

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**'Of course you had to keep the cake tins full': Pakeha women
and afternoon tea from 1930-50**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of
M Phil
in
Visual and Material Culture
at Massey University, Wellington
New Zealand.

by
Megan Watson

2011

Abstract

This thesis contributes to an understanding of female Pakeha cultural history through the study of an important social occasion: afternoon tea. It explores afternoon teas hosted in homes around the Manawatu from 1930-1950, through oral interviews, archival and object-based research, arguing that it was a performance of contemporary female identity as well as a social occasion. Certain items of material culture were ubiquitous: fine china tea sets, embroidered linen, baking and finely sliced bread, and these items demonstrate the critical importance women placed on cooking, cleaning and their own creativity.

Overall this case study reveals that Pakeha culture is a hybrid one, and through the examination of decorative motifs on tea sets and table linen, and contemporary cake and biscuit recipes, understandings of contemporary cultural influences are drawn out. The key influences discussed are English, Scottish, Irish and, to a lesser extent, Danish, although the influence of American popular culture is also apparent. As well as the practices of contemporary femininity and creativity, and the influence of different cultural mores, this thesis shows how class distinctions were also in play in rural Manawatu at this time, and how they were apparent at afternoon tea. The period chosen also allows for an examination of how wider economic and social events – poverty during the 1930s Depression and rationing during the World War Two – affected preparations for and the taking of afternoon tea. This research also shows the varying degrees different sectors of society were affected by these events.

The study of afternoon tea adds important dimensions to our understanding of the wider historical discourses on gender, class, and Pakeha cultural identities and makes a valuable contribution to women's history by emphasising the ubiquitous, but largely undocumented

activities of women's domestic lives. Additionally, this thesis demonstrates the fresh perspectives that can be gained by using a wide range of sources, such as material culture, cookery books, oral narratives and contemporary periodicals.

Acknowledgements

They say it takes a village to raise a child; it seems it also takes a village to write a thesis. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the many people who assisted me with this research project. My main supervisor Bronwyn Labrum has provided unfailing support, encouragement and guidance throughout this journey. My co-supervisor Patrick Laviolette gave this thesis the kick start it needed. My research would not have been possible without the fifteen wonderful women who gave up their time to be interviewed about Afternoon Tea. Approval to conduct these interviews was granted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. I would not have been able to find these oral narrators without the help of Laura Hudson and Cindy Lilburn and I would not have been able to visit these women without the help of my brother Geoffrey Watson and his wife Haklyka who cheerfully drove me to various locations around the Manawatu. My thanks also go to the helpful staff at Te Manawa, National Library and the Wellington City Library. I am indebted to Joanne Andrews for her help transcribing the interviews, to Faye Drawneek for editing the first draft and to Wendy Robinson who gave the whole thing a final proof. Thanks must also be given to College of Creative Art's Academic Administrator Teresa Hartley for her forbearance, and assistance with last minute queries. To my dad Ian Watson, my sister Catherine Watson and the rest of my family and all of my friends, but especially Debbie Armstrong, Jo Lewis, Sarah Lilley, Anne-Marie Rowe and Krystal Waine, who cheered me on when the going got tough I owe a huge thank you. My mum, Patsy Watson, deserves a special mention for enduring weekly Masters rants. Finally I would like to thank Dave Mulholland, for his patience, support and for keeping the home fires burning and the cake tins full.

Table of Contents

Abstract		ii
Acknowledgements		iv
List of Figures		vi
List of Tables		vii
Introduction		1
Chapter One	About Afternoon Tea	26
Chapter Two	Afternoon Tea and Identity: Femininity, Domesticity and Class	46
Chapter Three	Pakeha Culture and Afternoon Tea	75
Chapter Four	“There Mightn’t Be Money About, But the Cows were still In, and the Hens still Laying:” The Depression and Afternoon Tea	98
Chapter Five	Keeping the Tins Full Against All Odds: World War Two and Afternoon Tea	113
Conclusion		147
Bibliography		157

List of Figures

		Page
Figure 1	Shamrock detail on embroidered Irish linen supper cloth	82
Figure 2	Belleek china tea cup	82
Figure 3	Bambi detail from supper cloth	85
Figure 4	Poppy and aster detail on embroidered supper cloth	88
Figure 5	Daffodil detail on embroidered supper cloth	88
Figure 6	Primrose tea set	89
Figure 7	Hollyhock tea set	89
Figure 8	Embroidered elephant detail	93
Figure 9	Silver jug, sugar bowl and koruru inspired teaspoons made by Rita's father	94

List of Tables

		Page
Table 1	Average sugar use in cake recipes 1940-1946	130
Table 2	Average white sugar, brown sugar and syrup use in cake recipes 1940-1946	131
Table 3	Sugar quantities in cake recipes in <i>Aunt Daisy</i> .	132
Table 4	Sugar quantities in cake recipes in <i>War Economy</i> .	133
Table 5	Sugar quantities in cake recipes in <i>Truth's</i> .	133
Table 6	Average numbers of eggs in cake recipes 1940-1946.	135
Table 7	Numbers of egg used in cake recipes in <i>Aunt Daisy</i> .	136
Table 8	Numbers of egg used in cake recipes in <i>War Economy</i> .	137
Table 9	Numbers of egg used in cake recipes in <i>Truth's</i> .	137
Table 10	Average quantities of butter used in cake recipes 1940-1946.	139
Table 11	Quantities of butter used in cake recipes in <i>Aunt Daisy</i> .	140
Table 12	Quantities of butter used in cake recipes in <i>War Economy</i> .	140
Table 13	Quantities of butter used in cake recipes in <i>Truth's</i> .	141

Introduction

The first thing I learnt when I began this project, was that there was afternoon tea and there was Afternoon Tea. The lower-case version was the mid-afternoon snack between the midday and evening meal. This was an informal, family-only meal, which might be taken at the table, or might be consumed out on the verandah. As Eileen, one of my informants, remembers, “if it was just us, mum and ourselves, we would have afternoon teas sitting on the porch in the sun.”¹ Usually a cloth was laid, but this was plain and practical as was the china. Home baking from the tins would be put out, and of course, tea would be sipped. When visitors came, however, this meal was transformed into Afternoon Tea. The best china, silver and table linen were set out and the most delicious baking was served. In the words of Lois, another of my informants, “people would put out their very best to impress.”²

In this thesis I focus on this second type of Afternoon Tea, because these were significant social occasions for women in the 1930s and 1940s. Recent works in New Zealand food history, gender history and textile history have each noted that Afternoon Tea was an important social event for New Zealand women in the first half of the twentieth century.³ Indeed, according to a 1930 issue of *N.Z. Truth*, “Afternoon tea is the basis of social life for women of the Dominion.”⁴ As my informant Rita told me, Afternoon Tea was important for housewives because it was “a real skill really because they stayed at home, that was their careers and when they

¹ Eileen, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

² Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

³ Helen Leach, *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2008), 87; Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 114; Rosemary McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s* (Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 147.

⁴ “Art of Afternoon Tea,” *N.Z. Truth*, October 16, 1930, 22, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

had guests around they were showing off their skills and their embroidery, they took real pride in these things.”⁵ However, despite numerous brief mentions, no substantial research, either popular or academic, has been published specifically on this important social occasion.

This thesis explores Afternoon Tea hosted in private houses in the Manawatu region of the North Island of New Zealand between 1930 and 1950. My topic forms part of the history of women in New Zealand, of which a number of important studies have appeared in the last three decades. Two key movements prompted an investigation of women’s history; the social history movement and the feminist movement. The social history movement, through its engagement with those excluded from traditional historical study, helped to legitimise women’s history as an academic discipline.⁶ The feminist movement of the late 1960s and 1970s prompted feminist history with its impetus to write women’s experience into the historical record and to challenge the overwhelming characterisation of men’s experiences as the norm.⁷ Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie outline four areas of focus in New Zealand women’s history: party politics and suffragists; biography; women as autonomous agents examined through such topics as immigration and women’s organisations; and the placing and re-evaluation of the role of women in established historical narratives.⁸ This last area focuses on the oppression of women, particularly as objects of state and medical intervention.⁹

⁵ Rita, interview with the author, August 24, 2009.

⁶ Paula S. Fass, “Cultural History/Social History: Some Reflections on a Continuing Dialogue,” *Journal of Social History* 37, no.1 (Fall 2003): 41.

⁷ Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, “Situating Gender,” in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 5.

⁸ Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, “Introduction,” in *The Gendered Kiwi*, eds. Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 8-9

⁹ Daley and Montgomerie, “Introduction,” 9.

Looking broadly at the types of research into New Zealand women's history suggests areas which might benefit from further investigation. Research into party politics, suffragists, women's organisations and women as objects of state and medical intervention explores aspects of women's lives that intersect with the public domain. Although biographies may record private aspects of a woman's life, many of the biographies cited by Daley and Montgomerie tell the stories of women who were actors in the public realm.¹⁰ There is a lack of research into the lives of ordinary women in the private and domestic arena.

Sally Parker's exploration of rural women living in the Waikato during the 1950s does examine the roles of ordinary women and their contribution to the farm economy through the domestic tasks they performed.¹¹ Her work provides a useful model for this kind of research. She analyses a mix of oral histories and contemporary journals and newspapers read by rural women at the time to get a picture of the lives of such women. The conclusions of her study disrupt the orthodox view that the technological and scientific advances of the 1950s improved the lot of the farming community as a whole. Instead she shows that women were slow to benefit from these advances: farm finances went first to farm goods, and only second to farm houses. Parker notes that little research has been done on the lives of farm women.¹² While her focus is on the 1950s, there is also

¹⁰ For Example: Judith Devaliant, *Kate Sheppard, A Biography : The Fight for Women's Votes in New Zealand, The Life of the Woman Who Led the Struggle* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1992); Judith Devaliant, *Elizabeth Yates : The First Lady Mayor in the British Empire* (Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 1996); David Gee, *My Dear Girl: A Biography of Elizabeth McCombs, New Zealand's First Woman Member of Parliament, and Her Husband, James McCombs, Member of Parliament for Lyttelton for Twenty Years* (Christchurch : TreeHouse, 1993); Lynley Hood, *Minnie Dean : Her Life and Crimes* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1994). See Daley and Montgomerie, *The Gendered Kiwi*, 8, 14.

¹¹ Sally Parker, "A Golden Decade? Farm Women in the 1950s," in *Women in History 2*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Charlotte MacDonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 205-224.

¹²Parker, "A Golden Decade," 205.

a lack of research on women in the home in the previous decades of the 1930s and 1940s.

In *The Women's War: New Zealand Women 1939-1945* Deborah Montgomerie explores understandings of femininity during World War Two. Montgomerie found that, despite the entry of large numbers of women into paid workforce during World War Two, the home was still seen as a woman's proper place. According to Montgomerie, "Marriage and motherhood were indivisible components of mid-twentieth century New Zealanders' understanding of mature womanhood."¹³ *The Women's War* is an invaluable source of information about perceptions of the place of women in the 1940s society but it focuses on women in the paid workforce, not on women's work as housewives, which, as I discuss in chapter two, was a key role for women of this era.

There have been several popular histories that discuss the domestic life of women in the twentieth century. Two noteworthy examples are Eve Ebbett's *Victoria's Daughters* and *Inside Stories: A History of the New Zealand Housewife 1890 – 1975* by Frances Walsh.¹⁴ *Victoria's Daughters* is based on interviews with men and women from around New Zealand who lived through the nineteen-thirties. Ebbett's account gives colourful detail about this era and includes information about the day to day life of women, such as their work as housewives. But her focus is on the "what" of house work, she does not examine the meaning women gave to their work around the home. The recently released *Inside Stories* illustrates the diverse concerns of the housewife's realm: from cleaning, to shopping, to childcare. Based on print media sources, *Inside Stories* provides a good general picture of housewives in New Zealand, but it is not focussed on a

¹³ Deborah Montgomerie, *The Women's War; New Zealand Women 1939-1945*(Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), 127.

¹⁴ Eve Ebbett, *Victoria's Daughters: New Zealand Women of the Thirties* (Wellington: A.H &A.W Reed Ltd, 1981). Frances Walsh, *Inside Stories: A History of the New Zealand Housewife, 1890-1975* (Auckland: Godwit, 2011).

particular era, and because it is draws on print media it gives limited insights into how housewives understood their work and role.

As well as a need for more studies of ordinary women in the domestic realm, and while social history has been an expanding area of research, there are still gaps in New Zealand cultural history. Over ten years ago Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum commented on the paucity of scholarly studies of Pakeha cultural history.¹⁵ They cite Jock Phillips' 1987 research into male culture as a major contributor to Pakeha cultural history. Yet, the lack of corresponding research into female Pakeha cultural history, also noted by Barbara Brookes in 1991, remains.¹⁶ Chapters in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History* and in *The Gendered Kiwi* go some way to remedy this lack. For example, in *Fragments*, Katherine Raine's chapter on the gardens of three colonial women shows how, in creating gardens, women participated in the cultural colonisation of New Zealand.¹⁷ Yet many other aspects of Pakeha female cultural history remain unconsidered, such as the work and rituals surrounding Afternoon Tea.

Further work on gender relations, that concerns both women and men, rather than looking only at women, provides fresh perceptions of Pakeha culture. Feminist history identified that gender was not determined by difference in biological sex, rather it was a social construct.¹⁸ One of the most influential works on gender is Joan Scott's "Gender: A Useful

¹⁵ Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, "Introduction," in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, eds. Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), 3.

¹⁶ Dalley and Labrum, "Introduction," 3; Brookes, Barbara, "Women's History," in *The Future of the Past: Themes in New Zealand History*, eds. Colin Davis and Peter Lineham (Palmerston North: Department of History, Massey University, 1991), 82.

¹⁷ Katherine Raine, "Domesticating the Land: Colonial Women's Gardening," in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, eds. Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), 76-96.

¹⁸ Brookes, Cooper and Law, "Situating Gender," 6.

Category of Historical Analysis.”¹⁹ Scott theorised that because gender is socially constructed, examining the traits attributed to the masculine and feminine genders and the relationship between those genders within a society, at a particular time and place, gives further insight into that society and its power structure.²⁰ Works of note in a New Zealand context are *The Gendered Kiwi*, edited by Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, and Caroline Daley’s *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930*.²¹

Erik Olssen’s chapter on family in *The Gendered Kiwi* is particularly salient to my topic.²² Olssen considers relations between men and women in the family setting between 1840 and 1880. Drawing on sources such as ship records, statutes, court records, letters, biographies and contemporary publications, Olssen concludes that British middle-class Victorian notions of female gender were re-worked in colonial New Zealand. According to Olssen, in a colonial society which consisted largely of family-run farms, gender roles within the family constituted an economic partnership. The man’s role was to make money; the woman’s role was to manage the money wisely. These gender constructions were necessary for colonial society to flourish. As Olssen notes, the English concept of women as ornamental and weak could not be sustained in a society where women were the key to the economic success of the family and so the colony.

¹⁹ Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1986), 1053-1075.

²⁰ Scott, “Gender”, 1055-1056, 1067-1074.

²¹ See Daley and Montgomerie, *The Gendered Kiwi*; Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, eds., *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), Brookes, Cooper and Law, *Sites of Gender*; Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999).

²² Erik Olssen, “Families and the Gendering of European New Zealand in the Colonial Period, 1840 -80,” in *The Gendered Kiwi*, eds. Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 37-62.

Interestingly, Przybysz makes a similar point for colonial North America.²³ Both Olssen and Przybysz restrict their study to the colonial period, prompting the question: what happened next? As towns grew, farms became less isolated, and society urbanised, what happened to constructions of gender?

To some extent, Brookes et al address this question in their collection *Sites of Gender*, which investigates how definitions of masculinity and femininity were accepted, challenged and changed, and how gender operated in southern Dunedin, particularly the borough of Caversham, between 1890 and 1930.²⁴ In the preface, the editors contend that gender cannot be studied in isolation, hence their analysis of it in a particular time and place.²⁵ While in many ways southern Dunedin was typical of urban developments of the time, it was singular in the vigorous support its women gave to the suffrage petition, and the mobilisation of its working men in the Maritime Strike of the 1880s.²⁶ This prompts another question: how did the operation of gender differ in this period in rural, conservative New Zealand?

Caroline Daley examines the small-town Taradale community in a similar period from 1886 to 1930.²⁷ She explores how gender dictated the work one did, the leisure activities one engaged in, and the contributions made to the local economy. Her work draws on both the public record and oral histories. Rather than considering only the activities women and men did,

²³Jane Przybysz, "Quilts and the Colonialization/ Colonization of the American Women," in *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, eds. Katharine Martinez, Kenneth Ames (Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 411 -443.

²⁴ Brookes, Cooper and Law, *Sites of Gender*.

²⁵ Barbara Brookes and Annabel Cooper, "Preface and Acknowledgements," in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), vii.

²⁶ Annabel Cooper, Erik Olssen, Kristen Thomlinson and Robin Law, "The Landscape of Gender Politics: Place, People and Two Gendered Mobilisations," in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 15-49.

²⁷ Daley, *Girls and Women*.

she considers the meanings her subjects ascribed to these activities. By looking at these meanings, Daley builds up fuller picture of what it was to be male or female during this period and how constructions of what it was to be a 'proper woman' changed over the time period. She notes that for older women, keeping the floors scrubbed, the tins full and the clothes pressed was central to their notion of femininity, whereas for younger women who worked outside their own homes, femininity encompassed more than their skill in the domestic sphere.²⁸ But, because of the limits of the time period, she does not examine how the younger women's perceptions of femininity changed once they married and left the workforce (as most did).

Olssen's work on the family and the work of Brookes, Cooper and Law on gender in southern Dunedin both draw on public records for their research.²⁹ As noted above, this leads to a lack of information in their accounts about the experiences of women in the home. While Olssen examines family life, the sources used shows trends at a societal level. The experiences of individual women are used only to illustrate wider societal trends, they are not analysed to reveal the meanings and understandings these women gave to their lives. *Sites of Gender* draws on the vast qualitative and quantitative databases of the Caversham project. In Appendix II, David Hood comments on the importance of using both types of data when examining gender, because gender operates in both the private and public domain.³⁰ But, as the editors note the data that is recorded about women in publicly available quantitative sources provides

²⁸ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 71.

²⁹ Olssen, "Gendering of European New Zealand," 37-62; Brookes, Cooper and Law, *Sites of Gender*.

³⁰ David Hood, "Appendix II, Quantitative and Qualitative Databases of the Caversham Project," in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 362.

limited information, for example electoral roles which classified men by their occupation, listed women only by their marital status from 1905.³¹

As David Hood observes, information about how individuals expressed and understood ideas about themselves, their work, their relationships and their families are best found in qualitative sources such as diaries, letters and oral histories.³² Daley draws on oral histories in her work, giving a more rounded view of the operation of gender in Taradale. Oral histories are valuable source of information not covered in the public record, but they also have their limitations. Brookes, Cooper and Law comment that oral histories are not a direct doorway to the past, but rather they are sources for interpretation, framed as they are by the social and cultural values of the speaker.³³ In addition to this, as Rachel Hurdey states, the information elicited from oral histories is limited by the questions asked and the information the subject chooses to reveal.³⁴ This in turn depends on the relationship established between interviewer and subject.³⁵

It follows that diaries and letters are also influenced by the social and cultural values of the writer and so require interpretation. In his analysis of letters from North American immigrants to friends and family in Great Britain, David Gerber questions the veracity of letters as accounts of daily life.³⁶ Gerber found that immigrants left out from letters parts of their lives

³¹ Brookes, Cooper and Law, "Situating Gender," 6. Similarly, the registrar of births deaths and marriages ignored women's occupations from 1902. Cooper et al., "The Landscape of Gender Politics," 23, 40.

³² Hood, "Appendix II, 362.

³³ Brookes, Cooper and Law, "Situating Gender," 9.

³⁴ Rachel Hurdley, "Dismantling Mantelpieces: Narrating Identities and Materializing Culture in the Home," *Sociology* 40, no.4 (August 2006): 729-30.

³⁵ Hurdley, "Dismantling Mantelpieces," 729-30.

