depicts crude data it reveals the complexity and importance of kinship relationships. In this study British families were more likely to practise co-residence, and to live in close geographical proximity to kin. Little difference appears in wider geographical patterns, and both New Zealand and British families lived in the same province or country as their kin.[39]



Note: Same city refers to urban interviewees only, while same street/area, refers to both rural and urban interviewees.

Co-residence

Traditionally historians and sociologists have regarded levels of co-residence or propinquity as important in determining the strength of family ties within a society. Later studies have revealed that close family ties exist without co-residence. However, co-residence is still an important indicator of kin obligations and ties. This study reveals that a surprising number of families experienced co-residence at some time in the family cycle. Approximately a quarter (13 out of 41) New Zealand families, and half of the British families (18 out of 34) had kin living with them, or were themselves living with kin, at some time. Families in Britain were more likely to have kin living with them, perhaps because of more favourable economic conditions in New Zealand. In Bethnal Green in the 1950s, roughly 50 per cent. of married men and women lived with parents or had a widowed parent living with them. Robert's study of Lancashire families also revealed higher figures of co-residence than in my New Zealand

[39] One aspect of kinship that this graph does not show is the numbers of kin, and generally British families lived in proximity to greater numbers of kin than New Zealand families.

families. In Barrow and Lancaster 30 per cent. had lived with kin, but the figures in Preston were even higher. Roughly 45 per cent. had lived with kin. Reay notes that in rural areas in Kent farming households often went through an extended phase, but no significant difference emerged between rural and urban families in New Zealand.[40]

Families usually saw co-residence as a temporary measure and not as an ideal. Sociologists have argued that British people regarded the kinship ideal as 'intimacy at a distance'.[41] Co-residence occurred within certain periods in a family life cycle. A married couple might live with parents at first, either to look after the parents or because they could not afford to establish a separate household. Young working class couples in Britain often resided with parents in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[42] Wilmott and Young noted that although some married couples lived with parents most preferred to set up their own household. People believed in the ideal of 'a home of your own'.[43] Conversely, a widowed or infirm parent might live with the family until their death. Other family members might board with the family because they needed accommodation or to help with children. Most co-residence took place among primary and secondary kin. Relations often took in children that were not their own. They cared for children in response to poverty or family tragedy, even loneliness. The mother's or father's sister might live with the family and care for children after the death of the mother.

The different types of co-residence can be illustrated by examples from the New Zealand sample in this study. These examples also reveal the largely favourable impact of co-residence on children's lives. Elizabeth Greene's mother died of pernicious anaemia after the birth of her son (there were two children) and 'along came Aunty Ivy a first and older cousin a spinster of 21 . . . she came for three months and stayed thirty years!'[44] They returned her dedication by extending support to her family. Ivy's brother and sister both lost their farms in the Depression, and visited frequently, while Ivy's mother lived with the Greenes for years. Mrs Partridge lived with her parents early in her marriage, while her husband went away with shearing gangs during the war. Later on, Edna's uncle made their home his base and lived there between jobs. 'We adored him, and he used to tell us ridiculous stories about monkeys and that sort of thing'.[45]

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[40] Reay, *Microhistories,* p.162.

[41] Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* p.29, also p.26.

[42] Diane Gittins, *The Family in Question Changing households and familiar ideologies,* 2nd edition, Macmillan Press, London, 1993 (first published 1985), pp.24-5. See also Strathern, *Kinship at the core* , pp.118-120.

[43] Young, & Wilmott, *Family and kinship in East London*, p.20.

[44] E.Greene (pseudonym), hand-written life story.

[45] Edna Partridge, 7.2.95, p.21. Mary Trembath's uncle lived with them for a time to recover from alcoholism and to save money to set himself up with a farm. Mary Trembath, 31.12.96, p.3. Albert and Jane married in 1909, they lived with James's parents in 1911 where their first child was born, then in 1911-1914 they lived with Jane's brother Walter at Paeroa where they had their second child, Mary. In 1914 they finally moved onto their own farm. Notes from Lynn Lister, 22 May 1997.

Elderly parents preferred to maintain their independence but both the Walkers and Evans looked after parents. Marjorie Walker's maternal grandfather, a tailor, moved to their farm in 1929. He built a two-bedroomed cottage on their land, but ate with them, 'so there were a lot of mouths to feed'. She remembered his presence resulting in some tension but 'he was good to us too and made us lovely little jackets to wear with our school gymfrocks'.[46] British families lived with relatives for similar reasons. Nancy Greaves' grandmother had been married to an abusive husband who knocked her around. When she gave birth to a fifth daughter 'he fetched a bucket of water and he threw it over them both'. Her sons finally 'kicked him out' and her children looked after her. She died in 1933 when she was living with Nancy's family.[47]

Other co-residence took place along more formal lines, where relations lived in as boarders. During the Depression the Atkinsons rented a large house in Wellington which had a glassed in porch, 'three boarders lived out there, and my cousin and his wife had another room, I shared a room with one of my cousins . . . the eldest and younger one [brothers] I assume were in a room on their own, and then Mum and Dad had their room.'[48]

Co-resident kin enriched children's lives, and kin were most likely to take in children if death, illness or poverty meant that they could not be looked after by their parents. Despite high mortality during this period, relatively few children (roughly three per cent.) were cared for outside kin networks. In 1924 4574 children under 15 were cared for in some of the 91 benevolent institutions throughout New Zealand, 4488 children by the state in receiving homes, industrial schools and under the infant life protection schemes.[49] In 1949 there were 55,255 children in care in England and Wales.[50] Although most families tended not to live with kin, the practice of a child being taken in by kinfolk seems to have been reasonably common in New Zealand and Britain. Molloy notes that in Waipu in the nineteenth century 'Children were quite likely to spend a period of their lives in a household other than their natal one'.[51] This happened most often after the death of one or both parents, and orphans usually moved in with deceased (as opposed to widowed) parent's kin.[52] Kin also took in children to ease overcrowding or as financial assistance to a family. This tended to be a temporary arrangement and in Waipu children usually went to maternal rather than paternal kin. The evidence in this study supports Molloy's conclusions, as only maternal aunts or

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[46]Marjorie Walker, 20.10.94, pp.3, 4..

