

Emigration and Kinship

MIGRANTS TO NEW PLYMOUTH 1840-1843¹

IN HIS path-breaking and controversial article, 'Local Community or Atomized Society? The Social Structure of Nineteenth Century New Zealand', published in this journal in 1982, Miles Fairburn argued that historians knew 'next to nothing about attitudes to kinship' among European colonists. He went on to make the point that even if 'in theory blood had been thicker than water', colonists had few chances to benefit from kin ties. The newness of European settlement, he argued, meant that few three-generation families had time to develop in the nineteenth century and the high rate and selective process of immigration had injected into localities 'a large number of kinless individuals'. Just how many kinless individuals had come to New Zealand was unknown for,

1 The information in this article has been derived from a series of sources which I have used to reconstitute the migrant families. I began with the lists of the first six emigrant ships to New Plymouth. These lists gave me the names and ages of passengers, although the *William Bryan* list included only the names of men. These lists are in the Taranaki Museum and the National Archives. From there I wanted to go to parish registers and the 1841 census but was not certain where to start. Fortunately St. Mary's Church in New Plymouth holds a 'Church Register of Male Population 1842-1844' in which the clergyman of the day, probably the Reverend William Bolland, entered the names of all males in the settlement professing to be members of the Church of England, along with the parish of their baptism and marriage. Apart from the problems of a Lincolnshire man trying to understand the dialects of Cornishmen and Devonians, which made for some interesting spellings of place names, this register was invaluable in giving me a guide to places of origin. My first step was to construct a form suitable to my purposes on which the data I had on names of migrants, ages, places of origin and names of children were entered. From this I went to the International Genealogists Index, to parish records and to the 1841 census to verify or to supplement my information. Much of this work was actually done in England, where I received the help of county record offices and members of Family History Societies. I also had access to the remarkable collection of family histories and genealogical details in the files of the Taranaki Museum, and, for a later project, I have had access to the St. Mary's Birth, Death and Marriage Registers and to the Justice Department Birth, Death and Marriage Registers. The latter sources have provided the occasional piece of information useful in this research. Descendants of Taranaki migrants, too numerous to thank here personally, have also been most generous with information. If I can help any of them I am willing to do so.

In doing this work I have had to learn how genealogists work and I am grateful for help from the Taranaki Genealogical Society and especially Mrs Merla Baylis. I would also like to thank Mary Reid of the Taranaki Museum, Marjorie McConachie, the Archivist at St. Mary's Church, Mrs Hanson of the Justice Department, Mr Eric Yates of the Devon Family History Society and Mrs Irene Ivall of the Cornwall Family History Society.

I would also like to thank Jan Kelly of the Geography Department, University of Auckland, for drawing the maps.

as Fairburn said, 'unfortunately research on immigrants has neglected their demographic composition'. A large number of colonial men, however, he argued, would have to remain kinless for, with a shortage of women, they would never be able to marry.²

The 'kinless individual' is crucial to the picture of society presented in Fairburn's expanded study, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*.³ The lack of kin can be seen as the root cause of much of the loneliness, anti-social behaviour and chaos that Fairburn argues characterized the nineteenth-century frontier. Fairburn is still not sure how many nineteenth-century settlers were kinless, suggesting 'that most newcomers came alone or as members of their immediate families and thus left most of their blood and affinal relationships behind'.⁴ This suggestion is probably correct; it is the case with most European migrant groups. Yet it remains to be demonstrated, and Fairburn's reasons for making it are not convincing. He points out that there were 'only about a dozen' communities in New Zealand where a whole village, or a segment of a whole village, voyaged and settled together.⁵ Such migration, however, is unusual in British colonies of settlement and might be used instead to argue for a relatively high level of kinship rather than a low one. Pieces of statistical evidence, for instance about the proportion of men in the population, are indicators towards Fairburn's argument but need a great deal more analysis before his conclusion can be sustained. In other cases the statistics cannot bear the weight of the interpretation. The fact that in 1901 only 4% of women aged 50 and over were born in New Zealand tells us nothing about the number of grandmothers in the country or the number of women who had access to 'traditions' about child care. The 'biological' history of the colonial population had provided enough time for women migrants from the 1840s to the 1880s to become grandmothers.⁶

Historians have already begun the more detailed study of immigrant groups that Fairburn called for in 1982. Maureen Molloy has worked on the Scottish settlers to Waipu, Rosalind McClean on Scottish emigration generally and Charlotte Macdonald has studied the assisted single women migrants of the 1850s and 1860s.⁷ Nevertheless much work has to be carried out before we can even partially understand the meaning of kinship to nineteenth-century New Zealand settlers. In an article reflecting on the last hundred years of writing New Zealand history published in 1990, Jock Phillips claimed, 'We cannot under-

2 *New Zealand Journal of History* (NZJH), 16, 2 (1982), p.149.

3 Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies. The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900*, Auckland, 1989.

4 *ibid.*, p.165.

5 *ibid.*

6 *ibid.*, pp.166-7.