³⁶ David A Gerber, "Acts of Deceiving and Withholding in Immigrant Letters: Personal Identity and Self-Presentation in Personal Correspondence," *Journal of Social History* 39, no.2 (Winter 2005): 315-330.

“too painful or... inconvenient to address truthfully.”³⁷ He examined letters between correspondents unlikely to meet again, making epistolary masquerade more plausible. However one can surmise that similar misrepresentation, if more minor, occurred even in letters between family and friends within New Zealand. Diaries are also problematic. As Bronwyn Labrum notes, the papers kept in the archive tend to be those of educated, upper class women, or publicly important women, again leaving the everyday lives, of middle class and working class women in the dark.³⁸

Scholars of public history in Britain have addressed the limits of traditional historical sources and public archives in investigating the everyday lives of ordinary people, by using the things of everyday life, such as personal collections, place and landscape to reveal aspects of culture and society previously hidden.³⁹ Of particular interest is the approach of Hilda Kean who examines her own family history through family artefacts such as photographs, furniture, and stories passed down through the family. She uses these to provide new understandings of the cultural and social history of the British working class.

In “East End Stories” Kean examines her family history by looking at chairs made by her grandfather, an East End furniture maker.⁴⁰ She considers the chairs in terms of their personal and public meaning. By analysing family photographs of the chairs Kean shows the meaning the chairs held for her grandfather. She reveals the wider cultural meaning of

³⁷ Gerber, “Acts of Deceiving,” 327

³⁸ Bronwyn Labrum, *Women’s History: A Short Guide to Researching and Writing Women’s History in New Zealand* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited, 1993), 51.

³⁹ Hilda Kean, *London Stories: Personal Lives, Public Histories* (London: Rivers Oram Publisher Ltd, 2004); Kean, Hilda. “East End Stories: The Chairs and the Photographs,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6, no. 2 (June 2000):111-127. Hilda Kean, Paul Martin, Sally Morgan eds. *Seeing History: Public History in Britain Now*, (London: Francis Boutle Publishers, 2000).

⁴⁰ Kean, “East End Stories”.

the chairs by looking at the representation of chairs made by East End furniture makers in contemporary visual, documentary and fictional sources. In *London Stories: Personal Lives, Public Histories* Kean combines her own family history as told through material and stories handed down through her family, with the wider social history sourced through public documents recording societal trends and public events of East End London.⁴¹ By contrasting her family stories with those stories told in the public record, Kean brings fresh perspectives to the history of working class London, and in some cases revises the established historical narrative.

The methods employed by Kean address several of the problems raised by the historical approaches outlined earlier. By using family artefacts, Kean illuminates aspects of lives not found in public archives, and gives voice to the individual's experience of everyday life. Critics of cultural history allege that because cultural historians focus on individual experience and scrutinise erratic collections of material, they cannot draw valid conclusions about the demographic from which those individuals come.⁴² These concerns about the validity of cultural history methods are remedied by the approach of Kean. She locates the individuals whose stories she analyses within a particular demographic, and then compares the individual stories with the social and cultural trends of that demographic. Kean derives these social and cultural trends through evaluation of quantitative public records and contemporary visual and literary sources. Kean's approach could be extended and used to examine family artefacts other than those belonging to the researcher, provided sufficient detail can be gleaned from their owners about the personal meanings associated with the artefacts.

⁴¹ Kean, *London Stories*.

⁴² Fass, "Cultural History/Social History," 43-45.

Family artefacts are a form of material culture. Material culture, meaning the objects a society produces and consumes, has been used to obtain understandings of societies since the nineteenth century.⁴³ Material culture was initially used to investigate societies distant in location or time, without voice through lack of written record.⁴⁴ This makes it seem an appropriate source to investigate the lives of those in more modern society left out of the written record, such as ordinary women. Even in modern western societies where comprehensive written records of a society exist, Kenneth Ames argues that material culture provides information about society's agendas and assumptions not expressed verbally or vocally and that it reveals pervasive cultural forces.⁴⁵ Two decades ago Jock Phillips commented on the dearth of research into material life in New Zealand.⁴⁶ Recent work by Bronwyn Labrum, Fiona McKergow and Stephanie Gibson on clothing in New Zealand has addressed this to a certain extent, demonstrating how clothing can reveal changing "social, political and economic contexts."⁴⁷ However there are many other forms of material culture within New Zealand which remain unconsidered.

As I wish to examine the domestic lives of middle-class Pakeha women, domestic artefacts seem the most appropriate forms of material culture to study. Much of the research on the material culture of domestic life is about domestic appliances. Caroline Davidson and Ruth Schwartz Cowan examine how the industrial revolution changed the tools of housework

⁴³ Victor Buchli, ed. *The Material Culture Reader*, (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 2.

⁴⁴ Buchli, *Material Culture Reader*, 4-5.

⁴⁵ Ames, Kenneth. *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992, 3.

⁴⁶ Jock Phillips cited in Fiona McKergow, "Opening the Wardrobe of History: Dress, Artefacts and the Material Life of the 1940's and 1950's," in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, eds. Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), 166.

⁴⁷ Bronwyn Labrum, "Dressing History Up: Introduction," in *Looking Flash: Clothing in Aotearoa New Zealand*, eds. Bronwyn Labrum, Fiona McKergow, and Stephanie Gibson (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007, 11.

and housework itself in Britain and America respectively.⁴⁸ While both make significant contributions to the discourse, they examine the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of housework rather than analysing the artefacts themselves to gain insights into the culture. More recent work explores how domestic appliances reveal notions of gender in contemporary society. Jane Graves and Mark Blythe and Andrew Monk comment on the continued gendering of white-ware in general and washing machines in particular, as female.⁴⁹ This reveals that western society retains notions of gendered divisions of labour within the home. In New Zealand Jean-Marie O’Donnell studied the impact of domestic appliances on domestic work and women’s lives between 1935 and 1956. She found that electrical appliances did not give women more leisure time, rather “housework became more time-consuming as it came to include a wider range of tasks.”⁵⁰ More recently Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes examined changing gender ideology in New Zealand by looking at appliance advertising in New Zealand from 1936-1970.⁵¹ They found that at the start of the period women were characterised as motherly and nurturing and by the end as glamorous and seductive. While both studies examine appliances, their research is based on magazine advertisements for the appliances rather than the appliances themselves or women’s views of them.

⁴⁸ Caroline Davidson, *A Woman’s Work is Never Done: A History of Housework in the British Isles 1650 -1950* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1982); Ruth Swartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

⁴⁹ Jane Graves, “The Washing Machine: Mother’s Not Herself Today,” in *The Gendered Object*, ed. Pat Kirkham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 30-42.; Mark Blythe and Andrew Monk, “Notes Towards an Ethnography of Domestic Technology,” *Proceedings of the Conference on Designing Interactive Systems: Processes, Practices, Methods and Techniques*, New York: ACM Press, 2002, 277-8.

⁵⁰ Jean-Marie O’Donnell, “‘Electric Servants’ and the Science of Housework: Changing Patterns of Domestic Work. 1935-1956,” in *Women in History Two*, eds., Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 168-183.

⁵¹ Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes, “Constructing Homes: Gender and Advertising in *Home and Building*, 1936 -1970,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 33, no.2 (1999): 200- 220.

While there has been little research specifically on Afternoon Tea in New Zealand, there is, however, research published on its constituent parts. Certain specific objects were integral to the performance of Afternoon Tea; fine china, embroidered linen, a silver tea service, and baked goods. Baking, in particular has received considerable attention in the body of work that has emerged on New Zealand's food history.

Most works to date on New Zealand's culinary history examine the changing eating habits of New Zealanders. In *Living in the 20th Century: New Zealand History in Photographs 1900- 1980* Dalley includes a chapter on food in her work which examines everyday New Zealand life through photographs from Archives New Zealand.⁵² However, as Dalley remarks, the public nature of her source means there is a lack of material on private and family life. The broad range of subjects covered means that food is not analysed in depth, although by selecting contrasting photographs, elements of class and gender are drawn out. Dalley looks at how diet has changed through the influence of immigration, cooking appliances, and the growing restaurant and café culture.

Two works from a sociological perspective, by Ian Carter and Angela Maynard, and Ian Carter, and one from a scientific perspective, by Ray Bailey and Mary Earle, also look at changes in the New Zealand diet.⁵³ While the sociological studies deal with historical data, their focus is on what this tells us about New Zealand today. In their 2001 study, Carter and Maynard note that cookbooks tells us much about the concerns and

⁵² Dalley, *Living in the 20th Century*, 212 -241.

⁵³ Ian Carter, "Eternal Recurrence of the Trivially New: Food and Popular Culture," in *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, eds. Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 84-102; Ian Carter and Angela Maynard, "Tell Me What You Eat...," in *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand*, ed. Claudia Bell (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press Limited, 2001), 89-112; Ray Bailey and Mary Earle, *Home Cooking to Takeaways: Changes in Food Consumption in New Zealand During 1880-1990* (Wellington: Royal Society Publishing, 1999).

times in which they were written, but do not examine this in detail.⁵⁴

Bailey and Earle draw on a wide range of cookbooks, and various publicly available, quantitative sources in their broad overview of the changes in diet from the colonial era to the present day. They note the dominance of biscuits and cakes in recipes books prior to 1950 and the importance of Afternoon Tea as a social meal.⁵⁵

The immense contributions of David Burton and Tony Simpson to New Zealand food history are clear. David Burton's *New Zealand Food and Cookery* is the most recent edition of this very useful overview of New Zealand cooking from before European settlement through to the present day, which was first published in 1982.⁵⁶ Tony Simpson's *A Distant Feast: The Origins of New Zealand's Cuisine* traces the origins of New Zealand food from eighteenth century Britain, through to early twentieth century New Zealand.⁵⁷ He explores changing cooking technologies and the internationalisation of food supply as key factors.

Since 2008 several important accounts have been published on New Zealand's culinary history: David Veart's *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking*, Helen Leach's *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History* and the Marsden funded work *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks* edited by Helen Leach.⁵⁸ All three tell the story of our changing society as well as our

⁵⁴ Carter and Maynard, "Tell Me What You Eat..." 95.

⁵⁵ Bailey and Earle, *Home Cooking to Takeaways*, 54, 93, 95.

⁵⁶ David Burton, *David Burton's New Zealand Food and Cookery* (Auckland: David Bateman Ltd, 2009).

⁵⁷ Tony Simpson, *A Distant Feast: The Origins of New Zealand's Cuisine* (Auckland: Godwit, 2008).

⁵⁸ David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008); Leach, *The Pavlova Story*; Helen Leach, ed., *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2010).

changing food habits, and fit into a wider international practice of using cookbooks for scholarly analysis.⁵⁹

David Veart's *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* examines changes in New Zealand cookery from colonial times to the present day.⁶⁰ His account is based on cookbooks and charts the changing influences on New Zealand cookery. In examining cookbooks he looked for pages showing signs of wear to get a sense of which recipes were frequently used.⁶¹ Veart covers a range of topics including how war, depression and the health food movement changed the way New Zealanders ate.⁶² He argues that during the 1920s a seafood focussed cuisine began to emerge, but that a diet heavy in meat and baked goods persisted until the 1960s and 1970s when waves of new migrants came to New Zealand. In 2010 Helen Leach edited a significant contribution to the catalogue of New Zealand's food history; *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks*.⁶³ Using cookbooks to examine New Zealand's culinary history, *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen* covers such themes as the external influences on NZ cookery, the ways cookery knowledge move between generations and the impact of changes in stove technology on methods and recipes.⁶⁴ Both *First Catch Your Weka* and *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen* mention the importance of baking in New Zealand cooking, and Leach goes so far to say that New Zealand women expressed their identity and ingenuity through baking, but neither focuses

⁵⁹ Shirley Teresa Wajda, review of *Eat my Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*, by Janet Theophano; *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, by Jessamyn Neuhaus and *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America* by Laura Shapiro, *Winterthur Portfolio* 42, no. 1(2008):77, accessed October 14, 2010, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/528906>.

⁶⁰ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*.

⁶¹ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 5.

⁶² Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 149-164; 165-184.

⁶³ Leach, *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen*. This book is based on work from a Marsden funded project on "The Development of New Zealand Culinary Traditions."

⁶⁴ Leach, *Kai to Kiwi Kitchen*, 9.

exclusively on this aspect of our cuisine.⁶⁵ Further, while cookbooks are a valuable source of information, they do not tell us how individuals viewed and valued cooking in the past.

The centrality of baking to the identity of New Zealand women is featured in the chapter by Phyllis Herda in Julie Park's edited collection *Ladies a Plate*, which discusses the lives of New Zealand women in the context of anthropological perspectives on gender.⁶⁶ The subjects of the study range in age from over 80 to under 20. Herda states that the well-stocked larder and full cake tins symbolise what it is to be a good New Zealand woman.⁶⁷ However, Herda's work is not a historical work. Although the oldest group of women included in this study were born between 1897 and 1925, Herda does not separate out the recollections of these women from those born later. Moreover the subjects were not interviewed specifically about food. Herda suggests that this would be an interesting and significant area for further research as the women in the study identified and expressed themselves through food.⁶⁸

The most significant piece of research on baking to date is Helen Leach's *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History*, which looks at the evolution of the pavlova in New Zealand.⁶⁹ Her work provides a very useful model for using recipes as a primary source. Leach developed a database of 667 pavlova recipes from over 300 sources. From this database she traces how the deserts named pavlova have evolved over time.

⁶⁵ Leach, *Kai to Kiwi Kitchen*, 61, 67; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 81.

⁶⁶ Phyllis Herda, "Women and Food," in *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women*, ed. Julie Park (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1991), 144-172.

⁶⁷ Herda, "Women and Food," 144.

⁶⁸ Herda, "Women and Food," 144.

⁶⁹ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*. There have also been several cookbooks published in the last few years, which bring together 'heritage' baking recipes from the first half of the twentieth century. See Alexa Johnson, *Ladies a Plate: Traditional Home Baking* (North Shore: Penguin, 2008); Alexa Johnson, *A Second Helping: More from Ladies, a Plate* (North Shore: Penguin, 2009) and Kate Fraser, *Cooking Times: A Culinary Journey Through Kiwi Kitchens from the 1930s to the Present Day* (Auckland: Harper Collins, 2008).

Importantly she notes that the history of the pavlova is not to be found in commercial and trade cookbooks, but rather in fund-raising cookbooks and in the magazines and newspaper food columns that published readers' recipes.⁷⁰ This signals that further research into baking traditions in New Zealand should also use these sources as a starting point.

New Zealand's textile heritage has not received anywhere near the same attention as our food heritage, although textiles, particularly handmade textiles, have been the subject of scholarly enquiry overseas as a means of exploring social and cultural history.⁷¹ In the last six years two important works were published which go some way to addressing the lack of New Zealand textile history research: Bronwyn Labrum, Fiona McKergow and Stephanie Gibson's edited collection *Looking Flash: Clothing in Aotearoa New Zealand* and Rosemary McLeod's *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s - 1950s*.⁷² The latter is of particular relevance to my research into Afternoon Tea.

In *Thrift to Fantasy* McLeod provides a useful survey of the types and themes of women's handicraft in the mid twentieth century. Based on her sizeable collection, McLeod use handicrafts to "tell a story of our identity and our past beliefs" by looking at textile craft artefacts and the images they depict.⁷³ She expands on the information contained in the artefacts by using her own family stories and public sources such as wage records. This composite approach reveals cultural assumptions and the way

⁷⁰ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 166.

⁷¹ See in particular, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of American Myth* (New York: Vintage, 2001) and Beverly Lemire, "Draping the Body and Dressing the Home; The Material Culture of Textiles and Clothes in the Atlantic World," in Karen Harvey, ed., *History and Material Culture; A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, (London: Routledge, 2009) 85-102.

⁷² Bronwyn Labrum, Fiona McKergow and Stephanie Gibson, eds., *Looking Flash: Clothing in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007); Rosemary McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s* (Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005).

⁷³ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 14.

women felt about these assumptions. Because much of her collection comes from shops around the country, in many cases McLeod does not know about the context of a craft work's creation which leads to supposition and speculation about its meanings. This aspect emphasises the advantage of Kean's approach of examining artefacts in the context of personal knowledge of the owner/maker. McLeod's *Thrift to Fantasy* is the only work to date which examines New Zealand handicrafts, leaving considerable scope for further research in this area.

Clothing does not quite fall within the realm of domestic artefacts, yet the approach used by McKergow (2000) to analyse dress in New Zealand in the 1940s and 1950s provides another useful frame for my research.⁷⁴ Her approach also emphasises the useful contribution studying material culture makes to a discipline. Through the study of dress, McKergow discovers cultural values not expressed verbally, leading to a reconsideration of widely held beliefs about New Zealand in the period. McKergow examines the item of dress itself, what the owner of the item recalls about the item, and photographs of the item being owned. She integrates this with an evaluation of portrayals of dress in literature, magazines and advertising to see how society represented that group of items. Her study reveals how dress defined social relationships and gender.

I could not find any New Zealand research that examined the fine bone china tea sets or silver tea services of Afternoon Tea, but as all of the fine bone china and most of the silver used at Afternoon Tea was imported, this is not surprising. New Zealand's Crown Lynn did not start manufacturing china for household use until around 1943 and right up to the end of my study this was sturdy and practical, and therefore not in the

⁷⁴ McKergow, "Opening the Wardrobe."

same category as the fine bone china required for the tea table.⁷⁵ On the subject of china and silver there are various histories of manufacturers, such as Royal Albert and Royal Doulton, as well as collectors' guide books, and in Britain, research is emerging on the meanings conveyed by and attached to china. Two important works in this field are Louise Purbrick's *The Wedding Present* and Moira Vincentelli's *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels*.⁷⁶ Of relevance to my research is the way both works use consumption theory.⁷⁷ In her chapter "Women, Collecting and Display" Vincentelli uses it to explore how women created and expressed identity through collecting porcelain.⁷⁸ In *The Wedding Present* Purbrick argues that wedding gifts do not reveal the identity of the recipient, instead they tell us about the relationship between the giver and the bridal couple.⁷⁹ She also looks at the status which different brands of china bestow on the owner and the giver.⁸⁰

Although existing research on New Zealand baking and handicrafts has looked at items integral to Afternoon Tea, there is no research that examines Afternoon Tea as a whole. Susette Goldsmith's *Tea: A Potted History of Tea in New Zealand* has a promising title, but surprisingly it does not touch on Afternoon Tea parties in people's homes, rather it covers the tea trade, tea in colonial New Zealand and tea drinking in public settings such as tea gardens and tea rooms.⁸¹ Given the gaps I have identified in the literature relevant to my topic, there remains considerable scope for further research about Afternoon Tea. Just as a play cannot be understood

⁷⁵ Valerie Ringer Monk, *Crown Lynn: A New Zealand Icon* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006), 23.

⁷⁶ Louise Purbrick, *The Wedding Present: Domestic Life Beyond Consumption* (England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2007); Moira Vincentelli, *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

⁷⁷ Consumption theorists argue that the items people buy reveal the identity they wish to convey. Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 107.

⁷⁸ Vincentelli, *Women and Ceramics*, 106-131.

⁷⁹ Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 18-19.

⁸⁰ Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 54-61.

⁸¹ Susette Goldsmith, *Tea: A Potted History of Tea in New Zealand* (Auckland: Reed, 2006).

by studying only one character, *Afternoon Tea* cannot be understood by looking only at baking or linen. Baking, linen, china and silver all had a part to play and they must be studied together and in the context of the tea table if we are to understand the performance of *Afternoon Tea*.

Even the existing works on New Zealand's baking and handicrafts are uneven. *The Pavlova Story* focuses on only one food of the tea table and while *First Catch Your Weka* is a very useful reference for baking, because its scope is the whole of New Zealand cookery it does not provide much detail on baking. Likewise *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen* makes only a brief mention of baking.⁸² Similarly, because *Thrift to Fantasy* looks at the whole range of women's handicrafts, it does not go into detail about the table linen of *Afternoon Tea*. Also absent from most of these works are the voices of the women who baked and sewed the items discussed, which leaves considerable gaps in our understanding about how women felt about baking and sewing and the meanings women ascribed to both the process of making objects and the objects they made.