[47]Mrs Nancy Greaves, courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford, p.14.

[48] Elliott Atkinson, 11.6.94, p.5.

[49]*NZOYB,* 1926, pp.208, 233. The total primary school population in New Zealand during this period was 247,277, so I calculated that roughly three per cent. of children were cared for outside direct family networks. *NZOYB,* 1926, p.221.

[50] D. Ford, *The Deprived Child and the Community,* Constable, & Co., London, 1955, p.3.

[51] Molloy, 'Friends, neighbors, and relations', p.318. See Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.175.

[52] Molloy, 'Friends, neighbors, and relations', p.320.

grandparents in this study cared for relatives' children.

Among the New Zealand sample only one woman lived permanently with her grandparents, but others lived with, or visited relatives. Mary Sherry and her sister lived with their maternal grandparents and aunt, from the age of four. There were five children in the family but Mary's only brother was slightly handicapped and the parents had little money. She had plenty of contact with her parents who lived nearby, but her grandparents raised her. Mary commented 'we were there for company, and we were quite a lot of company'.[53] Stories from British families were very similar. Thomas McCormack, for example, grew up with his grandparents in Norfolk after his father died, and remained with them after his mother married again and emigrated to Australia.

The extent of co-residence or propinquity (see graph) does not support the suggestion that New Zealand was an atomised society, but suggests that family ties were not as close as in Britain. Nevertheless, New Zealand, as well as British families, recognised obligations to kin and were prepared to care for them in their homes, if necessary. The fact that financial circumstances usually prompted co-residence also indicates that much co-residence occurred because of necessity rather than choice. Another indication of the strength of family ties is geographical proximity to kin, and the next section explores this concept.

Close geographical ties with kin

Although not many families practised propinquity, they often lived close to their extended family. Families in Bethnal Green were twice as likely to live in close geographical proximity to the wife's relations,[54] a pattern that seems to have been repeated in other parts of Britain and in New Zealand. Many New Zealand and British interviewees lived in close geographical proximity to at least some kin. Just under half (19 families) of the New Zealand sample had close local ties with some kin, at some time. The impression emerges from the interviews that proximity to kin gave children a sense of security and encouraged sociability. For example, Peter Crookston, a Scottish respondent, recalled his maternal Celtic relatives as friendly, open and generous. When he walked down town 'and I met my uncle John, I'd cry out "Hello there", you know, and I'd get a 3d bit or something'.[55]

British people seem to have had closer contact with relatives, as Figure 17 graphically shows. Almost two-thirds had, at least for part of their lives, lived in the same street or area with relatives, some with a number of relatives. The Cuffs, an East London family, followed the very close patterns that the study on Bethnal Green revealed.[56] Henry explained that his

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[53]Mary Sherry, 5.4.95, p.3.

[54] Willmott & Young, *Kinship and Community in East London,* p.22.

[55]Peter had about twenty aunts and uncles living in Port Glasgow. Peter Crookston, courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford.

[56]White argues that the mutual support networks here developed out of desperate poverty. Jerry White, *The Worst Street in North London Campbell Bunk, Islington, Between the Wars,* History Workshop Series,

mother's parents lived on next floor of the same house, and his father's elder brother lived next door. Uncle Len had the flat above him, and Aunt Flo and Aunt Mad? lived close by. All his relatives were within ten minutes' walk 'so there was always aunts and uncles all over the place'.[57] Living in close proximity promoted family sociability, but some families did not emphasise family ties. Sidney South explained that he did not visit relatives often. 'We used to know who they was if they speak to us we used to speak to them, but that was it. Just hello Auntie. Or - grandad, or - That was it. Not like today.' [58]

Such close geographical ties with kin occurred less frequently in New Zealand, but these patterns were replicated to some extent. The Goodyears lived in the closely-knit and long-established community of Port Chalmers.[59] The family (Flora's maiden name was Thomson) were of Scottish descent. George explained that most of their neighbours in Bemicia Street were relations:

> With so many relations round, I suppose we all helped with sickness and things like that. *So how many relations did you have living round the area?* Well there was my grandmother next door, my grandfather till he died, and then above us on the corner, there's my great-uncle, and next door to him was the uncle, mother's brother, and opposite him was another great uncle and just opposite our place was my mother's cousin. So that was one, two, three, four, five, houses all very close to ours that had relations.

Other Watson relatives also lived in Port Chalmers.[60] This is the only example of 'clustering' in this study,[61] but a substantial number of New Zealand families retained strong ties with kin.

Migrant families built up kin networks quite quickly in an age of large families, which suggests that the theory of atomisation in New Zealand may be overstated. The Maretts, a Dunedin Presbyterian family, illustrate this point. Vera's maternal grandparents migrated from Jersey in the late nineteenth century. Two Marrett brothers (one her grandfather) had

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Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1986, p.72.

[57]Interview with Henry and Elsie Cuff, courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford.

[58]Sidney South, p.7. Courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford. His mother visited her parents often but he saw them himself once or twice in twelve months, pp.14.-15. His paternal grandfather 'lived with us a bit but we couldn't manage him'. He died in a workhouse.