7 Maureen Molloy, *Those Who Speak to the Heart: Family and Community at Waipu 1853-1920*, Palmerston North, 1991; Charlotte Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character. Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-century New Zealand*, Wellington, 1990; Rosalind McClean's work was undertaken for the PhD degree at the University of Edinburgh.

stand what made New Zealand different unless we understand the habits and values of those who came here. We need to trace who those people were and where they came from.⁸ In an earlier article on the settlement of New Plymouth I focused on the habits and the values of the people.⁹ I did not trace their origins, accepting the frequently repeated statements that New Plymouth was largely peopled from the south-west of England, mainly from Devon, Cornwall and Dorset. Here I want to look at the origins of some of these people. I want to trace where they came from and who they were; I seek to establish patterns of kinship and their 'demographic composition'.

Another reason for this study is to take issue with Fairburn's comment that *The Ideal Society* 'neglects the 1840s to offset the undue historical attention given to the Wakefield settlements. The author contends that these were untypical of colonial society and that any influence they exercised was swamped by social transformations from the 1850s onwards.'¹⁰ There are a number of problems with this cavalier dismissal of the 1840s in a book on nineteenth-century settler society. First the essential themes of the Arcadia Fairburn identifies owe much to the emigration propaganda and rhetoric of that decade, as indeed they owe much to such rhetoric in general and not just to the New Zealand version of it. If the aspirations of Arcadia were established in the 1840s the society that produced them surely merits inclusion. Second, rather than the Wakefield settlements receiving an 'undue historical attention' in recent years, I would argue that historians have been so turned off by Wakefield, the New Zealand Company and its associates, as to almost write them out of New Zealand history. It is true that late nineteenth and early twentieth-century historians such as W.P. Reeves, A.J. Harrop, A.W. Shrimpton and Alan E. Mulgan, writing in the brighter, better Britain mode, placed a considerable emphasis on Wakefield. But with the 1950s revisions of John Miller and Michael Turnbull, Wakefield fell out of favour.¹¹ In his *History of New Zealand*, Keith Sinclair went to pains to establish the number of settlers who came to New Zealand in Company ships, to argue that they were a majority of the population only in the 1840s and that New Zealand 'was settled in a hundred ways'.¹² By the time the *Oxford History of New Zealand* was published in 1981 Wakefield as a colonizer and 'the Wakefield settlers' had virtually vanished. In my view this is a pity because the way New Zealand was populated by Europeans in the 1840s was and is one of its distinctive

8 Jock Phillips, 'Of Verandahs and Fish and Chips and Footie on Saturday Afternoon. Reflections on 100 Years of New Zealand Historiography', NZJH, 24, 2 (1990), p.133. Similar statements were made by Erik Olssen and Rosalind McClean at the Christchurch conference of the New Zealand Historical Association held in May 1991.

9 'Popular Protest in Early New Plymouth: Why Did it Occur?', NZJH, 20, 1 (1986), pp.3-26.

10 *The Ideal Society*, p.15.

11 John Miller, *Early Victorian New Zealand. A Study of Racial Tension and Social Attitudes 1839-1852*, London, 1958; Michael Turnbull, *The New Zealand Bubble; the Wakefield Theory in Practice*, Wellington, 1959.

12 First edition, Harmondsworth, 1959, pp.96-7.

historical events. Settlers from that period, in powerful positions thirty years later, conceived immigration policies in the context of rekindling the spirit of the 1840s.¹³ Third, Fairburn has contended that the Wakefield settlements were 'untypical of colonial society' but produces no evidence to show that they were untypical of anything. Until work is done on these and later settlements we cannot make such sweeping claims.

Between 19 November 1840 and 3 September 1842 six ships left Plymouth harbour carrying emigrants to New Plymouth. This migration was organized initially by the Plymouth Company, established as an auxiliary of the New Zealand Company, and then by the New Zealand Company.¹⁴ The Plymouth Company had been set up with the idea of tapping the migrant pool of the southwest counties which Thomas Woolcombe, the New Zealand Company agent in Plymouth, had already shown to be a good recruiting source.¹⁵

The six ships carried a total of 1012 passengers: 896 men, women and children in the steerage as 'emigrants'; 19 intermediate and 97 cabin passengers, or, in the terms of the day 'colonists'. Most of these migrants were landed at New Plymouth, although two ships, the *Oriental* and the *Blenheim* also called at Wellington. Several of the cabin and intermediate passengers of the *Oriental* had chosen Wellington as their destination and some of the steerage passengers were also disembarked there because of the state of their health.

Steerage passengers to New Plymouth came predominantly from Cornwall and Devon as can be seen from Table 1, which indicates the county of origin of steerage families. Smaller groups came from Dorset and Somerset with a sprinkling from other counties. Of 12 cabin families settling in New Plymouth between 1841 and 1843, five were from Devon, two from London and one from Dorset.

Single men and women, both steerage and cabin, are more difficult to trace than families. However, in cases where the county of origin is known, all the single men and women who travelled as steerage passengers came from the four major recruiting counties or from London. Single cabin passengers tended to come from Devon or London, but there were some single men, for instance George and Edwin St. George, the illegitimate sons of George Durant, owner of Tong Castle in Shropshire, who came from further afield.