In this review of the historiography connected to my research I have identified the limits of public archives, oral histories and letters in providing information about the individual experiences of ordinary women and the meanings they gave to everyday life. The studies of domestic material culture examined reveal how material culture can uncover aspects of a culture not expressed through words. However, a thing is not a fact.⁸³ The research on material culture shows that to glean the cultural import of artefacts they need to be examined in the context of quantitative and qualitative sources. My review reveals that there is a lack of research on female Pakeha cultural history, and on New Zealand

⁸² Interestingly only Eileen remembered having Pavlova at afternoon tea in the 1930s and 1940s. Those that did mention it said it came later in the 1950s.

⁸³ Sally Morgan, "Heritage Noire: Truth, History and Colonial Anxiety in *The Blair Witch Project*," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7, no.2 (June 2001):138.

material culture. More particularly, the ubiquitous activity of Afternoon Tea – its preparation and consumption – is mentioned but not investigated in any depth.

This thesis focuses on this ubiquitous practice and is based on analysis of oral narratives, contemporary cookbooks, magazines and newspapers, and the linen, china and silverware of Afternoon Tea. My research is driven by the oral narratives I obtained from interviews with fifteen women born between 1915 and 1935 who lived in or around the Manawatu. I found my interview subjects with the help of the Manawatu Historical Society, the Manawatu Embroiders' Guild and through an article published about my research in the local newspaper. I chose the Manawatu because it is an under-researched region and because I had good contacts there to help me to find my informants.

Most of the oral narrators were second or third generation New Zealanders. Ten women were from rural areas and four were from towns. The majority were of English descent, two were of Irish descent, one was of Scottish descent, one was half Samoan and two others were connected to Danish families through marriage. The names of the women I interviewed have been changed to protect their privacy.

I developed a question sheet which I used in each of my interviews. In each interview I asked about the baking, linen, and china of Afternoon Tea and about the rituals and etiquette involved. I used the 1930s Depression and the Second World War as markers to frame the period of my study. Five of the women were interviewed by themselves; sisters Edna and Marge and sisters-in-law Edith and May were interviewed together. Iris's daughter Judy sat with her during the interview. I interviewed Dorothy, Millie, Jean and Jane all together as they lived in the same rest home.

The most dynamic interviews were with those women I interviewed in pairs, as the recollections of one woman would spark the recollections of the other. This led to many tangential discussions, which I initially thought was a drawback, but when I came to analyse the material these tangents proved to be goldmines of insight. Interviewing two women together could have meant that they were less frank than if they were alone. However, this didn't seem to be a factor in my interview with Edith and May; both had quite different views of the past and both quite happily articulated them. My least effective interview was the group interview. One woman dominated the interview and although her comments were valuable, it was difficult to get the other women to speak, even when I questioned them directly. I also had only an hour with these women so the interview was much less detailed than the other interviews which took around two hours. I took photographs of the oral narrators' linen, china, and silver where they were happy for me to do so.

My interviews were recorded and then transcribed. When I analysed the data I paid heed to the cautions of Brookes, Cooper and Law that oral histories are framed by the cultural and social values of the speaker and so are sources for interpretation rather than gateways to the past.⁸⁴ I also tried to factor in Caroline Daley's findings that the women she interviewed presented themselves as home loving, law abiding and religious.⁸⁵ This may have meant that some of my interviewees over emphasised the value they placed on Afternoon Tea, and the style with which it was done, as the presentation was connected to the work of the housewife. I also took into account that, when talking about Afternoon Tea, many of the women were remembering what their mothers did, rather than talking about what they did. Only five of the women I interviewed married during the forties and so were running their own

⁸⁴ Brookes, Cooper and Law, "Situating Gender," 9.

⁸⁵ Caroline Daley, "'He would know but I just have a feeling': Gender and Oral History," *Women's History Review* 7 no.3 (1998):345.

homes for part of the period of my study. Through the interviews, the different personalities of some of my informants emerged. Lois and Eileen were rebels, Nora didn't care for the class system, Marjorie emphasised the correct and proper way of doing things, Edith idealised the past and May spoke about the past as a hard place she didn't want to go back to.

The period of my study was one disrupted by calamitous world events yet women continued to bake, embroider and meet for Afternoon Tea throughout. This reflects both the importance and the ubiquity of Afternoon Tea in the 1930s and 1940s. Because of the lack of research on Afternoon Tea, the first chapter begins by detailing the key elements of Afternoon Tea that were repeated at every interview; the baked food and dainty bread, the embroidered linen, and the fine china and silver. I also explain who attended Afternoon Tea, the day that Afternoon Teas happened, how it proceeded and how women thought about it.

In chapter two I explore how aspects of identity were expressed through the material culture of Afternoon Tea. The first section looks at gender identity. In the era of my study, marriage and housekeeping were key to contemporary understandings of adult womanhood. Through analysis of the wedding gifts the oral narrators received and the items they made for their glory box I establish that Afternoon Tea was an expected part of married life. I then use performance theory to interrogate Afternoon Tea as an enactment of the identity of a good housewife, and through analysis of the objects of Afternoon Tea, draw out which were the most valued tasks of the housewife. In the final section of chapter two I investigate how the way one 'did' Afternoon Tea was a class signifier and I look at the way rural women perceived and enacted class.

Chapter three considers how major cultural influences of the era played out at the tea table. I examine the degree to which American popular

culture, recolonisation, cultural nationalism, and the English, Irish, Scottish and Danish ancestry of the families of my research participants was apparent in the rituals and material culture of Afternoon Tea.

In chapters four and five I depart from the thematic approach used in the earlier chapters to investigate how the major world events of the era of my study, the 1930s Depression and World War Two, impacted on the food, linen and chinaware of Afternoon Tea. By using Afternoon Tea as a marker of how well a family survived the Depression, in chapter four I bring out the nuances of how different parts of society experienced the Depression. This counters the collectivised story of universal hardship which has developed about the Depression. In the final chapter I look at how wartime shortages affected every element of Afternoon Tea: fine china was no longer imported, linen was rationed, as were sugar, butter and eggs – all were key ingredients in baking. I examine how women coped with shortages and look in detail at how sugar, butter and egg use in cake recipes changed over the period of the War. My study into Afternoon Tea suggests that women resisted rationing and were ingenious in how they worked around it.

The importance of this thesis lies both in the detail it provides about an important social occasion and the insights it gives into the everyday lives of ordinary women. Overall this study of Afternoon Tea in New Zealand brings out aspects of Pakeha women's cultural history connected to their work in home. Although focused on Afternoon Tea, this study is really the story of the women in the 1930s and 1940s. It is about their identity and their imagination and resourcefulness.

Chapter One

About Afternoon Tea

There's one extra to tea, so heat a plate of yesterday's scones, please. And put on the Victoria sandwich as well as the coffee cake. And don't forget to put little doyleys under the plates – will you? You did yesterday, you know, and the tea looked so ugly and common. And, Alice, don't put that dreadful old pink and green cosy on the afternoon teapot again. That is only for the mornings. Really, I think it ought to be kept for the kitchen – it's so shabby, and quite smelly. Put on the Japanese one.⁸⁶

In this extract from Katherine Mansfield's short story 'Prelude' Beryl is instructing her servant Alice on how to serve Afternoon Tea. Beryl's family is fortunate enough to have servants, but from the mid 1930s this was increasingly uncommon.⁸⁷ However, even without servants, Afternoon Tea was still served in the same style. Doyleys were placed on top of plates and under cakes without regard for the work cleaning them would require. The best tea cosies were used, as was the finest linen, china and silver.

This chapter outlines the key elements of Afternoon Tea, drawing mainly on the oral narratives obtained from the interviews I conducted. I also read contemporary editions of the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, and the women's pages of the *New Zealand Listener* and *N.Z. Truth* to get a sense of the broader context and practices in New Zealand at this time. When I examined these sources, it quickly became apparent that certain items were ubiquitous at Afternoon Tea.

⁸⁶ Katherine Mansfield, "Prelude," in *Bliss and Other Stories* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1924), 54-55, accessed June 5, 2011, <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-ManBlis-t1-body1-d1-d10.html>.

⁸⁷ From 1936 to 1940 the number of women in domestic service dropped dramatically from 32,064 in 1936 to 9,169 in 1945. See Jean-Marie O'Donnell, "'Electric Servants' and the Science of Housework: Changing Patterns of Domestic Work, 1935-1956," in *Women in History Two*, eds., Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 174-5.

The women who I interviewed came from surprisingly diverse backgrounds given the small sample. Most were from the country, but some were from small towns. Some were comparatively well off and had 'help', while others were so poor during the Depression that they only survived through the charity of others. Most were second or third generation New Zealanders of British decent, but some married into Danish families and one was part Samoan. Despite these different backgrounds, each woman's story of Afternoon Tea involved the same key elements; baked foods and dainty bread, embroidered table linen, fine English bone china and polished silverware.

Other evidence suggests that these same elements appeared at tea tables across the country. Women from as far apart as Masterton and Invercargill remembered similar foods, linen and tableware when describing Afternoon Tea in this era.⁸⁸ Two articles from 1930 editions of *N.Z. Truth* refer to these same items. Readers of the October 16 issue were informed that:

In its formality, afternoon tea is served with due state and ceremony. Gleaming silver, frail delicate china and fine embroidered linen - the pride of the hostess's heart - all play their part. Delicious cakes in variety with sandwiches, biscuits, scones and what-not, accompany it.⁸⁹

Although suggestive, strong conclusions about nationwide practices cannot be drawn from the evidence of fifteen women in the Manawatu, one woman in Masterton, another in Invercargill and two articles. My research is focused on the Manawatu, and when I began this research I

⁸⁸ Helen Leach, *The Paolova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2008), 87; Rosemary McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s* (Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 147.

⁸⁹ "Art of Afternoon Tea," *N.Z. Truth*, October 16, 1930, 22, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

See also "Simplicity Gives Best Results," October 16, 1930, 23, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

was surprised to discover that there hadn't been much written about Afternoon Tea at all.

A Brief History of Tea.

I found two works on Afternoon Tea in Britain and England: Jane Pettigrew's *A Social History of Tea* and Julie E. Fromer's *A Necessary Luxury: Tea in Victorian England*.⁹⁰ Pettigrew analyses a range of printed materials such as novels, advertisements, and etiquette books to give a history of tea drinking in Britain from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. Pettigrew includes detail on the emergence of afternoon tea as a meal and the rituals and materials associated with it.⁹¹ Fromer's work focuses on Victorian England and draws on nineteenth century tea histories, advertisements and novels to show how tea rituals were used to demonstrate "social identity and inner morality."⁹² Both works provide a valuable backdrop to my research, as the custom of tea drinking and Afternoon Tea came to New Zealand with British immigrants.

Pettigrew explains that tea came to England from China in the latter half of the seventeenth century and quickly became the fashionable drink of the aristocracy.⁹³ By the early nineteenth century tea drinking was so widespread that a contemporary essayist declared tea triumphant in "cheering the whole land from the palace to the cottage."⁹⁴ When Aotearoa became an English colony in 1840, tea drinking was integral to English national identity and by 1850 afternoon tea was an established upper class habit in England.⁹⁵ Afternoon tea originated in English

⁹⁰ Jane Pettigrew, *A Social History of Tea* (London: National Trust Enterprises Ltd, 2001); Julie E Fromer, *A Necessary Luxury: Tea in Victorian England* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008).

⁹¹ To avoid confusion, I have used lower case 'afternoon tea' when describing afternoon tea in England, to distinguish it from the Afternoon Tea defined at the start of this thesis.

⁹² Fromer, *Necessary Luxury*, 20.

⁹³ Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 8, 22.

⁹⁴ Isaac D'Israeli, quoted in Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 55.

⁹⁵ Fromer, *Necessary Luxury*, 12, 13, 26, 42; Leach, *The Pavlova Story; Culinary History*, 65-66; John Wilson, "Government and Nation - From Colony to Nation," in *Te Ara - the*

aristocratic households around the 1830s or 1840s where dinner was not served until eight o'clock at night.⁹⁶ William Uckers attributes the custom to the Duchess of Bedford who ordered tea and cakes to be served at 5pm to remedy the "sinking feeling" caused by the lack of food between lunch and the late dinner.⁹⁷ According to Georgiana Sitwell, "It was not until 1849 or 50, ... that five o'clock tea was made an institution, and then only in the fashionable houses where dinner was as late as half past seven or eight o'clock."⁹⁸

Afternoon tea was associated with specific items and food. In the novel *A Cure of Souls* the imminent arrival of afternoon tea in a wealthy home is signalled by the following objects: "There was a flutter of snow-white linen and the pleasant tinkle of china and of silver, and the smell of hot butter."⁹⁹ This excerpt succinctly captures the key elements of upper class afternoon tea: linen tablecloth, bone china tea set, silver tea service and perhaps buttered scones or thin bread and butter. These components recur in descriptions of afternoon tea from the Victorian era through to the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁰ Although the middle and even lower classes may have begun to emulate the upper class performance of afternoon tea by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it seems that it was still associated with the upper classes until at least 1935 when it

Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated March 3, 2009.

<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/government-and-nation/2>.

⁹⁶ Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 102.

⁹⁷ William Uckers, *All About Tea Volume II* (New York: The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1935), 405. Pettigrew also refers to this, saying that the "accepted tea legend always attributes the 'invention' of afternoon tea to Anna Maria, wife of the 7th Duke of Bedford." Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 102,

⁹⁸ Georgiana Sitwell, cited in Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 102

⁹⁹ May Sinclair, *A Cure of Souls* (The Macmillian Company, New York, 1924), cited in Uckers, *All About Tea*, 497.

¹⁰⁰See Lesley Lewis, *The Private Life of a Country House* (Newton Abbot Devon: Davis and Charles Ltd, 1980), 48-50; *Home Notes*, cited in Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 157; George Gissing, *The Private Papers of Henry Rycroft*, cited in Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 105.

was noted that “the afternoon tea of the upper classes is the most characteristic of British institutions.”¹⁰¹

The food of afternoon tea distinguishes the meal from high tea. High tea was taken in the early evening by middle and upper class households where dinner was eaten in the middle of the day and also taken by factory and mine workers when they returned from work.¹⁰² As Mrs Beeton explains, while afternoon tea comprised “Little more than tea and bread-and-butter, and a few elegant trifles”, high tea “may be a meal, it being really worthy to come under that category.”¹⁰³ *Beeton’s Everyday Cookery and Housekeeping Book* includes menus for afternoon tea and high tea which highlight the differences between the two. The afternoon tea menus comprise dainty sandwiches and a range of cakes and other baked sweet foods. The high tea menus have a heavy meat emphasis.¹⁰⁴ According to Jane Pettigrew, a working class high tea featured meat, vegetables and a roly poly pudding.¹⁰⁵ While afternoon tea started at four or five pm the high tea of poorer working families was at around five thirty or six pm when mine or factory workers got home from work.¹⁰⁶ As I will explain, Afternoon Tea in New Zealand closely resembled the afternoon tea of the English upper-class rather than high tea. These and other tea drinking traditions travelled to New Zealand with the English immigrants.

¹⁰¹ Uckers, *All About Tea*, 411. I was unable to find research about how the middle class and lower class did afternoon tea. The sources I found spoke about tea drinking more generally.

¹⁰² Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 110, 112. See also Laura Mason, “Everything Stops for Tea,” in *Luncheon, Nuncheon and Other Meals: Eating with the Victorians*, ed. C.A Wilson (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1994), 71-90 cited in Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 66.

¹⁰³ Isabella Mary Beeton, *Book of Household Management* (1879 edition) cited in Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 112; Isabella Mary Beeton, *Beeton’s Everyday Cookery and Housekeeping Book* (London: Ward, Lock, Bowdon and co., 1893), 491.

¹⁰⁴ Isabella Mary Beeton, *Beeton’s Everyday Cookery and Housekeeping Book* (London: Ward, Lock, Bowdon and co., 1893), 490.

¹⁰⁵ Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 110.

¹⁰⁶ Pettigrew, *Social History of Tea*, 107, 110.

Simpson describes tea as one of the great mainstays of colonial New Zealanders.¹⁰⁷ By 1870, New Zealand's tea imports were worth three times the value of agricultural machinery imported in that same year.¹⁰⁸ From colonial times through to the era of my study and beyond tea was an important part of social and working life. As well as Afternoon Tea at home, visits to tea gardens and tea rooms were popular leisure activities, and in the mid-twentieth century meetings of the Country Woman's Institutes would always finish with a large afternoon tea.¹⁰⁹ Tea was also a feature of smoko, the break that punctuated the working man's day with a cup of tea and a cigarette.¹¹⁰ My informants Lois, Nell, Nora and Iris all remembered taking tea and scones or sandwiches to the men during haymaking time. Lois said:

The men wouldn't come in to the house for morning tea as a rule. But particularly at haymaking time and that, it would be taken to the field for them. Mum would make huge big batches of scones and big billies of tea and you would take it to the paddocks.¹¹¹

It is surprising that something that was such a constant of daily life for so long has not been the subject of more scholarly research. This thesis is about just one of these tea-drinking occasions, during one particular era, there are many other tea-times that would benefit from further study.

About Afternoon Tea in Aotearoa

The day on which people met for Afternoon Tea, and the gender make-up of the occasion was, to a degree, determined by whether the women lived

¹⁰⁷ Simpson, Tony. *A Distant Feast: The Origins of New Zealand's Cuisine* (Auckland: Godwit, 2008), 241.

¹⁰⁸ Simpson, *Distant Feast*, 241.

¹⁰⁹ Susette Goldsmith, *Tea: A Potted History of Tea in New Zealand* (Auckland: Reed, 2006), 30, 57-59, 80; Jock Phillips, "Rural Recreation - Country halls, 1890-1960," in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated March 1, 2009, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/rural-recreation/4>.

¹¹⁰ Goldsmith, *Tea*, 30; Carl Walrond, "Building Trades - Trades Culture," in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated March 4, 2010, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/building-trades/6>; Des Williams, "Shearing - From Blades to Shearing Machines," in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated March 1, 2009, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/shearing/2>.

¹¹¹ Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

in the town or the country. Marjorie, Iris, Nell, Edith and May, who all lived on farms, remembered Afternoon Tea as something that usually happened on a Sunday. Nora told me that many women did not drive, so it seems likely that gatherings happened on Sunday because women had to wait for their husband's day of rest from the farm to be driven to visit friends and family.¹¹² As Marjorie explains, "We used to have Afternoon Teas on the farm which generally happened on a Sunday when the men weren't working and they could bring their wives."¹¹³

In contrast, Rita and Dorothy, who lived in town, remembered Afternoon Tea happening on weekdays, and remember these events as female affairs. This was probably because in town women lived closer together and so could transport themselves to Afternoon Tea without the aid of men – Rita remembers her mother's friends bicycled - and because on weekdays the men of the house would be at work. This suggests that Afternoon Tea in the country was more family based and attended by men and women, while Afternoon Tea in the towns was more friendship based and attended by women only, although the women I spoke to did not go into a lot of detail about who attended Afternoon Tea. Interestingly Lois, who lived in the country but near town, remembered Afternoon Tea happened on both weekdays and Sundays. The day of the week determined the gender of the guests: "it was particularly ladies during the week. But perhaps on a Sunday, there would be guests, and perhaps family, it would be more mixed."¹¹⁴ Caroline Daley found that Sunday afternoon visits to family, friends and neighbours in Taradale were a "vital part of communal

¹¹² Ruth, interview with the author, November 30, 2009.

In her work on gender in Taradale in an earlier time period, 1890-1930, Daley also found that the home was the prime site for women's leisure activities because in part women could not drive. Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 113.

¹¹³ Marjorie, interview with the author, November 29, 2009.