[59] European settlers arrived in Otago in 1848, they arrived at Port Chalmers, and some settled there. During the 1860s the Port's trade increased and it became a 'southern *entrepot'*. E.Olssen, *A History of Otago,* John MacIndoe, Dunedin, 1984, p.67.

[60]George Goodyear, 13.7.94, p.4., also 10.2.95, p.8. Mrs Goodyear lived at 2 Bernicia Street (not recorded in 1920), George Thomson, harbour master (her parents) at 4 Bernicia Street, then in Belle Vue Place, off Bernicia Street, lived John Watson , draper and J.P. (her uncle), and Alex Watson Engineer (her uncle). James Alex Thomson, engineer, (her brother) lived in Grey Street, Port Chalmers. *Stones Directory Otago and Southland*, 1920.

[61]Marilyn Strathern noted that some kin in Elmdon tended to 'cluster', that is live in houses in the same block or street. It seems to have been a fairly common pattern in England. Strathern, *Kinship at the core*, p.112.

married two sisters and migrated together (and had six children each) so an extensive family network existed in Dunedin by the time of her birth.[62] The following family trees show the extensiveness of family networks. The first two trees show the maternal and paternal kin of Mary Trembath. Mary had a total of twenty-one uncles and aunts living in New Zealand, and seventy surviving cousins.[63] The last family tree shows the ancestry of George Goodyear.

The Lowry Family Tree, originating from Binion, County Donegal, Eire

James Lowry B. c.1848-1922

m. 27th April 1876 Mary Jane McLintock b.9 July 1855 d.1948

Thirteen children, except Elizabeth migrated to New Zealand 1904[64]

Notes: A brother and a sister (Durbins) both married Lowrys, another brother and sister (Forrests) married Lowrys

Elizabeth b.1877 m.John Mahaffey, 7 chn (in Ireland)	James b.1878 m.K. Durbin 4 chn.	Samuel b.1880 d.1916	Jane m. Albert Trembath	Mary b.1883 m.John Whitney 7 chn	Matilda b.1885 m.Tom Forest 3 chn	Robert 1887 Janet Forrest 6 chnn	Aileen b.1888 m.George Keeling 9 chn	Beatricce b.1890 m.James Thornton 4 chn. all died	Anna b.1892 m.Bert Durbin 4 chn 1 survived 1922	Evaline b.1894 m.Alex Sweeny 2 chn	Francis 1898 M.L.A. Petersen 5 chn
	Hikutaia Morrinsville d.1920 family scattered	Mangere	Ald Hikutaia Thames	Waikawa	Hiku Manukau	Akd	Wgtn.	Orongo Akld d.1922	Akd Paeroa Northland farmer	Akl	Hiku. Morr.

also Andrew John, lived at Hikutaia, Thames, Auckland

Emma Kathleen b.29 March 1911	Mary Osborne b.14 July 1912	Francis Selwyn 6 March 1914	Albert George 29 July 1917	James Hamilton 29 July 1919	Helen Jean 23 March 1923

62 Family sanctions operated to exclude some members, however. Vera explained that her father had a brother who drank 'and you didn't talk about him ever'. Vera Marett, 13.4.95, pp.1, 5. *Stones Directory* for 1920 records eight Maretts in Dunedin. Misses A. & M. Marett were dressmakers at 347 George Street, Dunedin, Misses L.P. & J. Marett were drapers at 548 King Street, a Mrs Charlotte Marett lived at St David St, a John Marett, carter lived in St Kilda, and a Mrs Priscilla Marett in George Street. Helier Marett lived in St Leonards at this time. An Alfred Francis Marett, carpenter, lived in Gore, and a Percy Douglas, carpenter ,lived in M. (Mataura?). *Stones Directory, Otago and Southland*. It seems likely that these people were related since Marett was a fairly unusual name.

63 Family trees compiled by Lynn Lister, Thames.

64 Lynn Lister notes that 'Mary Jane Lowry, nee McLintock was widowed in 1922, and continued to live at Arthur Street, West Onehunga . . . There were always daughters living with her. As they became widowed they moved in to live with their mother. Mary Margaret was there for many years, as her marriage 'dissolved', and she 'looked after' her mother in the 1940s. Eva also lived with her mother, before marriage, and after widowhood. Aileen Isobel lived one street away, Beatrice within walking distance. Frances after marriage, until she and her husband took over the Hikutaia Farm. Louise was a few miles away at Waikowhau overlooking Manakau Harbour. The boys were further afield, and Jane Mahaffy on a farm in Hikutaia, to which the family often travelled en masse, for picnic stays, living partly in tents and gathering blackberries. Each year from the late 20s, until Mary Jane died aged 93 in 1949, she had a birthday party at Onehunga, & all the children and grandchildren attended, & it was written up in the paper. She was adored by her children, & it was reported that she had 'never taken off her rings'. Meaning 'she had never had to do hard work.' Notes from Lynn Lister to Rosemary Goodyear, 22 May 1997.