It is not enough, however, to say that migrants came in the main from four counties. Devon and Cornwall, in particular, were large counties with significant local variations in economic and social structure. To pinpoint the county of origin does not reveal all about the kind of background of the migrants, nor does

13 William Fox, *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, 1870, vol. 7, pp.391, 395.

14 See Dalziel, 'Popular Protest', p.5; R.G. Wood, *From Plymouth to New Plymouth*, Wellington, 1959, p.29.

15 T. Woolcombe to J. Ward, 19 June, 22, 29 August, 3 September 1839, Colonial Office 208/1/33, 208/2/867, 871, 874; Minutes of Committees, 1837-40, 12 July 1839, C.O. 208/185, pp.184-5.

Table 1

COUNTY OF ORIGIN OF STEERAGE FAMILIES TO
NEW PLYMOUTH 1840-1843

County	<i>William Bryan</i>	<i>Amelia Thompson</i>	<i>Oriental</i>	<i>Timandra</i>	<i>Blenheim</i>	<i>Essex</i>	Total	%
Cornwall	7	15	7	11	10	16	66	39
Devon	12	12	9	8	4	4	49	29
Dorset	-	-	4	12	1	-	17	10
Somerset	2	-	3	3	1	-	9	5
Southampton	-	-	1	-	4	1	6	4
Middlesex	1	-	-	2	-	-	3	2
Other	-	3	1	-	1	-	5	3
Unknown	-	3	4	1	2	4	14	8
Total	22	33	29	37	23	25	169	100

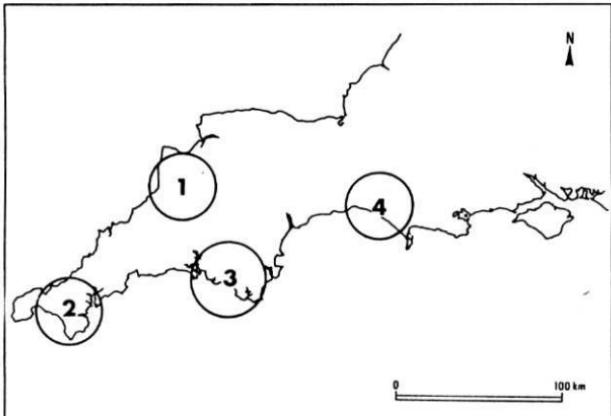
it tell us if they were a random collection of people from all over the county, largely unknown to each other, or from specific areas with much more in common. When the place of origin is located more precisely through parish registers and the 1841 British census returns, it is clear that there were four major recruiting areas in Cornwall, Devon and Dorset, and one of these makes a nonsense of the county division.

The Plymouth Company had a policy of recruiting immigrants from a small number of villages so that 'instead of being torn from their friends and relations they will find, instead of regret at leaving their native village, the pleasure of improving their circumstances among their own village friends and relations'.¹⁶ The accompanying maps show how successful the Company was in doing this.

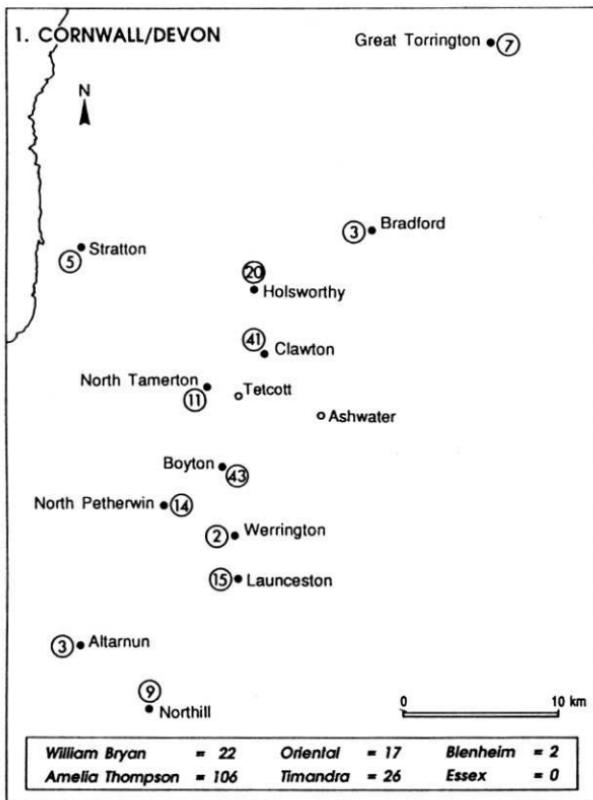
The first major recruiting area was the farming region straddling the northern border of Devon and Cornwall. This region was dominated by two market towns about ten miles apart. Holsworthy in Devon had a population of about 1900 in 1841 and was considered by a contemporary gazetteer to be 'an inconsiderable place, the houses being mean in appearance, and the inhabitants chiefly employed in agricultural pursuits, the working of some free-stone quarries in the neighbourhood, and the manufacture of serge to a trifling extent'.¹⁷ It was the home of Henry King, a retired naval officer turned coal, sand and timber merchant, in his late fifties, who was to become the 'chief commissioner' for the Plymouth Company and the leader of the migrants. Launceston, the other market town, was slightly larger. Only recently superseded as the capital of Cornwall, it was dominated by the hill-top ruins of a thirteenth-century castle and linked by