¹¹⁴ Lois, October 12, 2009.

leisure” in the era that preceded my study.¹¹⁵ She also found that the men often sat outside during visits while the women would sit inside.¹¹⁶

It seems that children were seldom seen and never heard at Afternoon Tea. Marjorie, Lois, Iris and Marge all remember that when they were children they were sent outside or to another room while Afternoon Tea was in progress. As Lois recalled, “Well, I don’t know if it was because we were naughty, but we were always sent out to the kitchen. That is where we were banished to, to the kitchen when we used to say..., when she was playing ladies.”¹¹⁷ Marjorie was allowed to stay at Afternoon Tea to hand food around to the guests after which, “you were allowed to take two pieces [of food] and that was it, then you were outside.”¹¹⁸ When she reached the age of twelve Marjorie was allowed to stay with the grownups but she had to be on her best behaviour and she said “you had to make yourself useful, you had to help out.”¹¹⁹ Nell didn’t tell me she had to go outside during Afternoon Tea, but she remembered that when she went to her grandmother’s for Afternoon Tea as a child she had to be “very well behaved and not say anything.”¹²⁰

Nell and Iris remembered that they and their mothers would give and receive calling cards inviting people for Afternoon Tea, while Rita thought that her mother and friends organised their next visit when they met together. Even if guests turned up unannounced, they would expect to have Afternoon Tea. As Iris told me, “You were expected to have your tins pretty full so if somebody arrived you could always put on an Afternoon Tea.”¹²¹

¹¹⁵Daley, *Girls and Women*, 93.

¹¹⁶ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 93.

¹¹⁷ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹¹⁸ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

¹¹⁹ Marjorie, November 29, 2009

¹²⁰ Nell, interview with the author, 13 July 2009.

¹²¹ Iris, interview with the author, July 25, 2009.

Keeping the tins full of home baking for hungry family and visitors both planned and impromptu was an important task of housewives in this era.¹²² According to a 1932 issue of *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, "The average housewife keeps the cake and biscuit tins well stocked."¹²³ To Rita, full tins were almost mandatory, as she explained: "it was a sort of badge of honour to have your tins full, it would be something of a disgrace not to."¹²⁴ Similarly Nora said "well you were considered quite a poor housewife if you didn't keep your tins full and have two or three things on hand always. Because people just dropped in you see."¹²⁵ Lois's mother had special baking reserved for guests. She remembers her uncle telling her that "he wasn't allowed to eat the 'in case' biscuits, and the 'in case' biscuits were the best ones, the neat ones, and they were in case somebody came."¹²⁶

Most of the women I spoke to remembered they and/or their mothers had regular baking days to ensure that the cake tins were full.¹²⁷ Even Edith who worked on the farm during the week kept her tins full. "I did it every Sunday, as I was that busy milking and working on the farm, I only had Sunday ... I filled every cake tin."¹²⁸ But even the best prepared housewife could be caught out by a deluge of guests. May and Edith spoke of large groups of relatives from town that would turn up on Sundays without warning but expecting to be fed. In those situations Edith told me "you made a batch of scones that was all you could do."¹²⁹

¹²² Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 84 and Phyllis Herda, "Women and Food," in Julie Park, ed., *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1921), 170.

¹²³ "Won't you Stay to Tea," *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, December 8, 1932, 31.

¹²⁴ Rita, interview with the author, August 24, 2009.

¹²⁵ Ruth, interview with the author, November 30, 2009.

¹²⁶ Lois, interview with the Author, October 12, 2009.

¹²⁷ Eileen's mother was the exception to this. Eileen said of her mother "I don't think she had a regular baking day", but when I asked her later if she kept her tins full she said "Yes. Always." Eileen, interview with the author, 12 October 2009.

¹²⁸ Edith, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

¹²⁹ Edith, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

There seemed to be a set format to what was served for Afternoon Tea. According to Lois, "You had something buttered, something biscuity, and something cakey."¹³⁰ The descriptions that other women gave of what was served at Afternoon Tea seemed to generally accord with this menu. The something buttered might be sandwiches, bread and butter, pikelets or scones. Very finely sliced buttered bread seemed to be a particularly popular – it was mentioned by Rita, Lois, Dorothy, Eileen, Nora and May. In Eileen's family these slivers or bread and butter were called cat's ears, when I asked Eileen why she replied, "I think because they were as thin as cat's ears, and they [her family] were very fond of cats."¹³¹

There didn't seem to be a pattern to the types of biscuits served. Both May and Eileen remembered shortbread, but otherwise there was no commonality across biscuit types. Other biscuits spoken of included anzac biscuits, gingernuts, cinnamon biscuits, hokey pokey biscuits and cheese straws.

There was a distinct trend in the types of cakes served at Afternoon Tea: coffee cake, fruitcake, sultana cake, chocolate and fruitcake were each mentioned by several women. Cream sponges were particularly prevalent and were remembered by Iris, May, Nell, Lois, Dorothy, and Eileen as a recurring feature.¹³² Only Eileen recalled seeing pavlova at Afternoon Tea at this time. The scale of some of these cakes was quite astounding. When Lois was describing her mother's sponges, she remembered, "hers were always monsters, she would make them in her meat dish."¹³³ May told a

¹³⁰ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹³¹ Eileen, 12 October 2009.

¹³² In 1958, eight years after my study ends, Aunt Daisy stated that the cream sponge "was our national sweet food – possibly more than the Pavlova." See Aunt Daisy, *New Zealand Listener* in Ray Bailey and Mary Earle, *Home Cooking to Takeaways: Changes in Food Consumption in New Zealand During 1880-1990* (Wellington: Royal Society Publishing, 1999), 95.

¹³³ Lois, October 12, 2009.

similar story, saying “We also made a big sultana cake in the roasting dish, the same one you cooked your meat in.”¹³⁴

Most women spoke of a particular dish at which they or their mother excelled. For Rita’s mother and sisters it was cheese straws because “they could bake them so thin.”¹³⁵ Eileen remembered that her mother and aunts each had a specialty dish:

Aunty Sally could make lovely pikelets, Aunty Lucy made beautiful sponge cakes, the next sister from Lucy was away, but the youngest sister would cook biscuits, she was very good at making them for children’s parties and she would make little marzipan eggs looking like birds eggs and nests... The rivalry was that mum used to make very good scones, but she couldn’t make sponges.¹³⁶

Nora told me “You got a name for being good at something... And you kept on cooking that recipe if you knew it was successful and you kept on at it.”¹³⁷

The recipes for these baked goods came from a variety of sources. The majority of my research participants had at least one published recipe book. These ranged from authored collections such as *Una Carter’s Famous National Cookery Book* and the *Aunt Daisy* cookbooks, to recipe books compiled by companies like Hansells and Edmonds to promote their products, to local fundraising recipe books that included contributions from the community, like the *The Manawatu Red Cookery Book* and various church fundraiser cookbooks.¹³⁸ In *The Pavlova Story* Leach found that the fundraising cookbooks were by far the most common type of cookbook.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ May, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

¹³⁵ Rita, August 24, 2009.

¹³⁶ Eileen, 12 October, 2009.

¹³⁷ Ruth, November 30, 2009.

¹³⁸ Una Carter, *Una Carter’s Famous National Cookery Book : Containing over 800 Well-Tested Recipes / Demonstrated at Numerous Classes throughout New Zealand by Una Carter*, 6th ed. (Napier: Swailes, 192-); Radio personality Maud Basham, as Aunt Daisy, published 8 recipes books during the period of my study, examples include Maud Basham, *Aunt Daisy’s cookery book of selected recipes / broadcast by Aunt Daisy* (Christchurch: Whitcombe &

Most informants mentioned that they and/or their mother compiled their own recipe books, taking them from newspapers and magazines, from the radio, and other women.¹⁴⁰ Rita remembers her mother listening to Emily Carpenter from the Otago Home Science School on the radio, and Marjorie, Lois, Edna and Marge all remembered listening to Aunt Daisy.¹⁴¹ Rita went on to say that “Mother didn’t have money to buy recipe books, but she cut out recipes from magazines and papers also would get recipes from recipe swaps – if someone said ‘oh that was nice, can you give me your recipe.’”¹⁴² Recipe swapping was popular, but it required some diplomacy; while it was a great compliment to ask someone for a recipe some women protected their recipes carefully and would not share them.¹⁴³ As Marjorie explained, “you thought twice about asking people for recipes. Some people guarded their recipes rather. On the whole people were very generous about it. You didn't presume if you didn't know the person well. It wasn't polite.”¹⁴⁴ This reluctance to reveal

Tombs, 1939) and Maud Basham *Aunt Daisy's cookery book of 1,150 selected recipes / broadcast by Aunt Daisy* (Christchurch, N.Z.: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1942); *Rainbow recipe book*, (Masterton, N.Z. : Hansell's, 194-?); There were several editions of the Edmonds cookbook during the period of my study, examples include *The "Sure To Rise" Cookery Book: Containing Economical Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints*, 5th ed. (Christchurch, : T.J. Edmonds, ca. 1930); *Edmonds "Sure To Rise" Cookery Book : Containing a Collection of Approximately 500 Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints*, 7th ed. (Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, 1939); *Manawatu Red Cookery Book : Tested and Tried Recipes*, rev. ed. (Palmerston North: Keeling & Mundy Ltd., 1926); Ruth had quite a few church fundraiser cookbooks, she told me that “it was such a good fundraiser you see.”

¹³⁹ In the database of recipe books that Helen Leach put together for her research into the pavlova, 65 percent were published to raise funds for various organizations. Only a quarter had identified authors. Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 83.

¹⁴⁰ Eileen remembered her mother got recipes from the *Dairy Exporter* and *the Journal of Agriculture*.

¹⁴¹ Maud Basham, known as Aunt Daisy was an icon of New Zealand radio from the 1930s through the 60s. Her show included recipes and handy household hints. See David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka; A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 200-204; David Burton, *David Burton's New Zealand Food and Cookery* (Auckland: David Bateman Ltd, 2009), 59-60; Peter Downes, “Basham, Maud Ruby 1879 – 1963,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June, 2007, <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>.

¹⁴² Rita, August 24, 2009.

¹⁴³ Rita, Eileen, Iris, Ruth, Marjorie and May all talked about recipes that they or their mothers had got from other women they had met.

¹⁴⁴ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

recipes appears to have been widespread. An article in *N.Z. Truth* notes that “Some women of course, jealously guard their special recipes – they cannot bear to give them away and only divulge them to their nearest and dearest.”¹⁴⁵

Iris and Edith also said they kept recipes in their heads. Edith told me “I never had a recipe book; I used to make me own mixture. And I can make about five different cakes out of the one mixture.”¹⁴⁶ When I asked her where she got her recipes from she said “just out of me head.”¹⁴⁷

Baking was something many informants only did in earnest once they were married and had homes of their own. This contrasts with Daley’s findings that, among other household tasks, girls were baking from an early age, and that by adolescence they were “full time apprentices” to their mother.¹⁴⁸ Marge remembers that when she first married she would only make queen cakes: “I got very good at making them because they were very quick to make with basic ingredients and they only took ten minutes in the oven.”¹⁴⁹ Her husband was very relieved when she ran out of the paper cases the queen cakes required “and he said thank goodness maybe we can have a change!”¹⁵⁰ Only one of the participants was taught to cook by her mother. When I asked Lois if her mother taught her she said “No, it was all get out of the way, I can do it quicker myself.”¹⁵¹ Marjorie was taught to cook by her housekeeper, and Dorothy learned at school. May, whose mother died when May was 17, leaving her to cook for the farm, spoke gratefully of her *Edmonds Cookery Book*: “that was my life saver, you could go by that recipe and you could guarantee that it

¹⁴⁵ “Simplicity Gives Best Results,” 23.

¹⁴⁶ Edith, October 3, 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Edith, October 3, 2009.

¹⁴⁸ See Daley, *Girls and Women*, 47-48.

¹⁴⁹ Marge, interview with the author, August 10, 2009.

¹⁵⁰ Marge, August 10, 2009.

¹⁵¹ Lois, October 12, 2009.

would work. As you grew older and more experienced you could just throw things together. But at the beginning I depended on that book.”¹⁵²

For Afternoon Tea, Nell told me “The table was spread with a white starched cloth, hand embroidered, usually with a handmade lace or crochet border” and “linen table napkins to match the cloth.”¹⁵³

Confusingly, the cloths put out for Afternoon Tea were called supper cloths.¹⁵⁴ Other research participants remembered embroidered tray cloths, embroidered tea cosies, and embroidered cloths to cover the food, crocheted covers for the milk jug and crocheted doyleys, which sat on top of the cake plates, beneath the food. The linen table cloths were mentioned at every interview and napkins, tray clothes and the doyleys were mentioned at most. Many women had kept examples of their linen and showed them to me. Rosemary McLeod’s description of the linen and handiwork of Afternoon Tea closely resembles that of my research participants:

The tea-party tea trolley had large, matching embroidered doyleys for both levels, and the tea table had one of the household’s best embroidered tea clothes laid out on it. A light, embroidered throw covered both before the guests arrived, to keep flies off the food and the immaculately clean best china. Sugar bowls and milk jugs, too, had their own crocheted covers, in infinite variety, to keep the flies off.¹⁵⁵

This suggests that similar types of handiwork graced tea tables across the country.

Machine-made table linen was not readily available, so most of the household table linen was made by the housewife, either before or after her marriage. Marge said all the linen was “hand embroidered of course,

¹⁵² May, October 3, 2009.

¹⁵³ Nell, July 13, 2009.

¹⁵⁴ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁵⁵ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 149.

because there wasn't machinery to do it."¹⁵⁶ The women I spoke to were either taught to embroider at school, learned by watching their mothers or they taught themselves. Almost all of the handiwork created for the tea table by my research participants came from commercial patterns, again echoing McLeod's discussion.¹⁵⁷ Most women remembered that the goods to be embroidered came with the pattern stamped on them. May recalled that "you could get beautiful pieces of linen all stamped with hemstitch which you could crochet around if you like."¹⁵⁸ Lois explained that "the pattern for the crocheted edge would come with the cloth too as well as the colours."¹⁵⁹ Several women also mentioned transfers which could be ironed on. According to Dorothy, "you brought linen... and you just stamped your pattern on."¹⁶⁰

Both Lois and Nora spoke of the lack of variety of patterns in New Zealand at this time. Nora said simply "there wasn't quite that much variety in the shops," while Lois gave more detail saying "we didn't have much in the way of threads and fabrics in New Zealand so you had to send to England and it was six weeks to get there and six weeks to get back."¹⁶¹

From the oral narratives of the women I interviewed, it seems that only a few types of stitches were used to work the linen and that the women seldom devised their own patterns. Marjorie's mother and Lois would sometimes make up designs, but this was unusual. Most women stuck to the pattern faithfully – Lois said it was "really radical" to use different

¹⁵⁶ Marge, August 10, 2009.

¹⁵⁷ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 42. McLeod says that the patterns came mostly from commercial patterns and magazines, only Lois mentioned magazines as a source of patterns.

¹⁵⁸ May, October 3, 2009.

¹⁵⁹ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁶⁰ Dorothy, interview with the author, November 30, 2009.

¹⁶¹ Nora, November 30, 2009; Lois, October 12, 2009.

colours or a different edging than that suggested on the pattern.¹⁶² When I asked Marjorie about the stitches she used in this era she said she just used “button holes and French knots all the old obvious ones everybody did.”¹⁶³ These findings reiterate what McLeod found in her more comprehensive study of women’s needlework. According to McLeod, only a “small range” of embroidery stitches were used, mostly “stem, chain, satin, button hole and bullion stitches.”¹⁶⁴ These were worked over a printed pattern; she found “scant evidence of original compositions.”¹⁶⁵

All the women remembered that when guests came, they, or their mother, would put out “the real flash china.”¹⁶⁶ The flash china was fine bone china, it was always imported and almost always from England. As Nell remembered, “the china used was fine quality; usually Doulton, Spode or Aynsley, there was a cup saucer and a plate that matched.”¹⁶⁷ Like Nell, most other interview participants were quite specific about the brands of china they used. Quite a range of brands were mentioned, ranging from the traditional, like Royal Doulton and Royal Albert, which were spoken of by several women, to the modern designs of Susie Cooper and Clarice Cliff owned by Marjorie and her mother. Eileen’s mother’s china collection was unusual in that it included pieces from countries other than England; she had Belleek china from Ireland and Noritake china from Japan. There was a definite hierarchy to the different makes of china. To some degree, the china used was an indication of wealth, although it was not the done thing to ask or comment on the make of china.¹⁶⁸ Most participants were given a tea set for their wedding present or their 21st birthday. Even

¹⁶²Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁶³ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

¹⁶⁴ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 82.

¹⁶⁵ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 42.

¹⁶⁶ Eileen, October 12, 2009.

¹⁶⁷ Nell, July 13, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ A more detailed discussion of china as a marker of status follows in the next chapter in the section on class.

participants from less well-off families remember their mother having one or two cups and saucers that were reserved for guests.

Most of the informants used a silver tea pot for Afternoon Tea, and many had a complete silver tea service. Marge described the components of a tea service for me: "a silver tray to begin with... a silver tea pot, a hot water jug, a sugar bowl and um a little jug."¹⁶⁹ Nell could remember various styles of tea services:

The silver tea service was on a big tray, usually made of sterling silver or good quality plate, some of the tea services were plain, and others were embossed with leaves and acorns etc... this one my grandmother had, would easily be about eight inches wide and five or six high.¹⁷⁰

Nell and Iris remember having spirit kettles, large kettles full of hot water kept warm with a methylated spirits burner. There was also different, daintier cutlery for Afternoon Tea. Iris, Nell, Eileen, and Rita all had special teaspoons and Nell spoke of a complete afternoon tea set. She remembered:

Little afternoon tea knives were about that long [4-5inches] and the fork was about that long [4-5 inches], and the fork often had one prong that was wider than the others and the teaspoon was usually something special.¹⁷¹

Although almost all of the women I spoke to talked about the brands of the china they owned, only Dorothy talked about a specific brand of silverware: Walker and Halls. Rita also mentioned the maker of her mother's tea service, but that was because it was made by her father, who was a silver smith.

It wasn't just the tea table that was decked out for Afternoon Tea: home, hostess and guests were all arrayed to best advantage. Rita and Marjorie

¹⁶⁹ Marge, August 10, 2009.

¹⁷⁰ Nell, July 13, 2009.

¹⁷¹ Nell, July 13, 2009.

both said that the house would be prepared before the guests arrived “the house would be really tidied up, everything would be polished.”¹⁷² Nell, Marjorie and Lois recalled that the hostess and guests would wear their best clothes for Afternoon Tea. As Lois explained, “they always had their hats and gloves and they kept their hats on.”¹⁷³ Rosemary McLeod also remembers her mother and her mother’s friends dressing up for Afternoon Tea.¹⁷⁴ These recollections and several articles from the 1930s in *N.Z. Truth* and an advertisement in the *New Zealand Woman’s Weekly* about dresses for Afternoon Tea indicate that it was common practice to dress up for the occasion.¹⁷⁵

When it came to serving Afternoon Tea, a clear etiquette was followed. Generally the hostess would pour the tea and she or her female children would hand round the food.¹⁷⁶ Nell remembered “the ladies sat around the table or on lounge chairs, and the hostess usually sat at the table to pour the tea and then pass it round to her guests.”¹⁷⁷ According to Dorothy “nobody dared get up and help themselves.”¹⁷⁸ Marjorie and Nell both said that the daughters of the household would serve the food, whereas Iris was not gender specific, saying that it was handed round by “the children or the younger people present.”¹⁷⁹ Several women said that tea was served in order of seniority and recalled that “when it came to serving tea you always served the elderly ladies first.”¹⁸⁰ Iris and Rita

¹⁷² Rita, August 24, 2009.

¹⁷³ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁷⁴ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 147.

¹⁷⁵ “Four O’Clock and the Ladies are All Ready for Tea!” *N.Z. Truth*, May 8, 1930, 18, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; “The Tea Gown Possesses Pleasing Features,” *N.Z. Truth*, February 6, 1930, 20, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; “Fashion’s Forecasts for 1930,” *N.Z. Truth*, March 6, 1930, 18, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; “Spring Quartette... For Afternoon Overtures,” *The New Zealand Woman’s Weekly*, September 5, 1935, 33.

¹⁷⁶ Nell, Iris, Rita, Marjorie, Edna, Dorothy

¹⁷⁷ Nell, July 13, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Dorothy, November 30, 2009.