Trembath Family Tree, St Just, Cornwall

John Trembath b.27 Sept. 1818, m. Mary Ann Madern 1842

11 children, four emigrated to New Zealand 1874[65]

Mary A.	Alfred	Francis	William Henry
b.1851	b.1 Dec 1854	b.17 Aug 1856	c.1858
m.	m. 21 Oct 1854 Susanna Gribble	m. Emma Kneebone	
1. Steer		1878, d.1928	
2.R.Trembath			

Jessie	Lily	Albert	Leonard	Archi.	Frank	Hazel	Reginald	William	George	Ken	Gladys	Kate
		b.1883	b.1885	1887	1888	1890	1892	1894	1896	1897	1900	
m.Burley	2 m.	m. Jane Mahaffey	2 m.	m.Nellie Harvey	m. Massey	m. Thorburn	m.Violet Coxell	m.Sarah Jenson	d.W.W.1	m.Irene Clay	m. McMinst.	m.
4 chn.		6 chn	4 chn	7 chn	8 chn	3 chn.	1 c..	1 ch.		1 ch.	2 chn.	
Palmerston North	Thames Akld.		Akld	Thames Akld	Thames P.N.	Thames Akld.	Thames Hauraki	Thames Akld.	Thames	Thames Hamilton	Akls	Akld

The Watson Family Tree, Peterhead, Scotland[66]

John Watson, shoemaker, (b.1806, d.1869) m. Isabella Boyd (b.1806, d.1874),

8 children, 2 children emigrated to NZ, John and Garden

John Watson, mariner (b.1834, d.1912 NZ), m. Elizabeth Leask (b.1833, d. 1940 NZ)

John	Garden	Eliza Jane	Alexander	David	Isabella	William	Flora
b.1856, 1947	b.1859	b.1862, '33	b. 1866,	b.1869,	Clarke	b.1874	b.1876
m. Helen Rennie	m. Jane Watson b.1871	m. George Thomson, Port	m.Ellen McAulay, Port, Oamaru	m. Annie Cobden Wgtn.	b.1871 m. Thomas Robertson (cousin), Sct.	m.Sarah Smith b.1874	m. William Fretwell China
Port Ch.	Golden Bay		6 chn	8 chn	no issue	?	2 chn
10 chn	7 chn (disappeared)					3 chn	

John Watson	William	James	Annie	Flora
b.1884 d.1973	b.1886, d.1950	b.1888, d.1969	b.1890, d.1962	b.1894, d.1982
m. Ethel Collier	m.Allice Collier	m.Marg. Walker	m. N. Clark	m. C.Goodyear
1920, Wellington	1918, d.1918 1 ch.	1916, Port.		Port
2 chn		m. P. Waterhouse	5 chn.	2 chn
		1931 1 ch.		
		Port Chalmers		

John b.1920 George b.1924 m. Catherine Wright
3 chn. 4 cdn.

[65] Lynn Lister observes that: 'Reg, Ken and Nellie were the only ones to visit Albert at Hikutaia. My mother has never seen most of her cousins on this side. There were no reunions. Emma Couch Kneebone (Trembath) died 1917 of diabetes. Her husband remarried in the 1920s, to the family's disapproval, so the tendency for this family to split was further encouraged by that probably'. Notes from Lynn Lister to Rosemary Goodyear, 22 May 1997.

[66] Partly compiled by Shirley Cameron, Port Chalmers, also Flora Goodyear?

Close geographical ties with kin seemed more common in urban New Zealand. The Goodyears, Bastings, Moores and Atkinsons had strong local ties but over half the urban families lived for a considerable amount of time in the same town or city as kin. Elliott Atkinson talked about a rich network of relatives in Wellington but commented that 'family feuds were common amongst [my mother's family] there was thirteen of a family and nobody ever saw eye to eye'.[67] Toynbee suggests that since her working class interviewees had moved in search of work, either from abroad or elsewhere in New Zealand, they were not as closely tied to kin as working class families overseas. In her study, middle class families had the closest ties with kin.[68] While my findings do not necessarily agree with this supposition, certainly middle class families had the resources to visit kin and maintain family contacts.

Rural families in New Zealand had less direct contact with kin, unless kin lived in or were close enough to visit frequently. Farming settlements had been established fairly early in the South Island and as a result rural South Islanders appeared to have more extensive kin networks. Oxford (Littledene), for example, had been farmed as early as the 1850s.[69] The importance of these kinship networks is apparent in the Williams family. Mr Williams worked on the railways which meant that the family moved approximately every two years. Assisted by cheap travel they retained close ties with kin, which gave the children extra stability. The family stayed with Mrs William's parents in Heriot every Christmas, and the children stayed there when their mother gave birth (she had nine children). Reg explained that his grandmother 'had a very large part in our lives as you can imagine - going there to live for some months when Mum was looking after a new baby . . . She was just dearly beloved by everybody. She more than anybody else made our big family one'.[70]

Some areas of the North Island had been established early (Johnsonville for example) but other areas were opened up in the twentieth century. The Trembaths and Ryans both settled on new blocks of land after 1920. The relative time of settlement had an impact on kinship ties. For example, the Partridges, who lived on a farm near Rangiora, saw kin weekly, whereas the Ryans, who had settled on a soldier settlement block, lived far away from kin. They lived under the Ruahine Ranges, 'a windswept god-forsaken place if ever there was one', and their nearest relations were in Gisborne and Napier (222 kilometers and 81 kilometers distant from Dannevirke).

In the English sample rural families had closer ties with kin than in many of the New

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[67] Elliott Atkinson, 11.6.94, p.3.

[68] Toynbee, *Her work and his,* p.108.

[69] H.C.D. Somerset, *Littledene A New Zealand Rural Community*, N.Z.C.E.R., Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd, New Zealand, 1938, p.2. One of my earlier interviewees, John Martin, had explained that his uncles and aunts all settled on farms near Milton. Interview with John Martin, 30.8.90 (hand-written abstract).

[70] Reg Williams, 14.9.94, p.2. The family owned two farms at Heriot and when there Reg saw relations every day. 'They were just wonderful with us as children - we used to meet pretty frequently all the members of the family with all their children, and this has lasted to this day'. 22.12.94, p.23.