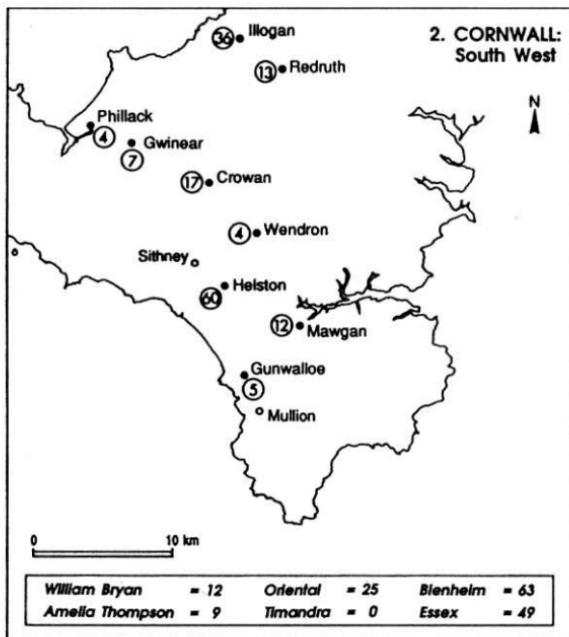
16 *Plymouth Journal*, 5 November 1840.

17 Robson's *London and Western Counties Directory for 1838*, London, 1838, pp.142-3.

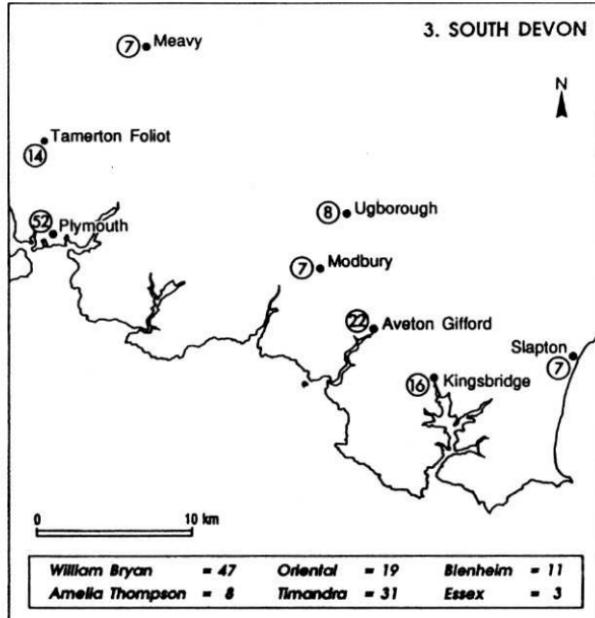


Map 1 Areas of major recruitment of New Plymouth migrants 1840–1843

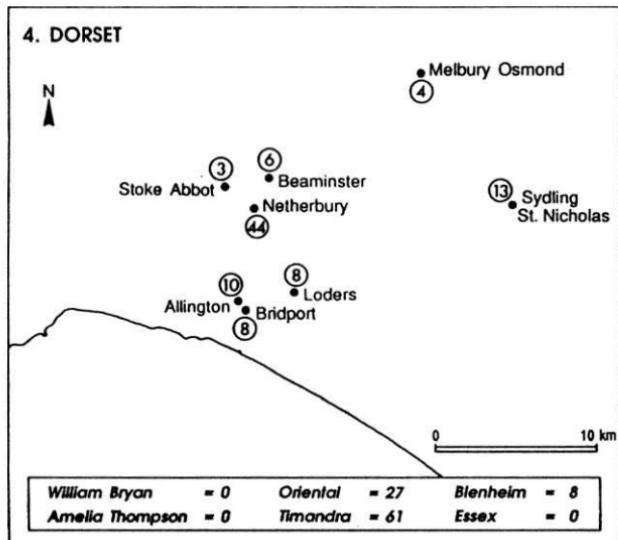
Maps 2-5 Number of migrants from towns and villages in major recruiting areas
Number of migrants per ship from each area



Map 3



Map 4



Map 5

a medieval footbridge across the River Kensey, to the separate village of St. Stephens. The two towns were surrounded by many small villages of between 100 and 1000 people, mainly agricultural labourers and their families. It was a poor farming region, working cold yellow clay lands. The land around one of these villages, Clawton, was so heavy that there was a local saying that 'The Devil was clogged in Clawmoor'.¹⁸ The families of the area had usually lived there for generations, but they were not firmly anchored in one village. Tenant farmers moved from farm to farm, as did agricultural workers. Marriage and baptismal registers show a pattern of intermarriage and migration between villages, particularly between an interlocking group of villages and hamlets, Tetcott, Clawton, Ashwater, Boyton (which was divided between Devon and Cornwall by the Tamar River boundary), North Tamerton and North Petherwin.

There were economic reasons why families might wish to leave this region but there was also a specific connection between the villagers and the Plymouth Company. One of the largest local land owners was the Molesworth family, the head of which, Sir William Molesworth, was a principal promoter and shareholder of the Company. The vicar of Ashwater, who also served at Clawton, was the Reverend Paul Molesworth. Whether Molesworth personally encouraged the migration of his own tenant farmers and their workers, and if so for what reasons, is not known, but certainly this is an area where he had influence and where knowledge of his connection with the New Plymouth enterprise would have been significant.