¹⁷⁹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

¹⁸⁰ Marjorie, November 29, 2009. Iris, Rita and Edna had similar memories.

both recalled that the savoury food was served first. Rita told me “if you didn’t have bread and butter first you were considered greedy going for the cake.”¹⁸¹

I didn’t ask specifically which room was used for Afternoon Tea, but Marjorie and Iris both mentioned the lounge/sitting room. Edna, Lois, Nell and Marjorie remembered that specific equipment came into play: “We all had dinner wagons, to serve afternoon teas mostly.”¹⁸² The tea trolley was wheeled and had two levels. Nell explained that “they used to put the cups and the teapot at the top and the food on the bottom.”¹⁸³ The use of a tea trolley also suggests that Afternoon Tea took place in the lounge/sitting room as if the meal occurred in the kitchen or dining room there would be no need for this ersatz table.

I got a real sense that the women I interviewed enjoyed and valued Afternoon Tea. Jean and Dorothy said they used to love hosting tea parties and Marjorie said that “It was hard work but it was fun seeing people.”¹⁸⁴ Rita was more analytical when considering Afternoon Tea, saying “For women who were at home it was quite important – it would break the monotony, gave them something to work hard at, to be praised for, would generate friendship, mutual sharing, and we don’t do that anymore.”¹⁸⁵ Rita also gave a more pragmatic reason why her mother enjoyed Afternoon Tea, saying “I think it was a real gossip session.”¹⁸⁶

Conclusion

Afternoon Tea was defined by the material culture associated with it: fine china, embroidered linen, polished silver, baking and finely sliced bread.

¹⁸¹ Rita, August 24, 2009.

¹⁸² Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁸³ Nell, July 13, 2009.

¹⁸⁴ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

¹⁸⁵ Rita, August 24, 2009.

¹⁸⁶ Rita, August 24, 2009.

Mentioned at every interview, they reveal the ubiquitous way Afternoon Tea was practiced, although the day and gender of guests might vary between town and country the material culture remained the same. Afternoon Tea was an important social occasion, which the women I interviewed thoroughly enjoyed, but it was also a lot of work. Before hosting Afternoon Tea the house had to be tidied and the silver polished, the linen and baking were also made by the hostess and she put out the her best examples of these items and her china for her guests. As my Mum would say, "it was quite a performance."

Chapter Two

Afternoon Tea and Identity: Femininity, Domesticity and Class

Identity is a slippery concept. It is a word we use to describe the fundamentals of who we are and yet, “identity including gender identity, has come to be seen less as a direct expression of inner authentic self, and more a culturally and historically shaped set of practices and performances.”¹⁸⁷ In this chapter I explore how my oral narrators articulated and perceived identity through the material culture of Afternoon Tea, and how that identity was shaped by contemporary mores. The chapter covers two distinct topics: gender identity and class identity. My examination of gender identity begins by looking at how marriage was integral to notions of adult womanhood, and at how Afternoon Tea was an expected part of married life. I then look briefly at how being a good housewife was a key role of married women, before considering in detail how Afternoon Tea was a performance of this role. The food, linen, china and silver all played a part in establishing gender identity, but they also had a role in establishing class identity. In the second section of this chapter I look at how class identity was perceived and expressed through the way women ‘did’ Afternoon Tea.

The period of my study was marked by two devastating world events, the Great Depression and World War Two. In the former many men lost their jobs, and in the latter many men left their jobs to fight overseas, but despite the upheaval caused by these events, the gender script which decreed a woman’s role was to marry, and once married to stay home and look after her home, husband and family remained largely unchanged

¹⁸⁷ Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, “Situating Gender,” in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 9.

through the period of my study.¹⁸⁸ As a contemporary of my oral narrators said, “It was incomprehensible that anything other than marriage and motherhood could lie ahead for any normal young woman.”¹⁸⁹

Afternoon Tea and Marriage

If marriage was essential to mature womanhood, then weddings were the ceremony that marked a girl’s transition into womanhood. Reading my interview transcripts, I noticed that it was common for objects of the tea table to be either given as wedding gifts or made in anticipation of marriage. In this section, I will explore the connection between marriage, womanhood, and Afternoon Tea.

Wedding gifts were given to furnish the couple with things they would need in their lives together and so provide clues as to what adult life involved. Louise Purbrick found that at weddings the gifting and receiving of presents “confirm the existence of a traditional familial division of labour: wedding gifts are nominally jointly received by brides and grooms but quickly become the preserve of only the wife.”¹⁹⁰ Although Purbrick’s study is of gift giving in England from 1945 to the present day, this assertion aligns with gift giving practices in New Zealand in the 1930s and 40s. Tea sets and other paraphernalia of the tea table were common wedding gifts, demonstrating that hosting Afternoon Tea was an expected part of life for married women.

Marjorie, Lois, Dorothy and Iris each mentioned getting a china tea set as well as various other accoutrements of Afternoon Tea as wedding gifts. Dorothy described the practice as universal. “I got a silver tea service and

¹⁸⁸ Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), 167. See also Deborah Montgomerie, *The Women’s War*, 23.

¹⁸⁹ Lauris Edmond, ed., *Women in Wartime* (Wellington: Government Printing Office Publishing, 1986), 236.

¹⁹⁰ Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 12.

I got a china tea set, everybody did.”¹⁹¹ When I asked Lois if tea sets were a common wedding gift she replied, “Well it was in my case; my cousin was married one year, my brother was married the next year, and I was the next year and a cousin gave us all a tea set.”¹⁹² Lois went on to explain, “the same thing happened with a tea wagon, a tea trolley. My step-grandmother was still alive and she gave us all a tea trolley, and made sure we were all equipped to go out there...”¹⁹³ Lois’s phraseology is interesting, she links being given a tea trolley to being equipped ‘to go out there’, ‘out there’ being the adult world of marriage. If a tea trolley was necessary equipment for marriage, Afternoon Tea must be important part of married life.

What is less clear is whether both recipients and givers viewed the role of Afternoon Tea in married life with equal importance. According to consumption theory, the selection and use of an object is a process of self-definition, so we can learn about the owners of objects from the objects they own.¹⁹⁴ However, as Louise Purbrick argues, the relationship between object and owner is complicated when the object is a wedding gift, as the recipient has not chosen the object and cannot refuse it.¹⁹⁵ Those gifting tea sets and so forth were likely to be in the older generation, as they were expensive gifts; it was Iris’s mother-in-law who gave her a tea set and Lois’s step-grandmother who gave her the tea trolley. Therefore, while the gifts of tea paraphernalia indicate that those in the older generation saw Afternoon Tea as an important part of married life, it does not necessarily follow that the recipients viewed it in the same way.

To get an idea of how my research participants viewed the role of Afternoon Tea in marriage it is helpful to look at the custom of making

¹⁹¹ Dorothy, interview with the author, November 30, 2009

¹⁹² Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

¹⁹³ Lois, October 12, 2009.

¹⁹⁴ Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 20.

¹⁹⁵ Purbrick, *The Wedding Present*, 18-19.

linen for the Glory Box. According to Eve Ebbett, "An engagement was followed immediately by the acquisition of a 'Hope Chest' or 'Glory Box' to be filled with at least six of everything the bride would need in her new home."¹⁹⁶ A number of the women I spoke to talked about glory boxes or trousseaus, as they were also called. Nell, Iris, and May all married in the 1940s and all made linen, including supper cloths, for their glory boxes. Nell said that she made "masses of them", but Iris who was limited by wartime rationing, said she made some "but nothing like the generation before."¹⁹⁷ Lois, who married in 1950, also made linen for her glory box. She showed me a supper cloth her mother made for her when she married, saying, "My mother crocheted it and of course it was 'absolutely vital' that I have something like that in my glory box."¹⁹⁸ In contrast, Nora only made one item, a supper cloth for her glory box. Eileen, who was born in 1935 and the youngest woman I interviewed, did not put one together at all, although she said her friends did.

Taken together, the gifting and making of goods for Afternoon Tea in connection with marriage shows that Afternoon Tea was seen as an important part of marriage right through until the 1940s by both the older generation and many of the younger generation getting married. However there were exceptions. That Nora only made one item, and Eileen made nothing for her glory box, intimates that these women did not envisage that Afternoon Tea would play a big role in their future married life, and indeed once married Nora said she and her friends did not do formal Afternoon Tea.

¹⁹⁶ Eve Ebbett, *Victoria's Daughters: New Zealand Women of the Thirties* (Wellington: A.H. and A. W Reed Ltd, 1981), 102.

¹⁹⁷ Nell, interview with the author, July 13, 2009; Iris, interview with the author, July 25, 2009.

¹⁹⁸ Lois, October 12, 2009.

Good Wives

“Your job was to get married... It wasn’t discrimination. It just wasn’t done. Your Mother wouldn’t allow you to stay on and work - she’d be ashamed to tell anyone you worked.”¹⁹⁹ So spoke Ngaire Hale, who married in the late 1930s. Her statement summarises contemporary attitudes which continued until after World War Two. Another woman recalled “young women in the years at the end of the Second World War were among the last of those raised in a society whose main expectations were that they would make good wives and mothers, and which gave the title of ‘respectable’ to a woman because she was married.”²⁰⁰ Although it was increasingly common for younger women to work before marriage, once married women were expected to give up paid work to stay home and look after the house.²⁰¹ Even during World War Two when women were needed to fill the jobs vacated by men called to fight in the war, once women had children there was considerable pressure for them not to work outside the home.²⁰²

Of course, some women were in paid employment once married and even once mothers. A couple of articles in 1932 editions of *The Woman’s Weekly* debated the issue of whether women could be good housewives if they were also in the paid workforce. That this debate occurred suggests that some women did continue in paid employment once married. However, underlying the debate was the belief that once married, whether in the paid workforce or not, a woman’s primary role was taking care of the home - the question was not whether a working woman could be a housewife, but whether she would be a *good* housewife. Both articles assume that a married businesswoman would continue her household

¹⁹⁹ Montgomerie, *The Womens War*, 140.

²⁰⁰ Edmond, *Women in Wartime*, 234.

²⁰¹ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 68, 71. Julie Park, “Connections: Women in Relationships,” in *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women*, ed. Julie Park (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1991), 116.

²⁰² Montgomerie, *The Womens War*, 134-5.

duties as well as her professional duties. In "Money Making Wives - Are they Successful in Bringing Happiness to the Home?" E.L. Wild argues that "a married businesswoman may be distracted in the middle of taking down a letter with the worry of a home job left undone and of the evening meal which must be planned, brought and cooked before her husband's dinner."²⁰³ Although Isobel M. Cluett presents arguments in favour of married women remaining in the paid workforce in "Home or Business-Which?", she says at the outset "When a woman marries she knows that in the ordinary course of events the duties of wife and mother and home-maker must fall to her share. She marries on the understanding that this is her part of the marriage pact."²⁰⁴

Whether in the paid workforce or not, the role of housewife was a major part of New Zealand women's lives right through to the middle of the twentieth century, yet as Daley notes "it is only in recent years that people have taken the history of housework at all seriously."²⁰⁵ Daley's chapter on women's work in *Girls and Women, Men and Boys* contributes to research on housewives and housework in New Zealand. Daley explains that from 1886 right through to 1930 "the day to day running of the home was the main occupation for married women in Taradale."²⁰⁶ Daley goes on to outline the tasks that made up a woman's day. Women scrubbed, washed, and ironed; crocheted, knitted and sewed; and baked, cooked and preserved. They also churned butter and made candles and soap. She found that status and respectability were earned through "keeping the floors scrubbed, the tins full and the clothes pressed."²⁰⁷ Daley's work provides many insights, but it only tells us about housewives and housework up until 1930. It doesn't tell us what happens next.

²⁰³ E. L. Wild, "Money Making Wives - Are they Successful in Bringing Happiness to the Home?" *The New Zealand Womens Weekly*, December 15, 1932, 15.

²⁰⁴ Isobel M Cluett, "Home or Business -Which?" *The New Zealand Women's Weekly*, December 8, 1932, 15.

²⁰⁵ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 47.

²⁰⁶ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 47.

²⁰⁷ Daley, *Girls and Women*, p160

Sally Parker picks up the story of women's work in the home twenty years after Daley's study ends. In "A Golden Decade? Farm Women in the 1950s", Parker looks at the role of women within marriage in rural Waikato.²⁰⁸ She found that in the 1950s "the tradition which stressed the primacy of women's domestic role appears to have remained intact."²⁰⁹ Farming women were slower to get domestic appliances than their urban counterparts, meaning that housework remained labour intensive for many farm women well into the '50s.²¹⁰ The day-to-day tasks of women in Parker's study were similar to those in Daley's study: women were still cooking and preserving; cleaning and gardening; making clothes and handicrafts and raising children and chickens.

As I noted in the introduction, Eve Ebbett provides a wealth of detail about women's lives in the 1930s, including their work as housewives, but her focus is on the "what" of house work, she does not examine the meaning women gave to their work around the home.²¹¹ Afternoon Tea provides an important case study of housewifeliness as I show in the next section.

Playing Ladies: Afternoon Tea as a Performance of Domesticity

When I was reviewing the transcripts of my interviews, I was struck by the performative language the women I interviewed used to describe Afternoon Tea. Lois told me that Afternoon Tea was "when we played ladies."²¹² Later in the interview, she again refers to her mother's Afternoon Tea as 'playing ladies.' When I asked her if this was how she

²⁰⁸ Sally Parker, "A Golden Decade? Farm Women in the 1950s," in *Women in History Two*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Charlotte MacDonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Ltd, 1992), 205-224.

²⁰⁹ Parker, "A Golden Decade?" 221.

²¹⁰ Sandra Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women Since they Won the Vote* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1993), 212.

²¹¹ Eve Ebbett, *Victoria's Daughters: New Zealand Women of the Thirties* (Wellington: A.H & A.W Reed Ltd, 1981).

²¹² Lois, October 12, 2009.

talked about Afternoon Tea when she was little, Lois said, “Yeah, I think so.”²¹³ Both Rita and May spoke about Afternoon Tea as a show. Rita said that there was a “show in making everything nice” while May said that when guests came “you could always put on a bit of a show.”²¹⁴ When Eileen was explaining that her mother did not do Afternoon Tea in style she said “she didn’t really try and present an image of being a capable housewife.”²¹⁵ The words ‘play’, ‘show’ and ‘present’ all suggest that these women saw Afternoon Tea as contrived – an act or a performance.

Taking my cue from the women I interviewed, I will analyse Afternoon Tea as a performance. According to performance theorists, social life is made up of performances wherein we are each actors trying to convey a particular identity.²¹⁶ Examining Afternoon Tea through the frame of performance, the comments of Lois and Eileen suggest that the identity women were trying to convey was that of a refined and capable housewife. A successful performance relies on “engagements with and presentations of objects.”²¹⁷ Objects are crucial to any performance not just for their utilitarian function but because of their ability to stand for things and to communicate meaning to others.²¹⁸ Ian Woodward gives the example of seeing a usually casually dressed male friend wearing a suit and a tie. This is likely to suggest that the friend is either going to a job interview or a funeral – both suit and tie represent to the viewer that the friend is going to a formal occasion which requires ‘proper’ dress.²¹⁹

In chapter one I noted that although the women I interviewed came from different backgrounds, their recollections of Afternoon Tea involved the

²¹³ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²¹⁴ Rita, interview with the author, August 24, 2009; May, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

²¹⁵ Eileen, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

²¹⁶ Ian Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2007), 152-155.

²¹⁷ Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, 152.

²¹⁸ Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, 152-154.

²¹⁹ Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, 154-155.

same key objects; baked foods and dainty bread, embroidered table linen, fine English bone china and polished silverware. The universal use of these objects at Afternoon Tea indicates that they were essential to its performance. When women hosted Afternoon Tea, they did not put out the same linen, china and silverware they used for everyday, as Lois put it “people would put on their very best to impress.”²²⁰ Lois’s mother even had special baking for guests, while most women had dishes they excelled at that they would serve for Afternoon Tea.²²¹ The use of special food, linen, china and silverware for Afternoon Tea supports the assertion that these objects had a symbolic function, beyond their utilitarian function. Indeed, given the difficulties of cleaning embroidered table linen, the fragility of bone china teacups and the polishing required of silverware, one could argue that the symbolic values of these objects outweighed their utilitarian and practical values.²²²

In the following paragraphs, I will examine the food, linen, china and silver of Afternoon Tea in terms of their symbolic function in the performance of the identity of a refined housewife. In this frame of analysis, the objects of Afternoon Tea can be seen as standing for the day-to-day housework of the woman hosting Afternoon Tea and also as a means of communicating that she was a ‘good’ housewife. Looking at what women were trying to say with these objects helps us to understand what was required to be a ‘good housewife’ in the period of my study.

The display of baked goods at Afternoon Tea was a representation of the time, skill and energy women put into cooking for friends and family on the coal range. According to Sandra Coney, “Before the advent of labour

²²⁰ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²²¹ See Chapter One.

²²² The work involved in laundering linen is discussed later in this chapter. See also McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 136, for detail on washing embroidered handwork.

saving devices, domestic work was hard labour indeed."²²³ Coney focuses on the coal range and the copper as exemplars of the hard work housework required. Although electric and gas appliances were increasingly common in the homes of New Zealand's wealthy townsfolk from the 1930s, they took some time to make it out to the country.²²⁴ In 1945 37 per cent of Pakeha provincial homes had only a wood or coal range for cooking.²²⁵ Of the fifteen women I interviewed, eight remembered that they or their mothers cooked on a coal range.

Cooking on the coal range required considerable effort and skill. Most coal ranges had no temperature gauge so determining whether it was at the right temperature required an experienced hand – quite literally. May said "There was a big round knob on the oven . . . and you could tell by the feel of that how hot it [the oven] was . . . mum only had to feel it and say – the oven's ready, put the scones in now."²²⁶ The oven had to be stoked with the correct amount of fuel for it to reach the desired temperature. Edna explained:

If you were going to make something that you didn't want to cook too quickly, then you didn't stoke up the firebox too much. If you wanted your oven hot then you stoked it up and you cooked according to how you were feeding your fire really. I mean if the oven was hot [I thought] oh well then I'll make a batch of scones.²²⁷

A number of cake recipes require a brisk, quick, or hot oven. To keep the oven hot, the fires had to be monitored and kept stoked. May remembered that when her mother made bread which is "something that needs to have the right temperature"²²⁸ her mother would put the bread in and then

²²³ Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine*, 212.

²²⁴ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 88.

²²⁵ Sandra Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine*, 212.

²²⁶ May, October 3, 2009.

²²⁷ Edna, interview with the author, August 10, 2009

²²⁸ May, October 3, 2009.

“she kept watching, making sure the firebox was stoked up and she’d say, just leave it now that will be hot enough”.²²⁹

The method used to fuel the oven also created challenges for the housewife. Edna explained that the success of your baking depended on the fuel selected. “Some of the coal wasn’t as good as others. There was some coal that would heat up and burn. Or heat up more quickly, others would tend to smoulder a bit.”²³⁰ Some women used wood to fire the coal range. This created another layer of difficulty because they had to get the men to chop it, which they were not always willing to do. As May recalls “The men would cut it enough for a couple of days but it had to last you a week. They weren’t overly keen to cut it.”²³¹ Lack of fuel would curtail what could be baked, as you could not squander your wood for recipes that required a ‘quick’ oven. Daley tells us that wood-fired ranges required about “one hour’s labour a day to maintain.”²³²

Several scholars have commented that cooking in general and baking in particular were key to constructions of New Zealand womanhood right through to the middle of the twentieth century.²³³ The importance placed on cooking is indicated by contemporary cookbooks that instructed women that “the health and happiness of the home depend on the wholesome and nutritious cooking, and this responsibility – a most important responsibility – rests entirely on the housewife.”²³⁴ Of all the

²²⁹ May, October 3, 2009.

²³⁰ Edna, August 10, 2009.

²³¹ May, October 3, 2009.

²³² Susan Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework*, New York, 1982, 41 in Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women*, 50.