Zealand rural families studied. Betty Stemp (Kent), Fred Pawsey (Suffolk) and Gwen Jones (South Wales) described close geographical ties with kin, similar to that in *Larkrise to Candleford*.[71] They saw grandparents, aunts and uncles frequently and although very few had relatives living in, they helped each other. Fred explained that in his youth when anyone fell ill the family looked after them. His mother would give her children their breakfast then leave to take care of her mother.[72] The following comment from Gwen Jones illustrates a number of important points about kinship. In the rural area of South Wales where she lived, family were physically close but women maintained family relationships. Gwen described her mother caring for Gwen's father's grandmother:

> It was part of my job on my way home from school to call in and see she was all right. That was my job for the day. I had to go home and report to my mother that she was all right because my mother was very very fond of her and looked after and took care of her. She never had any daughters of her own, she had three sons, one was my grandfather and two were married and one lived with her. But it was my mother who cared for her, my mother liked her very much I know. And she sort of trained us to pop in and say hello, sort of not say are you ill but just to tell her what we were doing, to tell her what was going on. But I never remember her being anywhere but sat in a chair and one day I went there and she had died.[73]

Maintaining relationships over distance

A debate exists about the effects of migration on family relationships. A central point in the debate is whether kinship ties can be effectively maintained over distance. Logic suggests that geographical distance would affect relationships with kin. Nevertheless humans are adaptable creatures and develop strategies to mitigate, if not remove, the strains of separation. People maintained family ties despite distance. Of necessity the kind of assistance given changed with distance but letters, visits and shared holidays maintained contacts. Letters became vitally important to a sense of maintaining family ties, but could not replace regular personal interaction with family members.[74] New Zealanders were highly literate, and the number of letters extant in New Zealand reveals that families made an effort to maintain contact with kin despite the 19,000 kilometres between New Zealand and Britain.[75] The unique quality of kin relationships is that, unlike occupational or community

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[71] F. Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford: a trilogy,* Oxford University Press, London, 1975 (first published 1954), passim.

[72] Fred Pawsey, 12.2.96, p.4.

[73] Gwen Jones, 18.11.96, p.2.

[74] Fairburn notes the importance of the colonial letter which allowed 'settlers to live vicariously in a community'. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies,* p.201.

[75] Olssen and Levesque, 'Towards a History of the European Family in New Zealand', in Peggy Koopman-Boyden, *Families in New Zealand Society,* Methuen, Wellington, 1978, p.7.

relationships, they can be maintained over distance and through time. Associations weaken but connections remain.

New Zealand families faced greater separation by distance than did British families. Less than half lived in close geographical proximity to kin compared to over two-thirds of British interviewees (see Fig 17). Over two-thirds of the New Zealand families had relations living in the same province and some had relations in neighbouring provinces, which made contact easier. Many interviewees talked about exchanging visits and holidays with relatives. These visits were an important part of childhood leisure and figure prominently in memory. Kevin McNeil recalled impressing his town cousins by riding a horse bare-back.[76] Sometimes only a few family members lived in the same province, meaning that local family networks were not extensive. Cook Strait formed the greatest barrier and few families could afford to cross it to visit relatives.

Families maintained ties over distance, however. The Ryans were too poor and isolated to visit relatives (except on one occasion) but when Thomas went to boarding school in Auckland his relations looked after him, and had him to stay during term holidays. Uncle Pat meant a great deal to Tom and he 'made a point of making sure I met all my relations'. Thomas still keeps in touch with his relatives because of these introductions.[77] Kin ties might seem tenuous but they could be resurrected when necessary. British interviewees also talked about spending holidays with relatives, although they mentioned this less frequently (see previous chapter), often because all their relations lived nearby. So it would seem that family holidays were an important strategy to maintain relationships when distance resulted in infrequent contact. The extended family seems to have had a greater association with leisure in New Zealand than in Britain.

Recent migrants naturally had weaker networks, though many had emigrated with relatives or as part of a chain migration system. Sometimes migratory ties were tenuous; John Partridge migrated to New Zealand 'because immigration was in the air', but went to Canterbury because some distant members of the family had settled there years before. When he married he became incorporated into his wife's family network. Only the Wicks and the Tworts migrated independently. The Wicks left because of lack of opportunity in England. 'They realised that there was no way they could afford to marry in London so my father applied for a position . . . as an indent agent.' They eventually settled in Invercargill and prospered. Later 'my widowed aunt had come to live in New Zealand and she became our housekeeper'. She lived with them for three months before acquiring her own home.[78] The Wicks were more isolated as a result of this separation from family, but such isolation does not seem to have been usual. Other families either migrated with kin (see Trembath and

[76]Kevin McNeil, 15.6.95, p.12.
[77] Thomas Ryan, 24.4.95, p.19.
[78] Joan Wicks, 24.1.95, pp.1-3.

Margaret Anderson's relatives.

Margaret explained that she felt much more at home with the Irish children

Sissie's daughter, London, c.1930s.

Bessie's family in Belfast, 1931

Courtesy of Margaret Anderson.