18 W.G. Hoskins, *Old Devon*, Newton Abbot, 1966, p.369.

At least 33 steerage families came from this area, 23 of them sailing on the *Amelia Thompson*, which also took Henry and Mary Ann King to New Plymouth. This ship carried the largest contingent of farmers and agricultural labourers. Among them were three Bayly brothers and their families, described as yeomen and agricultural labourers, from the village of Clawton. From the same village came John Veale with his wife and grown-up family. From the town of Holsworthy came Elizabeth and Josiah Hoskin, with his brother Arthur and his wife, and a single brother Peter. Their father, Josiah, was a local wheelwright and the brothers followed the trades of cooper, shoemaker and sawyer. Also from Holsworthy was John Medland, King's head clerk, with his wife Grace. Medland's brother, Edwin, had already sailed on the *William Bryan* and his nephew, John Shepherd, accompanied him. After the *Amelia Thompson* there was still a small trickle of families from this area, but the main exodus had occurred.

The second major recruiting area was the south of Cornwall with its large tin and copper mining towns, surrounded by farming villages. Twenty-seven families came from this region, 21 of them from the towns of Helston, Redruth and Illogan. Helston, with a population of some 3500, sent 11 families, five of whom were neighbours in one street and three who lived near each other in a street close by. These towns accounted for most of the miners who came to New Plymouth, although they also sent agricultural workers. Again some of these migrants had a pattern of moving around their area. Richard Julian was living in Helston in 1841 but he had been baptized 48 years before in the village of Mawgan, and married Elizabeth White from Sithney. Most of their children were baptized in Helston but Richard was cited as being of Helston in 1819 and 1826, Mawgan in 1821, and Wendron in 1828, 1833 and 1837. The Cornish migrants from the south, travelled together on three ships, the *Oriental*, the *Blenheim* and the *Essex*. Their large numbers on the *Essex*, the last ship to leave, probably reflect both the drying up of farming migrants and the hopes of the Company that New Plymouth would yield rich lodes of minerals.

The third recruiting area surrounded the port of Plymouth. Plymouth was a large sprawling town with a population of 70,000 in 1841. In addition to having the port and naval base nearby, it was a manufacturing town with soap and starch factories, a sugar refinery and distilleries, and a market town with large cattle, corn and fish markets. By 1841 the town had over-run the once separate villages of Devonport, Stoke and East Stonehouse.¹⁹

Eleven steerage families can be traced definitely to Plymouth and its suburbs. Six of these families travelled on the first two ships to leave for the settlement. However the circumstances of their migration suggest that it was planned rather than casual or chance migration simply because migrants resided in the port town. James Shaw, a shipwright living in Stoke Damerel with his second wife

19 Robson's *Directory*.

Jane, sailed on the *Amelia Thompson* with his six children, another son being born at sea. Shaw's oldest son, also James, had gone ahead of the family in the *William Bryan*. Among other Plymouth migrant groups were inter-connected families, and families related to men in the survey party which had preceded the emigrant ships.

Several cabin passengers came from Plymouth, including George Cutfield, brother of Mrs King, and Charles Brown and his son, Charles, who was to become Superintendent of the province of Taranaki. Brown senior had lived just outside Plymouth since 1836 and had come to know Thomas Woolcombe through their membership of the Plymouth Institute.²⁰ The five sons of Lieutenant Colonel H.H.W. Aubrey, cousins of Molesworth, also emigrated to New Plymouth. Harcourt Aubrey, the oldest, was a member of the survey party, and his four brothers followed him later.

Migrants also came from a zone of agricultural villages round Plymouth and in particular from the area known as the South Hams. This was a fertile farming area and emigration to New Zealand was not heavy. Usually a single family left a village except for Aveton Gifford which sent three families. Most of the South Hams migrants travelled on the *Timandra*, a ship which predominantly drew its passengers from Dorset.

The Dorset recruiting area lay in the west of the county not far from the Devonshire/Dorset border. All of the Dorset families came from a narrow wedge of the county running from the coastal rope-making town of Bridport north to Stoke Abbot and across to Sydling St. Nicholas in the east. Most of these people sailed on the *Timandra*, led by the land purchaser Josiah Flight and his wife Ann. The Flights lived in the tiny village of Sydling St. Nicholas and left England because their investments in the flax industry had failed, leaving them virtually penniless. They were able to come to New Zealand because Ann Flight's family, the Devenishes, provided money for land purchases. Ann's unmarried brother and sister accompanied them and her mother was to join them later.²¹

The steerage families came from Bridport and the villages to the north. The village of Netherbury contributed the largest number. The first to leave were William Pattimore, a limeburner in his thirties, with his wife and their four children, his sister Eliza, her husband and their family of seven. They sailed on the *Oriental*, preceding another five Netherbury families who went on the *Timandra*. These families were probably among the poorest of all those who went to New Plymouth. One couple, with three of their children, were residents of the Netherbury Workhouse at the time of the 1841 census; two of the other breadwinners were agricultural labourers, one a flax worker and one a shoemaker.

20 E.H. McCormick, *The Friend of Keats. A Life of Charles Armitage Brown*, Wellington, 1989, p.177.

21 Handwritten notes, December 1854, William Devenish papers, Taranaki Museum, MS 087/0.

Two-thirds of those steerage families whose origins are known came from these four areas. Of the remainder there are other smaller concentrations. For instance, a third of the Somerset families came from the village of Martock and the Cornish village of St. Just in Roseland sent four families on the *Timandra*. The remainder had lived scattered around these counties or came from outside them.