²³³ Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes, “Constructing Homes: Gender and Advertising in *Home and Building*, 1936 -1970,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 33, no.2 (1999): 210; Frances Steele, “New Zealand is Butterland.!” *New Zealand Journal of History* 39, no. 2 (October 2005): 186; Helen Leach, “Culinary Traditions in Twentieth Century New Zealand,” *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks*, ed. Helen Leach (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2010), 61.

²³⁴ N.Z. “Truth’s” *Cookery Book: Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes* (Wellington: Truth, 1946), v.

forms of cooking, baking required the most skill, so the parade of perfect cakes and biscuits at Afternoon Tea signalled to guests that the hostess was a master of other forms of cooking and kept her family happy and well fed.

Marjorie explained that it was only cakes and things that you needed recipes for “because when it came to cooking savoury things you just cut up meat and vegies for the casserole and added flavouring and put it in the oven. You roasted meat of course, but presumably anyone can do that.”²³⁵ By contrast a *N.Z. Truth* article published in 1930 cautions women that “painstaking care is required to formulate and bake those tasty dishes which women like to serve at Afternoon Tea gatherings.”²³⁶ Another *N.Z. Truth* article from the same year states that “cake making is the real test of a good cook; for many a housewife who can serve up an excellent dinner, finds great difficulty in keeping her cakes from becoming soggy and heavy.”²³⁷ The link between being a good housewife and being a good baker was made explicit by Lois who said “you weren’t much of a housewife if you couldn’t make a sponge.”²³⁸ The baking of Afternoon Tea communicated to the hostess’s guests that she was living up to “the most important responsibility” of ensuring the “health and happiness” of her home through “the art of good cookery.”²³⁹

The way that baking was served at Afternoon Tea suggests that it was star of the performance, which in turn indicates that of all of the tasks of the housewife, cooking was among the most valued. Lois, Marjorie, Nell,

²³⁵ Marjorie, interview with the author, November 29.

²³⁶ “Successful Afternoon Socials,” *N.Z. Truth*, October 16, 1930, 23, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

²³⁷ “Cakes are Real Test: Lore of Pot and Pan,” *N.Z. Truth*, 25 September 1930, 20, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

²³⁸ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²³⁹ Federated Farmers of New Zealand, Women’s Division, Mayfield Branch, *Recipe Book*, Ashburton, 1950, 1, cited in Frances Steele, “New Zealand is Butterland,” 186.

Dorothy, Edna, Marge, and Iris all mentioned that the food was served on a tiered cake stand or a raised cake plate. The cake stands usually had three tiers. Marjorie told me “mother had a cake stand with three equal circles and the plates were white with a grey and black pattern around the edge, it really was very elegant.”²⁴⁰ Although Nell didn’t recall any rules about which foods went on which tiers, Lois and Dorothy were quite precise about what went where. Lois remembered, “you had tiny little sandwiches and then biscuits and then cakes on top.”²⁴¹ Dorothy recalled “they would have the sandwiches on the bottom and the nut loaf, and then the scones and then they would have the cakes on top.”²⁴² On top of each plate, beneath the food, was an embroidered or crocheted doyley.

Cake tiers had a practical function – they allowed several different types of food to be served without taking up too much space – but they also had a symbolic function, by elevating the food it became more eminent. The doyleys had no practical function; they served only to heighten the sense of display. The practice of putting cakes at the top of the cake stand suggests that cakes were the pre-eminent object of Afternoon Tea. If Afternoon Tea is accepted as a performance, and the objects of Afternoon Tea are seen as representative of the work of the housewife, then the starring role of cakes and baking at Afternoon Tea suggests that cooking was among the most valued of all of the tasks of the housewife.

When I thought about the linen of Afternoon Tea, I had assumed that the women would pay close attention to the execution of the embroidery on the hostess’s tea table. Lois soon put me right about this, saying, “There might have been some people that did. But they would take notice of how well it was laundered and whether it was starched or not. They would

²⁴⁰ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁴¹ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²⁴² Dorothy, November 30, 2009.

take notice of whether she was a good housewife or not.”²⁴³ This sentiment was echoed in my interview with Marjorie. When I asked her whether women noted the quality of the embroidery on table linen she was non-committal saying, “well it depended on the person, some people were not remotely interested in that sort of thing. I suppose you would notice if something was exceptionally well made.”²⁴⁴ However, when I asked her if it was important if it was clean, she was quite definite, replying, “Things had to be cleaned and ironed.”²⁴⁵ An article from a 1930 edition of *N.Z. Truth* suggests that the emphasis on cleanliness over execution was widespread. After noting that fashion dictated the choice of linen, the writer declares that “the most essential point about all linen is that it is beautifully laundered and fresh.”²⁴⁶

The linen of Afternoon Tea could be seen to represent the housewife’s work knitting, crocheting and sewing clothes for her family, a task which many women referred to in the course of their interview. But the fact that the skill of the hostess as an embroiderer was not generally noted, whereas her skill as laundress was, shows that the linen represented the housewife’s work cleaning, not sewing for her family. The focus on cleanliness in Lois and Marjorie’s comments and the *N.Z. Truth* article, suggests that of the tasks of the housewife, cleaning was valued over sewing. Lois’s words are telling. She makes a clear link between having clean linen and being a good housewife. Keeping things clean was ascribed moral value and it was one of the most important tasks of a housewife.

²⁴³ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²⁴⁴ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁴⁵ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁴⁶ “Simplicity Gives Best Results,” 23.

Daley found that washing and ironing featured predominantly in women's memories of their mother's domestic work.²⁴⁷ This is probably because doing laundry was exceptionally hard work and was the most dreaded household task.²⁴⁸ This may also be why it was perhaps one of the more valued tasks of the housewife. In the 1930s and 1940s the majority of farming women were still doing their washing using the copper, as they had been at the time of Daley's study.²⁴⁹ Iris, Lois, Edith, May and Jean all mentioned using the copper in the course of their interviews. The copper was a large copper bowl, with a fire underneath, which was set in concrete.²⁵⁰ Lois explained the washing process that clothes and household linen would go through. "They would be boiled and rinsed and then they would be 'blued'."²⁵¹ Washing had to be put in in the correct order; "all the whites go in first in the copper, then colours and so on."²⁵² One of Daley's oral narrators conveys the energy washing required:

Everything was sort of washed or scrubbed violently and then in to the copper and boiled up. And then back in the tub again with cold water to rinse them and then into the next tub, which had a blue bag in it and then out onto the line.

Washing using the copper was an arduous process, estimated to be as exhausting as "swimming five miles of energetic breast stroke."²⁵³

Once the linen was washed and dried it then had to be starched and ironed.²⁵⁴ Dorothy explained that to starch linen "you'd have to damp it

²⁴⁷ Daley, *Girls and Women*, 50.

²⁴⁸ Jean-Marie O'Donnell, "'Electric Servants' and the Science of Housework: Changing Patterns of Domestic Work. 1935-1956," in *Women in History Two*, eds., Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 169.

²⁴⁹ Matt Morris, "Unpaid Domestic Work - Housework and Caregiving," in *Te Ara - the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, updated March 4, 2010, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/unpaid-domestic-work/2>.

²⁵⁰ Matt Morris, "Unpaid Domestic Work - Housework and Caregiving."

²⁵¹ Lois, October 12, 2009.

²⁵² Edith, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

²⁵³ Christina Hardymont, *From Mangle to Microwave: The Mechanization of Household Work*, 10, cited in Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys*, 50.

all and roll it up and you couldn't press it till then."²⁵⁵ Rosemary McLeod details the particular care embroidered and crocheted linen required:

The embroidery, lace and other domestic handwork had to be washed carefully by hand, dried, then starched and ironed with skill before it was fully dry. Starching was a finely judged and delicate exercise; starched work had to be ironed at just the right point of dampness to get the desired crisp finish. Women had to know to iron embroidery from the back to keep its profile; they had to know how not to tear delicate lace.²⁵⁶

As Marjorie said, "they were pigs to iron the embroidered things."²⁵⁷ Lois told me that at the end of this lengthy process, the table linen must be folded correctly so that the folds sit appropriately on the tea table.

The display of well laundered linen at Afternoon Tea represented the hours and energy women spent washing every week. As noted earlier, as well as table cloths, women put out linen napkins, embroidered food covers, embroidered tea pot covers and doyleys which would go on top of the cake plates and under the cakes. McLeod aptly describes this as an "extravagant gesture" because "every woman present knew the labour involved in making these things, and the care taken with their laundering and ironing."²⁵⁸ When Iris contemplated the work of washing after Afternoon Tea she laughed and said, "Really and truly they made things awfully hard for themselves!"²⁵⁹ Nevertheless, although it increased the amount of washing they had to do, the array of clean linen was important to the hostess as it was proof to her guests that she was a "good housewife."

When one considers the amount of work laundering linen required, particularly embroidered linen, and the lack of recognition that women

²⁵⁴ Dorothy, November 30, 2009; Lois, October 12, 2009; and Daley, *Girls and Women*, 50.

²⁵⁵ Dorothy, November 30, 2009.

²⁵⁶ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 136.

²⁵⁷ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁵⁸ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 148.

²⁵⁹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

got for this work from their peers, it seems surprising that women went to the effort of embroidering anything at all. Even if they had confined their linen to white work they would have made things easier for themselves as the same care would not need to be taken to ensure colours did not run, but instead many favoured coloured embroidery. In part this could be attributed to fashion, but it can also be put down to the enjoyment women got from working linen.

Many of my research participants seemed to really enjoy their needlework, speaking of it in terms of a leisure activity. Nell said “I loved doing things with my hands” and then shortly afterwards as if to add emphasis she said “I enjoyed my handwork.”²⁶⁰ Lois, Edna and Dorothy told me that they embroidered at night. Edna “used to sit in front of the fire and listen to the radio and do embroidery.”²⁶¹ Lois would also snatch time during the day to embroider: “I have always stolen a few moments here and there.”²⁶² Using coloured linen on the table was impractical and it was not certain that the guests would notice the skill it was worked with, but it was still used. This suggests that it was made and put out, not for the benefit of guests, but because the hostess valued the creativity and workmanship that went into her craftwork.²⁶³

The display of finely embroidered linen also contributed to the housewife’s performance of refinement, assisted by the fine bone china and silver tea service. Rosemary McLeod remembers that her mother had embroidered tea towels for the use of any guest who offered to help with the dishes. She said “these were intended to give the artless impression...

²⁶⁰ Nell, July 13, 2009.

²⁶¹ Edna, August 10, 2009.

²⁶² Lois, October 12, 2009.

²⁶³ Rosemary McLeod comes to a similar conclusion in *Thrift to Fantasy*. She notes that, although looking after hand embroidered linen took time and skill, women still “carried out these delicate, time consuming tasks in the midst of demanding family lives.” From this McLeod concludes that women valued their embroidered handiwork and also that it was an outlet for their creativity. See McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 39.

that life in the household was one of constant refinement.” In the article “Simplicity Gives Best Results” the writer outlines the trappings of a formal Afternoon Tea, listing the “fragile and exquisite” china, linen “with fine embroidery or lace” and “silver, plain but good.”²⁶⁴ None of these items were particularly practical. As well as the work associated with washing the linen, the silver had to be polished and the fine china was easily broken. Rita was never allowed to do the washing up after an Afternoon Tea in case she broke one of her mother’s tea cups.

As I outlined earlier, the practice of using fine linen, china and silver for Afternoon Tea came from upper-class English women, who at that time would be known as ‘ladies.’ Until the end of the 1930s at least, upper-class English women had servants. So the ‘part’ played by the china, silver and linen was to align the hostess to the genteel lady of leisure. The reality was quite different. As Anne Steward wrote in 1941, “the housewife has to be chief cook and bottle washer in the morning and metamorphosise [sic] into the perfect hostess by the afternoon.”²⁶⁵ The role of the linen, the silverware and the chinaware was to help both hostess and guest to “play ladies.”

My research indicates that cooking and cleaning were the most valued tasks of the housewife, with cooking possibly being the most important. The food of Afternoon Tea represented the work of the housewife cooking for her family and also demonstrated she was a good cook and a hospitable woman. The linen of Afternoon Tea represented the arduous task of laundering using the copper and communicated to guests that the housewife kept a clean house, and so was a good housewife. Women also valued their embroidered linen as an outlet for creativity. The linen, china and silver linked the Afternoon Tea of New Zealand housewives to the

²⁶⁴ “Simplicity Gives Best Results,” 23.

²⁶⁵ Anne Steward, “What We Need Are Homes for New Zealanders,” *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Services*, Sept 26, 1941, 41.

afternoon tea of the English upper class, suggesting that refinement was aspect of female identity which women sought to convey.

Farming Women's Perceptions of Class

The china and silver of Afternoon Tea didn't just confer a sense of refinement on Afternoon Tea through association with the English upper class, these objects also marked out class differences within New Zealand society at that time. Through my interviews it became apparent that aspects of class influenced the way the women I spoke to experienced Afternoon Tea. Class was material to them, and so is material to this thesis. In this section I will briefly canvas recent historical research about class and egalitarianism in mid-twentieth century New Zealand and then examine my research participants' experiences of class in the context of Afternoon Tea.

A common theme in discussions about the operation of class in New Zealand's history is the lack of research on this topic. Writing in 2004, Jim McAloon declared that the study of class in New Zealand historiography had been "lopsided and meagre" for some time, and that the research which had been done focused on class consciousness, with an emphasis on the working class in the 1890s.²⁶⁶ Daley and Montgomerie comment on the lack of research on women and class in particular.²⁶⁷ However, since 2004, several books have been written which have gone some way to remedy this lack of class research. Melanie Nolan's work considers the variation in working-class culture and identity from the late nineteenth to the mid twentieth century through examining the lives of five siblings in

²⁶⁶ Jim McAloon, "Class in Colonial New Zealand: Towards a Historiographical Rehabilitation," *New Zealand Journal of History* 38, no.2 (2004):3.

²⁶⁷ Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, "Introduction," in *The Gendered Kiwi*, eds Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 9, 11-12.

the McCullough family.²⁶⁸ She includes biographies of two sisters, thus expanding the understanding of gender in a class context.²⁶⁹ Erik Olssen and Maureen Hickey use information gathered through the census and the Caversham project to identify the occupational structure of New Zealand between 1893 and 1938.²⁷⁰ Finally, Miles Fairburn and Erik Olssen bring a quantitative focus to New Zealand social history, pulling together chapters on class in the twentieth century, social structure and social mobility, the impact of gender and class on voting and “the cultural dimension of class and politics.”²⁷¹

Yet further research is required. Annabel Cooper suggests that Nolan could have included more discussion of the home in *Kin*, noting that “decor, food and dress would seem to have a place in thinking about how women enact class.”²⁷² Olssen and Hickey focus on the urban occupational structure which was mostly male, leaving space for research on women and class and also on class in rural areas.²⁷³ The chapters in Fairburn and Olssen’s volume have a deliberately quantitative focus, leaving room for understandings of class from a qualitative perspective. In her chapter on images used to portray class difference Lydia Bloy

²⁶⁸ Melanie Nolan, *Kin: A Collective Biography of a New Zealand Working Class Family* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2005), 17-18.

²⁶⁹ Nolan observes that although there are many biographies of working class women they focus on gender not class. Nolan, *Kin*, 17.

²⁷⁰ The Caversham Project is an interdisciplinary study of the southern suburbs of Dunedin between 1881 and 1940. The project data base draws on electoral roles, marriage records, death certificates etc to provide information on all adults registered to vote in the southern Dunedin suburbs between 1881 and 1940. “About the Project,” last modified November 4, 2010, <http://caversham.otago.ac.nz/about/project.php>; David Hood, “Appendix II, Quantitative and Qualitative Databases of the Caversham Project,” in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, eds. Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 362-370.

²⁷¹ Miles Fairburn and Erik Olssen, eds., *Class, Gender and the Vote: Historical Perspectives of New Zealand*, eds. Miles Fairburn and Erik Olssen, (Otago: Otago University Press, 2005); 12-14.

²⁷² Annabel Cooper, review of *Kin: A Collective Biography of a New Zealand Working Class Family*, by Melanie Nolan, *New Zealand Journal of History* 40, no.2 (2006): 258.

²⁷³ Jim McAloon, review of *Class and Occupation: the New Zealand Reality*, by Erik Olssen and Maureen Hickey, *New Zealand Journal of History* 40, no.2 (2006): 265.

observes that there is a particular lack of research on how New Zealanders understood class.²⁷⁴ It is into the spaces left by these works that I offer some conclusions related particularly to how rural women perceived and enacted class in their homes in the 1930s.

There are good reasons why there is lack of research on rural women's perceptions of class. Such research is fraught with difficulties which need to be outlined and addressed. Although all of the women whose interviews inform this section were farmer's wives and daughters, and so ostensibly belonged to one social group, within the group there were clear strata. This observation reflects the findings of other researchers who have examined this issue in rural New Zealand. In their work on class structure in New Zealand between 1911 and 1951, Stephen Haslett and Miles Fairburn note that the market power of people calling themselves farmers was so divergent that it was "impossible to determine where anyone wearing such a label belongs in the class schema."²⁷⁵ James Belich discusses the disparity between affluent meat farmers and struggling dairy farmers and posits a hierarchy of farmers wherein "Run holders outranked farmers, sheep men outranked dairy men and old money outranked new."²⁷⁶ Similarly, in her study of Waikato farm women in the 1950s, Parker found that some women drew distinctions between "the property owners who employed labour and the dairy farmers reliant on family labour, the sharemilkers and farm managers employed by rentiers, and farm labourers."²⁷⁷ When considering class in a rural context, the researcher must be aware of the disparity of wealth and status amongst farmers and farm workers and factor this into any analysis.

²⁷⁴ Lydia Bloy, "'Class' in the Eye of the Beholder in 1930s and 1940's New Zealand Society," in *Class, Gender and the Vote: Historical Perspectives of New Zealand*, eds. Miles Fairburn and Erik Olssen (Otago: Otago University Press, 2005), 175-192.

²⁷⁵ Miles Fairburn and Steve Haslett, "The New Zealand Social Structure, 1911-1951: Did it become more Middle Class?," *New Zealand Sociology* 20, no.1 (2005): 34.

²⁷⁶ James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin Press, 2001), 149.

²⁷⁷ Parker, "A Golden Decade?" 217.

Examining perceptions of class is more complicated. In her work on class imagery in the 1930s and 1940s, Bloy identifies the difficulties in doing this. She observes that contemporary researchers cannot draw objective conclusions about how class *was* perceived during that period; they can only infer how it *appears* to have been perceived.²⁷⁸ Even understanding how class appears to have been perceived is complicated because people have such a “hotchpotch of ambiguous and contradictory and unexplored ideas about class.”²⁷⁹ Bloy goes on to examine the difficulties of accessing past perceptions of class. She states that oral histories are problematic because they are unavoidably influenced by contemporary conceptions of class; the memories of interview participants are tainted by contemporary understandings of class, and the researcher’s view of class influences the questions asked, the answers received, and ultimately the understandings obtained.²⁸⁰

To avoid these pitfalls, Bloy bases her analysis of perceptions of class on a wide range of published written sources. While Bloy’s criticisms of oral histories are valid, the limits of understandings obtained from published sources also need to be acknowledged. Bloy does this, noting that the texts she draws on tend to be by the educated and the literate. Another limitation of written sources of this era is that many are written by men so they cannot provide information about how women perceived class. As I have already noted, oral histories, for all their problems, are an important source of information about ordinary women whose lives were not documented in public records. I could not avoid modern notions of class influencing my participants’ memories of how they perceived class. However, because discussions of class came out of general discussions about Afternoon Tea and were not prompted by me asking specific

²⁷⁸ Bloy, “‘Class’ in the Eye of the Beholder,” 176.

²⁷⁹ Bloy, “‘Class’ in the Eye of the Beholder,” 176.

²⁸⁰ Bloy, “‘Class’ in the Eye of the Beholder,” 178.

questions about class, I believe that my own understandings of class had less of an effect on the way perceptions of class were discussed.

When considering the meanings people attach to the concept of class, McAloon argues that it is important not to lose sight of the economic strictures and influences which shape people's views.²⁸¹ Accordingly, I am going to consider the views of the women I interviewed in terms of the class distinctions articulated by Parker. I have chosen Parker's model because it was derived from interviews with women from a similar time and place to those women I interviewed and because its detail reverberates with the experiences of my own research participants.