Goodyear family trees) or because family members who had migrated urged them to join them. Ivy Anderson explained that her father's parents lived in New Zealand 'and that was how Dad come to come out here. His parents wanted him to come to New Zealand, saying that NEW ZEALAND WAS PAVED WITH GOLD, and you know what a wonderful life for his family if he brought us out here'. Unfortunately he came out just before the Depression, which she thought, 'ruined everything for him and his family'.[79] Migration meant a drop in status and income for her family. These family stories provide an interesting insight into the reasons and processes of migration, and the way in which people maintained family ties. [80]

Wealthier families were not as circumscribed by geographical distance and could afford to travel and keep in touch with kin. The better-off could even travel back to Europe. Flora Goodyear travelled to England three years after the death of her husband, hoping to get assistance from his family there. Her attempt was unsuccessful but her visit rejuvenated family relationships that had been carefully maintained in letters over generations. Until her death she wrote to relations in Scotland and England, a tradition that her son has maintained. The Andersons also returned to England and Ireland to visit their relations there. Margaret preferred her Irish (Protestant) relatives because her English cousins were very snobbish, 'but in Ireland they were pretty haphazard and pretty happy go lucky, which was much easier, that was quite fun'.[81] The ability to be able to return and visit kin revealed them to be more prosperous than most other New Zealanders. Poorer families managed to have some holidays with kin but would never be able to visit relations in their home country.

II

Functions of kinship

Economic ties, as well as emotional bonds, linked kin together. Families relied on nearby kin for companionship and assistance in times of need, 'a reserve account to be drawn upon as the need arose'.[82] Money or resources are passed through kin groups. Women and children, as the previous extract from Gwen Jones reveals, were a central part of the exchange of resources. Janet Finch observes that even when men acknowledged their responsibilities they often relied on their wives fulfilling their kinship obligations.[83] Toynbee suggests that 'as a result of the acceleration of industrial capitalism in New Zealand, men became increasingly divorced from economic relationships with kin, leaving kinship largely the

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[79] Ivy Anderson, 25.5.95, p.1. The family obviously associated New Zealand with a fall of status and income, although they might have been affected by the Depression in England.

[80] A Preston woman explained that one of her uncles migrated to Australia, Mrs B.2.P, p.17.

[81] Margaret Anderson, 14.10.94, p.20.

[82] Reay, *Microhistories,* pp.168. Cressy, 'Kinship and kin interaction in early modern England', *Past and Present,* 1986, quoted in Reay, *Microhistories,* p.169.

[83] Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* p.40.

domain of women'.[84] Women lay at the heart of most kinship networks; they kept in touch with family members, extended aid and looked after children.[85] One Lancashire interviewee explained that 'I was very much part of my mother's wider family in those early years'.[86] But children were also a vital, and often overlooked, part of these networks. Grandparents or aunts and uncles often gave assistance because of their grandchildren, or nephews and nieces, and children also acted as assistants. Like Gwen, they visited elderly relatives, ran messages, or did other 'jobs' for their families.

Finch identified six forms of economic assistance between kin: pooling resources (as is the case in a family business); transfers of money; or gifts in kind, from person to person; inheritance; assistance in finding work or after migration; and sharing accommodation (co-residence).[87] Why do kin help each other? Some historians have argued that economic support involved an exchange of resources, and people expected to have benefits returned. Roberts suggests that the majority of family members helped each altruistically.[88] While it seems likely that people did not expect 'tit for tat', forces other than sheer altruism must have prompted economic assistance. Kinship assistance must acted as a form of insurance against future hardship. Families also believed that the maintenance of family status was important. In wealthier families money usually flows from older to younger generations in order to ensure that the younger generation maintain a lifestyle similar to that of the previous generation.[89] Among poorer people help from relatives could make the difference between survival and disaster. Failure to give assistance may have also resulted in social stigma. Such sanctions probably operated more powerfully in the more enclosed world of small old world communities. Gwen Jones described their overwhelming fear of the workhouse:

> You could go to the workhouse if things got too bad, you didn't let your relatives go to the workhouse, if you could help it. *Why was that? Was it a terrible place or was there a stigma attached to it?* There was a stigma attached to it and it was a terrible place . . . People like my mother who was only a relative by marriage would be affected by the fact that this person had had to go into the workhouse. My mother used to spend any amount of time weeping for people who had to go - she used to think it was the worst thing that could happen.[90]

People regarded economic assistance from kin as natural so it did not invoke the terrible

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[84]Toynbee, *Her Work and his,* p.133.

[85]Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.183.

[86]Mr B91, pp.5, 19.

[87]Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* pp.15-25.

[88]Roberts, *A Woman's Place,* p.179. Strathern suggests that 'Between kin reciprocity is more diffuse, and not dependent upon immediate return, nor even upon any return at all'. Strathern, p.127.

[89]Finch, *Family Obligations and Social Change,* p.16.

[90]Gwen Jones, 18.11.95, p.7.

social judgement of charity. No New Zealand equivalent of the workhouse existed but the interviews with Irene Rylance depict the stigma and shame that recipients of charity suffered here.

Kinship played a much more important role in economic life earlier this century. The extent of the economic assistance suggested here belongs firmly to the world before the welfare state.[91] It is possible that the Depression intensified the community spirit, and encouraged assistance to kin. David Moore gave an example of transfer of money from one generation to the other. In this case his uncle helped support an elderly and widowed mother:

> In those days there was no social security. Her youngest son was with her - my uncle Tom - until he married, he was in his twenties, early twenties I suppose. What he brought home and shared with her helped to support her, also she kept hens and sold eggs. She got - eggs were sold at ha'penny each . . . It wasn't much but her rent was about 17s6d I think . . . I remember my other uncle - she had two sons - my uncle Jim, he worked in the freezing works, and I remember her saying to me one day at the weekend, I think they got paid on a Friday night, he would always come in and he would put half a crown . . . up on the mantelpiece for her. I remember her saying - she was very religious old Presbyterian - and she would say "Oh the Lord's good to me, he's been good to me", and this half crown that meant a lot, it helped her to pay her rent.[92]

He recalled his mother explaining to him that they could not afford to give the same level of support to his grandmother. Family expectations and pressures reinforced the sense of kinship obligations.