Most of the migrants travelling to New Plymouth were members of families. Tables 2 and 3 show the breakdown of passengers according to class of passage and family status. Of all steerage passengers, 59% were members of nuclear families, 37% were members of extended families and only 4% were without any kin in the first six ships. In the cabins 48% of travellers were members of nuclear families, 29% members of extended families and 23% without any kin.²²

TABLE 2
STEERAGE PASSENGERS TO NEW PLYMOUTH 1840-1843

	Married		Widow(er)		Unmarried Children over 14		Children under 14		Single Men		Single Women		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	William Bryan	21	21	0	1	10	9	39	28	12	0	82	59	
Amelia Thompson	33	33	0	0	3	8	38	31	7	3	81	75		
Oriental	24	24	3	2	16	11	47	39	7	1	97	77		
Timandra	37	37	0	0	9	9	59	42	4	5	109	93		
Blenheim	23	23	0	0	8	5	23	23	1	4	55	55		
Essex	23	23	1	1	10	10	17	20	5	3	56	57		
Totals	161	161	4	4	56	52	223	183	36	16	480	416		

TABLE 3
CABIN AND INTERMEDIATE PASSENGERS TO NEW PLYMOUTH, 1840-1843

	Married		Widow(er)		Unmarried Children over 14		Children under 14		Single Men		Single Women		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	William Bryan	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	5	1	
Amelia Thompson	5	5	2	0	0	0	6	1	9	2	22	8		
Oriental	2	2	1	0	0	0	6	0	5	0	14	2		
Timandra	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	5	4		
Blenheim	6	6	0	1	0	2	5	8	10	2	29	19		
Essex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0		
Totals	16	16	3	1	0	2	17	10	41	5	77	34		

22 These statistics, if anything, underestimate the percentage of people in extended family groups. Only positively proven relationships have been included. Eleven of the single men without kin travelling as cabin or intermediate passengers were destined for Wellington but are included here.

Migration with family members, as expected and encouraged by the Company, was the norm. However it was far from the case that all families were composed of young couples and one or two children, the Company's preferred profile. Migration to New Plymouth included families at every stage of the life cycle. Table 4 shows the marriage cohorts among steerage couples. The oldest and longest married steerage couple were William and Jenefer George from Helston. They gave their ages to the Company as 50 and 49 but William was in fact at least 58 and Jenefer 57. They had married in 1808 and were accompanied to New Plymouth by four adult children, one son among them married. Another daughter was to join them 17 years later. Jenefer George had long completed her family, as had several other women — Grace Lye married in 1813, Elizabeth Gollop married in 1816 and Elizabeth Putt married in 1817.

TABLE 4
MARRIAGE COHORTS AMONG STEERAGE PASSENGERS TO
NEW PLYMOUTH 1840-1843

Cohort	Number	Percentage
1805-9	2	1
1810-14	3	2
1815-19	11	7
1820-24	14	8
1825-29	21	12
1830-34	36	21
1835-39	27	16
1840-	38	22
Multiple	3	2
Unknown	14	8
Total	169	

Fifty-seven couples had married between 1825 and 1834 and most were in the middle of their family cycle. By 1840 such a family might have as many as seven children, as did the Olivers and Rundles, and rarely fewer than four. For those married after 1835, usually still under 30 when they migrated, and with, at the most, two or three children, the main part of their family was to be born in New Zealand.

It is difficult to know whether migration plans are a spur to marriage or whether the reverse is the case. Of married couples in the steerage on these ships, 36 were married between the beginning of 1840 and the time of their departure. Ten couples married within two months of leaving England. William Lumsden and Emma Strong of Plymouth cut it finest, marrying only four days before the *Oriental* set sail. There are three patterns among the recently married. One is of older children, usually daughters, of a family which has decided to migrate, who married shortly before the family sailed. Presumably these are cases where the

young couple were forced to make up their minds or be parted. Another is of a group of young newly marrieds, siblings or friends, who migrated together. The third, the largest, is of young people for whom marriage and migration coincided, offering the chance to make a new start, or the incentive to look for new jobs. These young couples left kin behind.

Although the Company had an age limit of 40 for free passage eligibility, it would break this rule for married couples who were accompanied by adult children. This made it possible for a number of three generational families to migrate and allowed for a complex set of extended family groups on board some ships. Ten married couples, three widows and one widower had married children on the same ship they travelled on, and Valentine Harrison's married son followed him a couple of ships later.

The largest extended family travelled on the *Amelia Thompson* and focused on John and Hannah Veale. The Veales, both in their mid-fifties, had lived in and around Clawton all of their lives. John had always been a farm worker or a tenant farmer. They had married in Clawton in 1807 and had nine children, the last born in 1826. Six of these children accompanied them to New Plymouth. The oldest two girls, Ann and Elizabeth, were married to Richard Rundle and Thomas Oxenham. Between them they had ten children. Three children remained in Devon although one, John, came to New Plymouth with his family in 1854. Also on board with the Veales were Hannah's nephew, William Paynter, with his wife and child, and Richard Rundle's sister, her husband and their five children. This kin group included 30 people and constituted 19% of the *Amelia Thompson*'s steerage passengers.