I have drawn on the interviews of six women in particular for this section. Edith, May and Nora were daughters and/or wives of dairy farmers so were located in the lower spectrum of the farming hierarchy. Eileen's family were in the middle; they were wealthy enough to have a billiard table, but she did not consider herself posh. Iris and Marjorie were towards the top of Parker's hierarchy. Iris spoke of employing shearers and Marjorie's mother had help in the house. Lois said of Marjorie that "she speaks beautifully and that. She's a real lady."²⁸² I analysed the oral narratives by looking for shared themes and common tendencies, as recommended by Bloy.²⁸³ Experiences of class were most apparent when talking about the formalities of Afternoon Tea, who socialised with whom, and the china that was used.

I have only analysed the interviews of those women who spoke about class. Interestingly these women were all from rural backgrounds. This could simply be because the majority of the women I interviewed were from farms. It could also be that class distinctions were more obvious in

²⁸¹ McAloon, "Class in Colonial New Zealand," 4.

²⁸² Lois, October 12, 2009.

²⁸³ Bloy, "'Class' in the Eye of the Beholder," 177.

the country. More research is needed about urban women's experiences of class.

Amongst the women I spoke to, the way one 'did' Afternoon Tea was linked to class. This was made most apparent by Nora, who said of Afternoon Tea gatherings after World War Two, "we had already dispensed with the class system and putting on of any trying to put [out] what nice china we had."²⁸⁴ So strong was the connection between class and china for Nora, that not having nice china was a way of dismissing the class system. Similarly, Eileen used the fact that her mother did not always do Afternoon Teas 'in style' to illustrate that they were not 'as posh':

People were always coming in for morning and afternoon teas. But it was not always done in style. I have a picture of us sitting out in the back yard of our farm house in the sun just having a cup of tea sitting on stools all the time when we were on our own, or when we had visitors. It was quite interesting because I felt in a way that I didn't have the sort of, great history of how things were done. But I thought, okay there is that other side of people who aren't as posh.²⁸⁵

In contrast, May brought out her best linen and china to bridge class differences between her and any 'posh' visitors. When speaking of hosting Afternoon Tea she said "if they were a bit posh looking, you tried to put on your best tablecloth, but you always had [nice china] in your china cabinet, you could always bring them [nice china] out. You could put on a bit of a show, but if there was only yourselves well you'd just have your ordinary kitchen cups."²⁸⁶ As I discussed in the previous section, by using her best linen and her best china and putting on 'a bit of a show' May could imply refinement, she could also use her china and linen to play the part of someone from a higher social class to the one she felt she belonged too. For Nora, Eileen and May, the way a table was laid out for Afternoon

²⁸⁴ Nora, interview with the author, November 30, 2009

²⁸⁵ Eileen, October 12, 2009.

²⁸⁶ May, October 3, 2009.

Tea was linked to class. The posh put out fine linen and china as a matter of course for visitors, the non-posh did not.

Edith and May seemed the most conscious of class distinctions in their communities, which were demonstrated by who would visit them for Afternoon Tea. Speaking of their local elite May recalled “They didn’t mix with us... You went to school dos and they would be nice to you there or anything on in the district... but they didn’t visit.”²⁸⁷ Edith affirmed this saying “No they never.”²⁸⁸ In Edith and May’s community, the home was the site where class distinctions were enacted. Although people might be polite to you in the public sphere, social strata was delineated by who would visit you and who would not.

While the formalities of Afternoon Tea and who you socialised with might vary between the posh and the non-posh, the food eaten did not seem to. This is best demonstrated in comparing the Afternoon Tea baking of Edith and May with that of Iris. As noted above, Edith and May were adamant that they were not part of the posh set. Edith seems to epitomize the struggling dairy farmer Belich speaks about. While her husband worked on another farm she milked the cows as well as raising her five children and running her home without help. By contrast, Iris, who would never presume to call herself posh, came from a well-known local family. She said “Growing up I mean everything money was short all the time, but we were always well dressed, but we did make a lot of our clothes, and we did go to balls, I had a ball gowns made at home.”²⁸⁹ Unlike Edith and May, Iris and her step mother had more formal Afternoon Teas, where the best linen, silver and china were used as a matter of course.

²⁸⁷ May, October 3, 2009.

²⁸⁸ Edith, October 3, 2009.

²⁸⁹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

However, the food that all three women remember eating is very similar. Fruit cake, rock cakes, sultana cakes and scones were pantry staples. Iris does remember various Danish cakes but these reflect her step-mother's Danish heritage rather than her class. The lack of variety in the foods eaten by Edith, May and Iris reflects Veart's findings about the similarity of recipes in cookbooks across the spectrum of New Zealand society in the middle of the twentieth century.²⁹⁰ Veart asserts that the similarity of recipes reflects "a more homogenous New Zealand society."²⁹¹ However Veart bases this assertion only on the similarity of the foods. He does not take into account the differences in how the foods were served and who they were shared with. When these differences are considered alongside the similarities, they suggest a society with a reasonably flat structure in terms of access to basic goods, but with a perceived hierarchy in terms of status. This supports Nolan's view of a New Zealand society wherein "equality was greater in NZ than in many other societies, but... was, in any case always fractured by class, gender and race."²⁹²

Edith, May and Nora perceived New Zealand society in the 1930s and 1940s as a society marked, if not fractured, by class. But what about Marjorie and Iris who sit at the top of the hierarchy suggested by Parker? How did they perceive class? In her analysis of perceptions of class in texts of the 1930s and 1940s, Bloy notes that there was a contemporary reticence in discussing the issue.²⁹³ In a similar vein, Belich observed that "as the twentieth century wore on... it became increasingly unwise to be too genteel or to consume too conspicuously."²⁹⁴ Both reticence in

²⁹⁰ Veart compares two cookbooks, *The Diners Digest* a wartime fundraiser compiled by the Auckland Travel Club, and the *Jubilee Cookery Book* compiled by women of Upper Waitotara Valley in 1958. David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 111-112.

²⁹¹ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 112.

²⁹² Melanie Nolan, "Constantly on the Move, but Going Nowhere? Work, Community and Social Mobility," in *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 357.

²⁹³ Bloy, "'Class' in the Eye of the Beholder," 177.

²⁹⁴ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 131.

discussing class and the dislike of conspicuous consumption were evident in my interviews with Marjorie and Iris. Unlike Edith and May, who peppered their conversation with references to the “posh”, the “hobnobs” and “the snooty lot out there”, neither Iris nor Marjorie spoke about groups of people in terms of class distinction.²⁹⁵ They did, however, speak with a degree of negativity about women who were overly concerned with status, as made manifest by their interest in makes of china.

According to Louise Purbick, “There can be no doubt that an economic and social hierarchical order can be established through the demonstration of ownership of more or less prestigious varieties of china.” Comments from Iris and Marjorie suggest that this also holds true for New Zealand society of the 1930s and 1940s. They both spoke of a hierarchy in the brands of china and in general, the finer the china, the better the quality and the more expensive it was. Marjorie told me that when handling china, the quality was “pretty obvious because of the thickness of it. Some was very lovely and some was quite ordinary.”²⁹⁶ The type of tea set one had was a reasonably clear marker of family wealth. Although one might discern the quality of china through its thickness, it was not the done thing to look at the base of the cup to see who it was made by. As Marjorie explained “you certainly didn't pick it up and have a look underneath it. Mum used to get most upset if she saw people look at the bottom.”²⁹⁷

Just as undue interest in the make of your host's china was frowned upon, undue concern with the make of the china you owned or wanted to own was also unseemly. Those who expressed such concerns were the subject of gentle derision. Marjorie recalls the way that “some people used to rather stress what their china was. You didn't really talk about those kind of things. Makes me think of, you know, that silly tv thing” (Marjorie is

²⁹⁵ Edith, October 3, 2009; May, October 3, 2009.

²⁹⁶ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁹⁷ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

talking about the social climber and snob Hyacinth Bucket from *Keeping up Appearances*).²⁹⁸ Iris recounted a story relayed to her by the owner of the local china shop: “this person came in and wanted to buy a dinner set and ... she liked the pattern and she said oh, if only it had Spode, if it only it had Spode on it. And this became a joke at Lattey’s (the local china shop).”²⁹⁹ China quality can be viewed as a proxy for wealth and to a degree, status. Placing emphasis on the brand of china owned by oneself or others suggests concern with displaying wealth and status. Such snobbery was not considered appropriate by Marjorie, Iris or the clientele of the local china shop.

The reticence in talking about class that Bloy observed was most marked in my interviews with Marjorie and Iris, who sat at the middle and upper end of the farming hierarchy. It was not present at all in my interview with Edith and May. Iris and Marjorie also made it clear that it was not done to be too concerned with makes of china, and so status and wealth. It would be useful to explore further the difference in perceptions of class between different strata, as it seems that while those at the lower end of the spectrum talked freely about class, those at the higher end avoided it and considered explicit concern with status inappropriate. The conclusions I have drawn here are based on a very small sample of women and they suggest some interesting understandings of perceptions of class in New Zealand which could be focused upon more directly in other research.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored how material culture can be used to reveal and express two aspects of identity: gender identity and class identity. The first has been the subject of several studies, but there remains a lack of

²⁹⁸ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

²⁹⁹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

research on women's lives as housewives — a key aspect of female identity shaped by community expectations in the era of my study. Afternoon Tea was an expected part of married life. Analyzing Afternoon Tea as a performance of the identity of housewifeliness revealed that each element of the tea table related to an aspect of that identity. The baking represented the work of the housewife cooking for her family and her skill in the kitchen, the linen stood for the terrible task of doing the laundry using the copper. My oral narrators directly linked being a 'good' housewife to baking skill and clean laundry. My research also suggests that of the tasks of the housewife, baking and laundering were the most valued. The use of embroidered linen and fine china also shows that refinement was a part of female identity that many wished to portray. Class identity has received considerably less scholarly attention in New Zealand. My research into Afternoon Tea has contributed to understandings in this area. Those at the lower end of the class spectrum identified themselves as being so by the fact that they did not use fine china and fine linen as a matter of course for Afternoon Tea, although they did have it available to use if the situation required them to portray a more refined identity. Those at the higher end of the class spectrum were aware the china was, to a degree, an indication of the wealth of the owner, but they emphasised that it was considered distasteful to be overly brand conscious. This shows those towards the top of the social strata sought to portray an identity unconcerned with social status.

Chapter Three

Pakeha Culture and Afternoon Tea

Roses, shamrocks, thistles, cottages, koruru and Bambi. This incongruous collection of icons were the decorative motifs that appeared on the teacups, silverware and table linen of the women I interviewed. They reflect some of the cultural influences in play in New Zealand in the 1930s and 1940s, and still others emerged as I conducted this research. The seminal writer on culture, Raymond Williams, defined the word as being both “the whole way of life”, that is everyday life including traditions and also “the arts and learning.”³⁰⁰ I have used this inclusive definition when considering cultural influences in this chapter. Scholars of Pakeha culture agree that it is a hybrid culture, exceptional only in the degree it was influenced by other western cultures.³⁰¹ In this chapter I explore some of its strands. In the performance and material culture of Afternoon Tea I found traces of influence from European immigrants, American popular culture, the ongoing effects of ‘recolonisation’ and also cultural nationalism. This chapter discusses these in turn, in an attempt to elicit the wider influences of society on my sample of Manawatu women and their domestic practices.

³⁰⁰ Raymond Williams, “Culture is Ordinary [1958],” in *The Everyday Life Reader*, ed. Ben Highmore (London: Routledge, 2002), 93; John Higgins, “Part 1: Introduction,” in *The Raymond Williams Reader*, [ed. John Higgins (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 3-4.

³⁰¹ Caroline Daley, “Modernity, Consumption and Leisure,” in *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 2009), 425; Avril Bell, “‘Half-castes’ and ‘White Natives’: The Politics of Maori – Pakeha Hybrid Identities,” in *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, eds. Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 131. Claudia Bell, “Kiwiana Revisited,” in *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, eds. Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 175; Douglas Hoey, “There will always be a Taupo: Some reflections on Pakeha culture,” in *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place* edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 194-5.

My examination of the tea sets, linen and silver of Afternoon Tea is based on objects belonging to six of the oral narrators: Rita, Lois, Eileen, Nora, Iris and Marjorie. Not all of the women still had their silver, china and table linen, and not all of the women were happy with me photographing these items for reasons of security, hence the reduced sample size. When analysing photographs of the silverware, chinaware and table linen, I paid particular attention to the motifs which appeared on each item. I based this approach on the work of Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, who used the patterns embroidered on a chimney piece to gain understandings about rural life in the United States prior to the nineteenth century.³⁰² I looked for recurring decorative motifs to determine key themes. To get a sense of what the most commonly served foods were, I recorded each food item my interview participants said they served at Afternoon Tea into a spreadsheet, and this allowed me to quickly discern trends. I used recipes in contemporary recipe books to complement these findings.

Roses, Shamrocks and Thistles: The Influence of European Immigrants on Afternoon Tea

Until recently the Europeans who immigrated to New Zealand in the nineteenth and early twentieth century were lumped together into the catch all category “British.”³⁰³ But British is not a ‘race’, it is a hybrid of English, Scottish and Welsh nations, and it excludes the Irish. England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland all had distinct cultures, and immigrants from these nations brought these cultures to New Zealand.³⁰⁴ The category British also ignores the immigrants from continental Europe such as the Danes, the Norwegians, the Germans and the Dalmatians. According to Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, until the 1990s, historians paid little

³⁰² Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Vintage books, 2001), 39.

³⁰³ Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 10.

³⁰⁴ James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin Press, 2001), 216, 217.

attention to the ethnic diversity of immigrants to New Zealand and the influences they might have had.³⁰⁵ In this chapter I will look at how English, Scottish, Irish and Danish heritage shaped Afternoon Tea for my women interviewees. I will draw on two key works by James Belich, and Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, which consider how the culture of these immigrant groups influenced Pakeha culture into the twentieth century. Phillips and Hearn provide a useful overview of existing research on the various immigrant groups who came to New Zealand. Most studies seem to be based on shipping records and focus on the decade of the 1870s.³⁰⁶

According to the accounts of James Belich, and Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, by the interwar period, the regional differences amongst Pakeha New Zealanders had been homogenised into one “British” identity.³⁰⁷ Belich argues that this “British” identity was strongly influenced by English and Scottish cultures, with little influence from the Irish, who, despite maintaining a strong sense of Irishness through schools and the Catholic Church, had little impact on wider New Zealand culture because of their tendency to cluster in groups.³⁰⁸ Phillips and Hearn draw similar conclusions. They note the lack of Irish influence, a strong Scottish influence and a “huge” English influence.³⁰⁹

Both books look at the big picture of immigrant influence on Pakeha culture. Although Phillips and Hearn make some mention of immigrant influence on Pakeha food habits, neither work goes into detail about how these immigrant influences played out in the home.³¹⁰ Looking at the performance and the material culture of Afternoon Tea provides insights into how cultural influences were enacted in the home and which

³⁰⁵ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 10.

³⁰⁶ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 11, 13.

³⁰⁷ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 123, 216; Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 194.

³⁰⁸ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 221, 222.

³⁰⁹ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 161, 172, 177.

³¹⁰ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 168, 172.

immigrant influences were dominant in the 1930s and 1940s. This research tests whether the large scale trends found by Belich, and Phillips and Hearn were discernable in daily life in the Manawatu.

Phillips and Hearn argue that New Zealand's British identity was an imperial identity, and that this imperial identity was mainly shaped by upper-class and middle-class English values.³¹¹ They argue that "Imperial ideology helped to strengthen the dominance of upper-class English traditions over regional ones."³¹² The practice of Afternoon Tea in New Zealand seems to exemplify this dominance of upper-class English traditions.

Every woman I interviewed and/or their mother hosted Afternoon Tea, and every description of Afternoon Tea included the same elements essential to the afternoon tea of the English upper-class outlined in chapter one: the bone china tea set, silver tea service, and linen tablecloth. Importantly, the food summed up by Lois as "something buttered, something biscuity, and something cakey" closely resembles the cake based menu of afternoon tea rather than the meat based menu of high tea.³¹³ That all the women I interviewed 'did' Afternoon Tea, and did it in a way that so closely resembled the English upper-class ritual, supports Phillips and Hearn's argument that Pakeha culture was strongly influenced by the English upper-class.

The strength of this finding may be tempered by the high proportion of English ancestry among the women I interviewed. Six out of ten were descended from English immigrants. However, as roughly two thirds of immigrants to New Zealand were English, and approximately two thirds

³¹¹ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 160, 161.

³¹² Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 181.

³¹³ Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009. See chapter one for distinctions between afternoon tea and high tea.

of immigrants to the Manawatu were English, the English bias of my study reflects the English bias of the Manawatu and New Zealand at this time.³¹⁴

According to Belich and also Hearn and Phillips, the Scottish immigrants had a discernable impact on New Zealand culture.³¹⁵ This can in part be ascribed to the number of Scots who immigrated to New Zealand.³¹⁶ After the English, they were the second biggest immigrant group to New Zealand. Although Scots were only about ten per cent of the population of the United Kingdom, by 1891 they made up roughly a quarter of New Zealand's United Kingdom born population.³¹⁷ However, the degree of influence the Scots had on Afternoon Tea is unclear. There is a frequently mentioned connection between the Scots and a love of baking. According to Phillips and Hearn, an area of North Canterbury which had a high concentration of Scottish settlers was known 'the land o cakes' after Robbie Burns' description of Scotland.³¹⁸ When Eric Linklater visited New Zealand in 1953, he found the whole country to be a 'land o cakes', and likened New Zealand to Scotland: "the New Zealanders, like the Scots, think that baking is the better part of cookery, and spend their ingenuity, exhaust their interest, on cakes and pastries and ebullient, vast cream sponges."³¹⁹

The array of baked goods at Afternoon Tea may be evidence of a Scottish influence. Phillips and Hearn give the popularity of scones as an example of the impact of Scottish immigrants in New Zealand and Belich cites the

³¹⁴ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 145.

³¹⁵ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 219, 221; Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 170-175.

³¹⁶ Other reasons for the strong Scottish influence are that the Scots had their own church, Presbyterianism, and the large Scottish settlements in Otago and Southland. Both the factors encouraged in-marriage. Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 220.

³¹⁷ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 54.

³¹⁸ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 175.

³¹⁹ Hamish Keith and William Main, *New Zealand Yesterdays: A Look at our Recent Past* (Sydney: Readers Digest Services, 1984), 178.

popularity of shortbread.³²⁰ Marjorie and Eileen did remember that shortbread was served at Afternoon Tea, and scones were certainly common – they were mentioned in over half of the interviews. However the popularity of scones could also be put down to practicality. They were quick to make if unexpected guests arrived and your cake tins were empty.³²¹ Even if scones were associated with the Scottish they were popular all over Britain and were a mainstay of English teas.

There are a number of factors that could account for the lack of evidence of Scottish influence on Afternoon Tea. Between 1840 and 1945, roughly twenty per cent of the people in the Manawatu region born in the United Kingdom were from Scotland, which is just below the national average.³²² So the Manawatu can be viewed as slightly less Scottish than other parts of the country. Furthermore, only one of my interview subjects had Scottish heritage. Lastly there is an apparent lack of research on Afternoon Tea or baking in Scotland, and until more is known in both these areas it will be difficult to establish how Scottish culture influenced Afternoon Tea.

Phillips and Hearn, and Belich, found little Irish influence on mainstream Pakeha culture.³²³ Accordingly one would expect little Irish influence on Afternoon Tea. Of the women I interviewed, Eileen and Edith were of Irish descent. When they spoke of the paraphernalia of their formal Afternoon Tea parties, they listed items characteristic of an upper class English afternoon tea. Only Eileen still had her china and linen, but in these items and in her family recipes was evidence of her Irish background.

³²⁰ Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, Phillips and Hearn, 172; Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 219.

³²¹ As noted in chapter 1, when unexpected guests came, Edith told me “you made a batch of scones that was all you could do.” Edith, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

³²² Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, 149.