The story of the Fords is a classic story of social mobility and inter-generational assistance. Jack's maternal grandparents owned a baker's business in Timaru and were reasonably prosperous. The children stayed there frequently, and Jack commented, 'we were very keen to get to the baker's shop and see the bread all being baked and pulled out of the ovens'. The Lanes helped the family in many ways, they gave them free bread, paid bills, and eventually helped their son-in-law to achieve his dream of owning a farm. They made sure that their daughter and grandchildren maintained their social status.[93] When Mr Ford experienced financial difficulties during the Depression 'the only reason why we could sell our wheat was through our grandfather who was a baker in Timaru and he said to the milling company "If you don't buy Harry Ford's wheat . . . he said I won't buy your flour, so he sold our wheat for us, and a lot of other people couldn't sell their wheat'. Jack believed that his

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[91] The welfare state role introduced by the first Labour government (1935-40) partially eroded the importance of kinship (as did the later establishment of the Welfare State in Britain). Toynbee, *Her work and his,* p.105. See Tony Simpson, *The Sugarbag Years*, Penguin, New Zealand, 1990, passim.

[92] David Moore, 17.5.95, p.19.

[93] Jack's older brother eventually took over the bakery business.

grandparents 'helped us a lot and that sort of kept us all together'.[94]

Family assistance served two purposes: kin helped each other, but also maintained family standing and respectability. It involved a certain degree of control, which is revealed by these stories. For instance, in the chapter on leisure Jack commented that his father and his brothers did not drink because of his grandparents' standing in the community. It is likely that the family's financial dependence on the Lanes enforced this standard of behaviour. The element of social control becomes explicit in the Chapman family. Anna Chapman's grandfather enticed his son back from an attempt at share milking in the North Island with a promise of a farm. He used financial resources to retain control over his son's life. Anna's grandfather 'was a Scotty and very canny'. A muted conflict between father and son shaped the family background. John Chapman fell in love with Muriel Anderson and wanted to marry her. 'He was 28, old enough to know his own mind but in those days he did as father said. He went home and said to his father he wanted to get married and his father said "no, you've got to stay here". He was cheap labour.' John objected. 'He'd saved up in those days £800, which today is small money but in those days was big money so he was determined to get married, so he married my mother and drew a farm way up in Morrinsville in the North Island'.[95] In 1921 John's father promised to buy him a farm if he would return to the South Island, so the family moved back to the Chapman farm at Westmere. They remained there for three years before they were given a 1200 acre farm. This patriarchal control dominated the family and for those three years the children were virtually brought up by their grandparents.

Parents gave considerable assistance to their adult children but siblings were also important. Adult sisters, especially, gave each other very valuable support.[96] Many but not all kinship services required geographical proximity. Clothes or money were sent around the country and relatives took children for holidays. If they could not take care of children regularly they were prepared to look after for them for several weeks at a time. This type of support had a definite economic component since feeding children eased parents' financial burdens.

Sometimes assistance led to exploitation. The sense of mutual aid and reciprocity broke down. Families resented too great an imposition on their resources. Mrs Jones disliked two of her husband's brothers because they helped themselves to food or tools. One of the brothers' wives, Lil, 'an enormous woman, she was part-Samoan I think now looking back, and she always sat on two kitchen chairs, one cheek on each chair' also borrowed frequently. '"Jean can you lend me a pot of jam, have you got any tea I could borrow, have you made any butter lately." She was always on the cadge, but Uncle Alec was so easy going there was

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[94]Jack Ford, 4.10.94, p.2, 21.3.95, p.14.
[95]Anna Chapman, 12.12.94, p.1.
[96]Roberts, *A Woman's Place*, p.178.

never any money and she had a whole raft of starving kids'.[97] When they moved away from Templeton they had little contact with these relations. On the other hand they did not mind helping deserving relatives. One of Mrs Jones' younger sisters had a husband on a relief scheme during the Depression. Mrs Jones sent them food:

> Time and time again Auntie Millie would be sitting there thinking "Now what are we going to have for dinner". She'd look in the cupboards they'd be empty, there'd be nothing, and the whistle'd go and that would be the postman and she'd know there'd be a letter card from Mum . . . We had a greengrocer at Dunsandel who'd come in [to Christchurch] on a Thursday to buy his weekend vegetables and he always garaged his van at a certain garage. And the letter card would tell Auntie to send the boys round to the garage with their dobbin because there'd be a big basket of food. Mum would send in eggs and butter and milk, if she had any meat spare she'd put that in too, often, and any vegetables that Mum had that they didn't have.[98]

She gave food without any expectation of immediate return.[99]

Sometimes kin failed in their obligations. Steve Harris recalled that his mother's relations promised to look after her when her husband died. But when she had to move from Days Bay to a remote house in Happy Valley, on the other side of Wellington, contacts diminished. She did not have money to visit them, and they could not afford to visit her often.

Kin were a rich and usually reliable source of economic and social support. Although distance may have reduced the extensiveness of assistance given, people still fulfilled their obligations to kin. Failure to give support or assistance to kin seems to have been rare. These factors diminish the seemingly extensive difference between kin in New Zealand and England.

Kinship also gave children a sense of place and status in the community. This occurred more strongly in England where a perception existed that one's place in society had been settled by birth. A middle class resident of Barrow explained that his mother's family were all business people:

> The butcher's business was carried on by mother's eldest brother, the oldest member of the family. And then the next brother had a business in town, men's clothiers in town, in Friargate. One of my aunts had a grocer's business, just by where we lived, they were the two cousins I went to school with. And my youngest aunt was married to a mineral water maker. So she had in her the small business background.

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[97] Millie Jones, 10.9.96, p.17.

[98] Millie Jones, 17.9.96, p.28.