A three generational cabin family was headed by James Pickford Smart and his wife Mary, from Colyton. The Smarts were accompanied by Mary's daughter from her first marriage, now married to Robert Parris, and Ann, their own daughter, married to William Palmer Murch, four other children and three grandchildren. An extended family of this size was rare among cabin passengers.

Of the parents on board with married children, two-thirds had grandchildren. Thirty-three children had grandparents travel to New Plymouth with them. And it is worth remarking that over 20% of migrants' children were 14 or older when they sailed. Many of these were to marry in the first decade of settlement. Three generational families became quite common in the 1840s and 1850s. It is also noteworthy that women became grandmothers at an early age in the mid-nineteenth century, as early as today. All the grandmothers aboard these ships were in their forties when their first grandchild was born. As their daughters married in the new colony, women became grandmothers to huge numbers of children. Elizabeth Julian, for instance, had eight children who survived to marry and at the time of her death in 1873 had more than 100 grandchildren.²³ The number of people who had access to the experience of a mother or mother-in-law

23 Madge Malcolm, *The Julian Jigsaw*, Inglewood, n.d. [c.1988].

depended not on the proportion of women over a certain age in the population but on the number of married children such women had.

Another common form of kinship group occurred when brothers and sisters emigrated together, either with their spouses and children, or when a single brother or sister accompanied a married couple. Sibling exchange, that is two or more individuals in one family marrying into another, appears in seven cases. Perhaps the most interesting example is of three Metherell sisters, who married three Bayly brothers. Thomas, William and James Bayly were the sons of John and Ann Bayly, a family that had farmed for years around Tetcott and Clawton. Susanna, Elizabeth and Grace Metherell were the daughters of Roger and Priscilla Metherell, who farmed at Ashwater. The marriages of the three couples took place between 1830 and 1839 and all three families, with their nine children, sailed on the *Amelia Thompson*. The Baylys were later joined by their sister Jane, married to Thomas Penwarden, a member of another old Clawton family. The other cases of sibling exchange involved two Cornish brothers, Nicholas and Richard Knuckey who married Zenobia and Jane Odgers and the two daughters of Philbert Roberts who, when their parents decided to go to New Plymouth, married Charles and Henry Rowe.

Groups of siblings, however, were more common than this. Amongst married couples and single adults travelling without their parents there were 61 individuals who are definitely known to have been accompanied by brothers and/or sisters. These included groups of up to four from one family, as in the case of Bryant, Philip, Jane and Martha Vercoe from St. Just in Roseland. It was fairly common among steerage passengers for a single person to accompany a married brother or sister but there are no cases of groups of unmarried brothers and sisters travelling without a connection to a married couple. Among cabin passengers this was quite different for there are the cases of the Aubrey brothers, the two St. Georges, William and Henry Halse and John and Sydney Wright, all travelling without family connection other than to each other.²⁴ Among married couples travelling with parents there were 16 individuals who had siblings, usually several, aboard the same ship. These sibling groups formed the basis of kin connections in the colony. Perhaps particularly important is the fact that not only did a considerable number of adults have brothers and sisters they could turn to but children had aunts and uncles. Nearly 30% of the children under 14 had aunts and uncles and some had young cousins in addition.

24 These young men perhaps are good examples of the havoc young single men could wreak. On 23 March 1843 William Halse was 'examined before the Magistrates for enticing away the Wife of a native'; on 2 July 1843 Alexander Aubrey beat up William Searancke for an alleged relationship between Aubrey's Maori wife and Searancke; on 8 March 1847 an illegitimate child was 'sworn on Mr Arcourt Richard Aubrey'. The Wright brothers, too, who were nephews of a former New Zealand company agent in New Plymouth, could not settle and were shipped off to Wellington. Diary of John Newland, Taranaki Museum, MS 016/0; J. Wicksteed to W. Wakefield, 2 July 1843, Confidential Correspondence of the Plymouth Company, Taranaki Museum, MS 072/0.

To travel as a nuclear family did not necessarily mean that the family lacked support. It is clear that friends and neighbours made decisions to migrate together. Friendship can be proven in the case of Edmund George and Josiah Millstead, for Edmund was the witness at Josiah's marriage to Susannah Beaglehole just before they all left on the *Blenheim*. John Prout and James Marsh were unrelated but their families lived on the same street in Netherbury before migrating to New Plymouth. It is unlikely that the Jeffrey and Kestle families sailing on the *Essex* would not have known each other, living only a stone's throw apart in the Cornish village Lanlivery. The same is true of the Davies, Georges and Moyles all living in Meneage Street in Helston.

TABLE 5
SIZE OF STEERAGE FAMILIES, 1840-1843

Number of children	Number of families	% of families
0	33	19
1	24	14
2	27	16
3	19	11
4	17	10
5	18	11
6	16	9
7	9	5
8	2	1
9	2	1
10	2	1
11	1	.5
12	1	.5
Total families	171	

The families that came to New Plymouth ranged in size from one to twelve children at the time the ships departed. Table 5 sets out the spread of families among steerage passengers, including two families where the parents travelled as intermediate and the children in the steerage on the same ship. It can be seen that the largest single group, 33 families, had no children at all. Most of these were recently married couples and five of the women gave birth to their first child during the sea voyage. If these families are subtracted, the average family size at the time of departure was three children and the median was also three. These figures of course do not tell us about total family size, even of completed families, for children could be left behind in England. They also provide an inadequate picture of fertility because of high infant mortality rates. It is hoped to follow this study by one on fertility and reproduction.

Although nearly half the married couples had two or fewer children nearly

40% had four or more and 74% of the children were in families of this size. The largest families were composite families put together from two marriages. When Susanna Sole and Edward Foreman married in Kent in February 1838 it was the second marriage for each of them. Richard had six children ranging in age from two to 14 and Susanna had eight between the ages of six and 20. They brought 12 of these children to New Zealand, causing an extraordinary amount of confusion in the records as to which surname belonged to which child.

The Argle family from Redruth was also a composite family. William Argle, a copper miner, had four children and Mary Rogers seven when they married in 1840. Mary's eldest daughter was married to Richard Langman and had three children. All of the men in the family were miners and the 1841 census showed that 15 year-old Eliza Rogers and three 10 year-olds, Richard Argle, Henry and Fanny Rogers, were working as ore dressers in the copper industry. The whole family came to New Plymouth on the *Blenheim*. A lack of work drove them all, except the Langmans, away within a few years.

Among these emigrants were some genuinely kinless individuals. Twenty-seven men and eight women who travelled steerage appear not to have any kin in the migrant group. For the cabin passengers the figures are 26 men and one woman. Twenty-three of these single people, 19 men and four women, are known to have married within the first decade of settlement and thus entered into established families or started their own. At least one who did not marry, 38 year-old Enoch Bailey, lived Fairburn's atomized life. He died within two months of arrival 'from paralysis brought on by excessive drinking'.²⁵ It seems likely that others who did not find partners drifted away from the settlement fairly soon.

A study of the demographic structure of a migrant group should ideally cover ages and occupation as well as geographical origins, marital status, kinship and family size. I prefer in this study to let family size speak for age. The ages of migrants, as listed on ships' lists, are notoriously inaccurate. The New Zealand Company's rule about maximum age was an incentive to obscure this information, if indeed it was accurately known. There is a haziness about age in the nineteenth century which often cannot be precisely corrected by access to parish registers which record the date of baptism rather than the date of birth. The migrants who left for New Plymouth after the 1841 census could give their ages as five or six years apart within a space of some 18 months.

Occupation too is slippery. The major occupation of male migrants over 15 years old, as listed on ships' registers, was agricultural labourer. Some 86 men gave their occupations as agricultural labourer or simply 'labourer'. A further ten stated they were in allied occupations, farmers, bailiffs, or shepherds and seven were gardeners. However the preference of the Company for agricultural workers encouraged reporting of this kind. Charles and Henry Rowe described

25 Extract from Journal of George Cutfield, 23 May 1841, enclosed in T. Woolcombe to New Zealand Company, C.O. 208/27.

themselves to Company agents as agricultural labourers, but when they were married only a couple of months before leaving Devon, their wedding certificates stated that they were gentlemen. Their father was a captain in the Royal Navy so it seems certain that their farming skills were recently acquired, if they had them at all. William Richards, a Cornish railway labourer, became an agricultural labourer and Simon Andrew, a weaver, became a gardener for the sake of a free passage. Rural craftsmen — sawyers, coopers, blacksmiths, limeburners and the like - were fairly numerous and nearly 10% of the total male immigrants were described as carpenters. The Cornish migrants included 18 tin and copper miners. The rest of the group consisted of shoemakers, bakers, builders, shipwrights, wheelwrights, a malster and a surprising five tailors. Few women gave occupations and of those that did most were domestic servants, with a few farm servants, two sempstresses and two straw plaiters.

Of course an analysis of this kind does not tell us how family and kin ties operated in the colonial context. The question of attitudes towards kinship is still very much an open one. Some possible interpretations however do suggest themselves. Migrating families included children in their twenties and thirties. Such families clearly regarded their kin bonds as functional and strong. Brothers and sisters migrated together often enough to conclude that they too saw positive advantages from remaining in a family group. Extended kin groups tended to be the ones who stayed in New Plymouth. Nuclear families predominate among those who disappear from the record in the first decade of settlement. It might be suggested that families departed because they were more ambitious, but I do not think that was necessarily the case. An extended kin group could help adjustment to the new land and could provide economic and emotional support. The stability of a settlement was provided by a core of families, in this case inter-related in a complex set of ways.

An analysis of one set of migrants cannot prove or disprove Fairburn's assertions about the nature of New Zealand society. What I would argue, however, is that the study of aggregate statistics and data, as in *The Ideal Society*, conceals as much as it reveals. It is essential that historians look at the people behind the figures, if they are to understand the meaning of the figures. Although this group of New Plymouth migrants consisted of only just over 1000 people, within 20 years the youngest of them was old enough to marry and their rate of multiplication was truly terrifying. They cannot be written off as insignificant in establishing social patterns. The aggregate data does not allow us even to begin exploring the kinship structure of New Zealand.

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