[99] ibid, 6.9.96, p.11. Mr Jones also took care of his senile father every Sunday. They gave him dinner and Millie had to trot around the yard and make sure that he did not stray.

So I can imagine that she [mother] wanted to have a shop.[100]

Such certainties existed less strongly in New Zealand despite a strong tendency for people to marry within their social and religious milieu. Nevertheless kin provided examples of aspiration, as in the above description and in cases such as Millie Jones of Canterbury. She explained that her eldest sister from an early age wanted to be a school teacher. On closer investigation it emerged that her aunt was also a school teacher. Kin, as well as parents, taught values associated with the family. Margaret Anderson's grandmother attempted to teach the proper deportment, Frances's Denniston's grandmother the Southland value of 'being a good little worker', while an uncle provided a strong role model for Dennis Kemp and his brother.

Kinship provided mixed messages of aspiration and social placing as well, especially in New Zealand. Many New Zealand families seemed to have a greater range of rich and poor, respectable and rough, than English families. Millie Jones explained that some of her father's large family had done well and some were poor. A paternal uncle became a politician and he made it clear that they did not have the social status to meet him as equals. 'You didn't go to Auntie Mary's uninvited, and Uncle Dave [politician] was the same.'[101] The Sully family in England experienced an even deeper gulf between rich and poor family members. Mr Sully established a successful business and liked to socialise with people from a higher social background. Ray explained that his father was a social climber and 'a bit of a snob' and would not meet his own brother because he was ashamed of his background.[102] Sociologists have suggested that the middle class ethos of personal achievement leaves little room for devotion to one's family of origin.[103] If that family of origin does not live up to the expectations of the socially mobile, kin ties can atrophy.

As well as involving geographical proximity and economic ties, kinship had an emotional component. Both New Zealand and British interviewees frequently discussed grandparents, and commented on their importance in their lives as children. This is a far more subjective category, since it depended on my questions (and I became more interested in kinship as I interviewed), and how people recollected their youth. The most common significant relationship seems to have been with grandmothers often (but not always) maternal grandmothers. This may be because grandmothers were more likely to survive long enough to make an impression on their grandchildren. Even if such relations were not perceived as vitally important, the existence of kin gave a sense of belonging and stability to the interviewees as children. Dennis Kemp recalled his great-grandmother, a fascinating and

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[100]Mr B3B, p.18.
[101]Millie Jones, 10.9.96, p.17.
[102]R.Sully, 4.2.96.
[103]Young & Wilmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*, p.141.

The Allison children with their Methodist grandparents. They were a big influence on the family and John was very fond of them. John is at the extreme left. Courtesy of John Allison.

charismatic figure, as very important in his youth. They spent a lot of time together when he went to Napier, so she told him many family stories. 'I was perhaps one of her favourite mokopunas and she was a great story teller.'[104] Grandmothers influenced their granddaughters and often reinforced gender roles. Frances Denniston recalled her grandmother showing her how to polish floors. 'My grandmother got me to put polish on, but I didn't do it right, she got down beside me and showed me how to polish it, the floor'. She explained 'she was a great influence on my life'.[105] Grandfathers are mentioned less frequently. Children seemed reasonably fond of grandfathers but they often died too early to make a deep impression. Mada Bastings was one exception to this. Her grandfather took them on outings to the St Clair baths and she enthused 'he taught us to dive and swim there, he was a wonderful grandfather'.[106] Although British interviewees had greater access to kin, the importance placed upon grandparents in New Zealand and Britain seemed roughly equal. Grandparents helped to bring up children, they introduced them to ideas, and provided role models for children.

Uncles and aunts provided another group of adults that children could draw upon. Although from the same generation as parents, uncles and aunts did not need to discipline children and provided a less fraught alternative to parents. They gave children companionship, advice and security. Their presence added greatly to the richness of family relationships.[107] Toynbee suggests that the importance of uncles and aunts may have declined in this period due to the simple demographic reality of the shrinking family. In New Zealand and England, Wales and Scotland, birth rates had been falling steadily since the 1880s. This may have had a negative effect on children since 'single aunts and uncles have spare time, love and money to lavish on close members of family.'[108] For example, Dennis regarded his father's brother, uncle Tom, as important since he 'was full of fun' and 'quite a character' whereas his own father tended to be a rather serious man.[109] The parents' marriage cohort (date when parents' married) was obviously influential since those children whose parents were older and had been married earlier were statistically more likely to come from large

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[104] Dennis Kemp, 29.5.94, pp.2-3. Mary Trembath recalled 'I loved my old grandma', although they did not see each other frequently since her family lived in a remote farm on the Hauraki Plains and her grandmother lived in Auckland. Mary stayed with her grandparents when she was eight, and then sixteen, although her grandparents visited them. Mary Trembath, 2.1.97, p.12.

[105] F.Denniston, 6.4.90, quoted in Goodyear, 'Black Boots and Pinafores', p.149. Also telephone conversation with Frances Denniston, 1.5.97.

[106] Mada Bastings, 13.9.94, p.1.

[107] It must be added that these relationships can have a negative side since research into child abuse also suggests that family friends and uncles (and perhaps aunts) can be abusers of children. No interviewee mentioned this form of abuse. One man did tell me about a local man paying him and his brother (as small children) to follow him into a field, where he promptly urinated in front of them. They told their father and he went and 'sorted the man out'. Conversation with D. Kemp, 20.4.97. A man attacked another interviewee outside a dance hall when she was eighteen. He received a week's jail for attempted rape.

[108] Toynbee, *Her work and his*, p.27.

[109] Dennis Kemp, 9.8.95, p.27, 29.5.94, p.1.