³²³ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 221, 222; Phillips and Hearn, *Settlers*, 161, 172, 177.

Eileen's mother's family immigrated to New Zealand from Northern Ireland. Eileen has a fine collection of Irish linen from her Irish grandmother, including a supper cloth embroidered with shamrocks. One of the recipes in Eileen's collections is for Ballyroney biscuits. Eileen explained they were given this name "Because that is where my mother came from."³²⁴ Eileen also has an Irish Belleek china tea cup decorated with shamrocks, which Eileen described as "a special Irish thing."³²⁵ Eileen explained that Belleek china was "very very fine and my grandmother and grandparents went back to Ireland in the 1930s and my grandmother brought a whole tea set."³²⁶ It was tempting to imagine the linen, the biscuits and the china all being used in an Irish version of Afternoon tea but this wasn't the case. Eileen said of the biscuits "I actually don't remember there being Ballyroney biscuits as a child"; of the table cloths "I don't remember them being used"; and of the tea cups "Mum gave us one of those each for Christmas but I have never used it."³²⁷ It seems that Eileen and her mother treasured these items as part of their Irish heritage, but this heritage did not inflect the way they practiced Afternoon Tea.

³²⁴ Eileen, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

³²⁵ Eileen, October 12, 2009.

³²⁶ Eileen, October 12, 2009.

³²⁷ Eileen, October 12, 2009.



Figure 1. Shamrock detail on embroidered Irish linen supper cloth

Photograph by Author



Figure 2. Belleek china tea cup

Photograph by Author

Belich tells us that New Zealand society of the first part of the twentieth century placed “immense pressure on ethnic minorities to conform and

assimilate” as British citizens.³²⁸ Although the majority of immigrants came from the United Kingdom, significant numbers also came from other European countries. Up until the 1950s Scandinavians were the most favoured continental European immigrants because of their reputation for assimilating into New Zealand society.³²⁹ Belich quotes Lochore, a contemporary immigration expert, who explained that Scandinavians were “the least alien of aliens, melting away into the British population like snow on the Wellington hills.”³³⁰

Danes were among the first European settlers of Palmerston North, led by Bishop Monrad who arrived in 1866. Monrad was “influential in Denmark, persuading other families to come to New Zealand and the Manawatu.”³³¹ In 1871 Danes and Norwegians arrived and settled on forty acre sections near Awapuni, and a second group settled near Whakarongo.³³² Two of the women I interviewed had Danish connections, although none were of Danish descent. Nell married into one of the old Danish families, and Iris was brought up by her Danish step-mother.

In *Paradise Reforged*, Belich comments on the lack of research on Scandinavian immigrants to New Zealand. Through the recollections of these women, my research makes a small contribution to this area. Nell remembers that “for the Danish they used to use Danish kremler, or another coffee cake was called coffee brod.”³³³ However Nell’s memories of the Afternoon Teas that she hosted did not seem to include Danish food. Similarly, Iris remembers that when growing up, “we didn’t do a lot

³²⁸ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 218.

³²⁹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 225.

³³⁰ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 225.

³³¹ Montague Harry Holcroft, *The Line of the Road* (Dunedin: John McIndoe Limited, 1977), 5. Awapuni is now a suburb of Palmerston North, Whakarongo is on the outskirts of the city.

³³² Holcroft, *Line of the Road*, 5.

³³³ Nell, interview with the author, July 13, 2009.

of Danish."³³⁴ Certainly the Afternoon Tea parties that her mother gave were done in full English style, with the requisite linen, china and silverware. This suggests that the Danish influence on Afternoon Tea was slight, even amongst Danish families, but it does not necessarily imply that the Danes had thoroughly assimilated. Although Nell's Afternoon Tea was English, her after-dinner drink was Danish: coffee. Nell recalled that she "used the demitasse after dinner for years and years... we had three different sets there, they were given to us as wedding presents, they were very nice, little demitasse cups."³³⁵

Disney and Aunt Daisy: American Culture and Afternoon Tea

While the influence of English culture is predominant in Afternoon Tea, I found that there were other cultural influences at play, although these were few and far between. Two objects from the group of women I interviewed show the pervasive and growing influence of American culture, specifically Hollywood. They stand out amongst the rose, thistles and shamrocks. The first was a supper cloth from Eileen's collection. The cloth, made in 1948 by her sister, is decorated with scenes from Walt Disney's movie *Bambi*. The second example, a tea casket, I found advertised in a 1939 edition of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly*.³³⁶ The tea casket, which was part of a promotion for Roma Tea, features scenes from another Disney film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. American culture increasingly influenced New Zealand culture in the 1930s and 40s, particularly through film and the relatively new technology of radio.

³³⁴ Iris, interview with the author, July 25, 2009.

³³⁵ Nell, July 13, 2009.

³³⁶"The New 2lb Roma Tea Casket, Illustrating in Seven Colours *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*," *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* March 23, (1939), inside cover.



Figure 3. Bambi detail from super cloth

Photograph by Author

Over the period of my study, the number of radios in New Zealand increased significantly, and so did New Zealand's connection with the wider world. In 1930 there were 50,000 radio receivers in New Zealand, and by 1939 there were 317,000.³³⁷ As Margaret Bondfield declared in a 1939 edition of the *New Zealand Listener*, radio brought "the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living-rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties."³³⁸ Yet the world brought into New Zealand's kitchens was a staunchly British one. As Belich explains, because of public outcry and state intervention, there were few American serials on New Zealand radio.³³⁹ Instead they were mainly Australian or British.³⁴⁰

Nevertheless, the flavour of the United States did reach the homes of New Zealand, quite literally through the broadcasts of Maud Basham as 'Aunt

³³⁷Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 251; "To Every Listener...Why," *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service*, Vol 1., No 1. June 30 (1939):3.

³³⁸ Margaret Bondfield quoted in "Woman and the Home," *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service* Vol 1, No2, July 7 (1939):14.

³³⁹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 253.

³⁴⁰ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 253-4.

Daisy'.³⁴¹ Aunt Daisy's show which included recipes and handy hints began broadcasting nationally in 1936 and she soon became a New Zealand icon.³⁴² As Aunt Daisy, Basham also published a number of cookbooks. In 1935 Maud Basham made the first of a series of visits to the United States and from then on she incorporated American recipes into her radio and cookery book repertoire.³⁴³ Aunt Daisy brought Uncle Sam into kiwi kitchens.

Marjorie, Lois, Edna and Marge all remembered listening to Aunt Daisy. But although American cakes appeared in Aunt Daisy's cookbooks and broadcasts, they were rarely talked about in my interviews. The one reference made to an American cake came from Dorothy, and this cake was not a success: "my husband brought a recipe back from America and it was called angel's food and it takes 12 eggs, and I made this bally thing... I was so angry, I was at the back door and just threw it – not even the birds would eat it."³⁴⁴ The infrequent mention of American cakes amongst the women I interviewed suggests that while they and/or their mothers might enjoy hearing about American cakes on the radio as they worked in their kitchens, the American recipes didn't change the way they cooked.

According to Belich, film was a much greater source of American influence than radio, as American films dominated our cinemas.³⁴⁵ This is supported by the two Walt Disney objects shown to me. Both the supper cloth and the tea casket undoubtedly reflect the popularity of Disney films

³⁴¹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 253. David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 200-204; David Burton, *David Burton's New Zealand Food and Cookery* (Auckland: David Bateman Ltd, 2009), 59-60.

³⁴² Peter Downes, "Basham, Maud Ruby 1879 - 1963," in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June, 2007, <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 200; Burton, *Food and Cookery*, 60; Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 253.

³⁴³ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 200-204.

³⁴⁴ Dorothy, interview with the author, November 30, 2009.

³⁴⁵ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 253.

and the influence of American movies on New Zealand culture. Yet the 'Americanness' of both these items is mediated by Englishness. I found the Bambi pattern in loose pages of a 1942 edition of the *English Woman's Journal*.³⁴⁶ The Tea Casket, while decorated with characters from an American film, still held tea that most English of drinks. The tea it contained most likely came from Ceylon then a British Colony.³⁴⁷ In this case the 'Americanness' was more of a veneer.

The English Cottage Garden: Recolonisation and Motifs of the Tea

Table.

"If it had roses and a bit of gold on it, at that stage of our history it would sell."³⁴⁸ This was the summary of the china market in New Zealand in the late 1940s by Tom Clark, the founder of Crown Lynn. He was right, although he could have thrown in primroses and hollyhocks for good measure. English cottage garden flowers were exceptionally popular decorative motifs on tea sets and table linen amongst the women I interviewed. Of the five women who still had their tea sets, four had tea sets featuring English cottage garden flowers including hollyhocks, primroses and roses. Of the seven women who had kept their table linen, all had linen showing cottage garden flowers, notably daisies, daffodils, forget-me-nots and poppies.

³⁴⁶ I don't have a date for this as I only have the two pages with the pattern on it, one of which happened to have a 1943 Calendar on the back of it, suggesting that the magazine was published in late 1942 (which was when Bambi was released).

³⁴⁷ Across the period of my study, the majority of tea imported to New Zealand came from Ceylon. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1936*, comp. The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand (Wellington: Government Printer, 1935), 225; *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1941*, comp. The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand (Wellington: Government Printer, 1941), 235; *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1946*, comp. The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand (Wellington: Government Printer, 1948), 858; *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1951-52*, comp. The Census and Statistics Office of New Zealand (Wellington: Government Printer, 1952), 258.

³⁴⁸ Valerie Ringer Monk, *Crown Lynn; A New Zealand Icon* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006), 36.



Figure 4. Poppy and aster detail on embroidered supper cloth

Photograph by Author



Figure 5. Daffodil detail on embroidered supper cloth

Photograph by Author



Figure 6. Primrose tea set

Photograph by Author



Figure 7. Hollyhock tea set

Photograph by Author

Most tea sets and embroidery patterns did come from England, perhaps explaining the emphasis on *English* flowers, but still the preference for cottage flowers is noteworthy.³⁴⁹ Although the majority of embroidery

³⁴⁹ Rosemary McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s* (Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 210. The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of

patterns I saw were floral, tea sets came with a range of motifs, but of those available, cottage flowers were preferred. The most commonly mentioned make of china, Royal Albert, was known for its floral patterns and had strong export sales in New Zealand and Australia.³⁵⁰

Rosemary McLeod also observed this strong preference for English cottage garden flowers in *Thrift to Fantasy* suggesting that the cottage garden theme was typical of this era. Based on her extensive collection of mid-twentieth century handcrafts, McLeod states that women's handcrafts "illustrated nothing but plants common in English Gardens - hollyhocks, delphiniums, roses, formalised yew trees."³⁵¹ McLeod found little evidence that New Zealand women embroidered native trees and plants; instead women preferred "the loved cottage plants of the remembered English past."³⁵²

McLeod sees the proliferation of English cottage garden flowers as a sign that New Zealand women still saw themselves as British.³⁵³ This is possible but I think it is more likely that New Zealand women saw themselves as "Better British." In *Paradise Reforged*, James Belich argues that from the late nineteenth century into the middle of the twentieth century, New Zealand society went through a "re-colonial" shift.³⁵⁴ The leading motif of recolonisation was that New Zealand was "Better Britain." As a Better Britain, New Zealand framed itself as a farmer's

New Zealand, *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1935* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1934), 223; The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand, *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1940* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1940), 285; The Census and Statistics Office of New Zealand, *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1950* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1951), 984.

³⁵⁰ Andrew Casey, *Twentieth Century Ceramics* (Woodbridge, England: Antiques Collectors Club, 2007), 124.

³⁵¹ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 48.

³⁵² McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 210.

³⁵³ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 35, 102, 210.

³⁵⁴ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 83.

paradise offering “ruralism, freedom from urban and industrial pollution and the virtues of an idealised England.”³⁵⁵

The cottage garden motif so popular on teacups and table clothes recalls thatched cottages and evokes a pastoral life of a pre-industrial England. The garden suggests tranquil self-sufficiency. This is not an England of stately homes, but nor is it the England of factories and workhouses. Instead this is a yeoman’s paradise of independence and natural plenty which echoes the positioning of Better Britain, suggesting Better Britishness had a strong influence on Afternoon Tea.

Koruru, Kiwis and Maori Kisses: Cultural Nationalism at the Tea Table

In 1946 a young James K. Baxter wrote “A poet or an artist must choose here and now whether he is a transplanted Englishman or a New Zealander.”³⁵⁶ Baxter’s words reflect another strand of Pakeha identity which emerged in the era of my study: cultural nationalism. Philippa Mein Smith interprets the 1930s and 1940s as an era which “proved to be one of cultural nationalism... from the introduction of public radio in 1936 to state patronage of the arts, a national museum, art gallery and orchestra.”³⁵⁷ This impulse was most clearly articulated by a group of New Zealand writers, including R.A.K Mason, Allen Curnow, Dennis Glover, Charles Brasch, A.R.D Fairburn and Robin Hyde who came to be known as ‘cultural nationalists’.³⁵⁸ Their writing was characterised by a desire to “signal cultural distinctiveness, and in particular to stress difference from Britain.”³⁵⁹ Dennis Glover was a key force in the cultural nationalist

³⁵⁵ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 83; Frances Steel, ‘New Zealand is Butterland: Interpreting the Historical Significance of a Daily Spread’ *New Zealand Journal of History* 39 No.2 (2005):6.

³⁵⁶ James K Baxter, “Poetry in New Zealand,” in *1946: Second Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*, ed. Howard Wadman (Wellington: H.H Tombs Ltd, 1946), 112.

³⁵⁷ Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005),172.

³⁵⁸ Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003), 380, 381.

³⁵⁹ Murray Stuart, *Never a Soul at Home: New Zealand Literary Nationalism and the 1930s* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1998), 15.

movement. His poem, "Home thoughts" encapsulates the ethos of cultural nationalism:

I do not dream of Sussex Downs
or quaint old England's quaint old towns
I think of what may yet me be seen
In Johnsonville or Geraldine.³⁶⁰

Mein Smith uses big state-sponsored projects as examples to support her assertion that the 1930s and 1940s were a period of cultural nationalism. I wondered if cultural nationalism, apparent in the works of the state, and the words of our writers, had any influence on Afternoon Tea. At first glance, it seems the answer is no. The rituals and motifs of the tea table were predominantly English with a slight American influence. None of the women I interviewed had table linen embroidered with New Zealand imagery and according to McLeod New Zealand motifs were uncommon.³⁶¹ The New Zealand themed embroidery that McLeod did find was of scenic vistas, which she suggests were souvenirs from tourist destinations.³⁶² Māori motifs were very rare, and McLeod postulates that the commercial patterns showing Māori figures were designed outside of New Zealand.³⁶³

McLeod suggests that the lack of New Zealand motifs indicates Pakeha women still thought of themselves as English. She writes "It is surely significant that they did not choose to devise their own imagery of native plants, preferring the loved cottage plants of the remembered English past."³⁶⁴ But the lack of New Zealand motifs does not necessarily suggest that Pakeha women did not have a sense of their 'cultural distinctiveness' from Britain. It may just reflect the lack of commercial embroidery

³⁶⁰ Denis Glover, *Selected poems / Denis Glover*, ed. Bill Manhire (Wellington,: Victoria University Press, 1995), 25.

³⁶¹ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 210.

³⁶² McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 197, 206.

³⁶³ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 197, 198.

³⁶⁴ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 210.

patterns with New Zealand designs and the reluctance of women to invent or modify embroidery patterns.

In the 1930s and 1940s embroidery patterns and transfer books mostly originated in England “though transfers were probably reprinted and possibly designed both here and in Australia.”³⁶⁵ As Lois explained “you could get books and magazines from England and we didn’t have much in the way of threads and fabrics in New Zealand so you had to send to England.”³⁶⁶ What was commercially available determined what women embroidered. Women rarely developed their own designs or deviated from the pattern they were following. Lois, who has taught embroidery for many years, said that for many women “that is the only way they can do it and that is following the pattern to a T. I have been on a nearly forty year rampage of trying to make people do their own thing.”³⁶⁷ Eileen took embroidery at high school, while others were embroidering flowers, Eileen made up a pattern for elephants. Talking about this piece of embroidery she said “I was a bit, kind of rebellious.”³⁶⁸



Figure 8 Embroidered Elephant Detail.

Photograph by Author

³⁶⁵ McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy*, 210.

³⁶⁶ Lois, October 12, 2009.

³⁶⁷ Lois, October 12, 2009.

³⁶⁸ Eileen, October 12, 2009.

Rita's father was a silversmith and in a set of teaspoons he made for her mother, I found the only suggestion of a Māori influence on Afternoon Tea. The top of the handle of each teaspoon seems inspired by the koruru, the carved head at the apex of a meeting house.³⁶⁹ Rita's father was an Englishman, but his use of Māori carving for inspiration reflects a wider trend amongst Pakeha which drew on Māori culture to signal New Zealand distinctiveness.³⁷⁰ In the year New Zealand became a dominion its artists were urged to turn to "old time Maori myths and legends after the manner that English artists had turned to the Ancient Greeks."³⁷¹ The works of artists from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century such as Wilhelm Dittmer, E. Mervyn Taylor, Gordon Walters, and film-maker Rudall Hayward reflect this adoption of Māori cultural motifs in Pakeha art works.³⁷²



Figure 9. Silver jug, sugar bowl and koruru inspired teaspoons
made by Rita's father

Photograph by Author

³⁶⁹ *Te Whaanke Maori Language online*, s.v "Koruru," accessed on May 31, 2011, <http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/>.

³⁷⁰ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 83.

³⁷¹ Johannes Anderson, cited in Hamish Keith, *The Big Picture: A History of New Zealand Art from 1642* (Auckland: Random House, 2007), 150.

³⁷² Keith, *Big Picture*, 150-152; David Eggleton, *Towards Aotearoa: A Short Story of Twentieth Century New Zealand Art* (Auckland: Reed, 2007), 78-80.

If innovation was unusual in embroidery it was ubiquitous in baking and in the names of recipes women invented, a sense of cultural distinctiveness is apparent. Helen Leach found “remarkable evidence of internal innovation and experimentation that goes back to the nineteenth century and dominated our baking repertoire throughout the twentieth century.”³⁷³ Unlike the china and linen, most of the recipes used came from New Zealand. The women I interviewed got their recipes from a range of sources, including other women, radio and print media. When I asked Lois if her mother used to swap recipes she told me; “Oh yes. Everybody would. Also when Aunt Daisy was on the radio, and she would give recipes and everybody would write those down. And you would find a lot of those recipes about. I think that in the newspapers there were recipes too.”³⁷⁴ Most of the women I interviewed also had at least one cookbook. The most commonly mentioned were the *Manawatu Red Cookery Book*, *Una Carter’s Famous National Cookery Book*, and various issues of Edmond’s “*Sure to Rise*”, “*N.Z. “Truth’s” Cookery Book*”, “*Aunt Daisy*” and *Country Women’s Institute* recipe books.³⁷⁵ All of these cookbooks came from New Zealand, and several were compiled from recipes sent in from New Zealand women.

According to Leach distinctive recipes found only in New Zealand and Australia began to appear after World War One and by the 1920s “the process of experimentation gained momentum” and Afghans, Tagoes and Louise Cake evolved. David Burton also lists Hokey Pokey Biscuits,

³⁷³ Helen Leach, “Culinary Traditions in Twentieth Century New Zealand,” in *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen; New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks*, ed. Helen Leach (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2010), 61.

³⁷⁴ Lois, October 12, 2009.

³⁷⁵ *Manawatu Red Cookery Book: Tested and Tried Recipes*, rev. ed. (Palmerston North: Keeling & Mundy Ltd., 1926); Una Carter, *Una Carter’s Famous National Cookery Book : Containing Over 800 Well-Tested Recipes / Demonstrated at Numerous Classes Throughout New Zealand by Una Carter*, 6th ed. (Napier: Swailes, 192-).

Māori Kisses, Pikelets and Lamingtons as examples of baked goods that originated in New Zealand.³⁷⁶

Leach states that New Zealand cooks expressed their identity through baking. Although the names Afghans, Tangoes and Louise Cake do not ring of New Zealandness, the names of other baked goods do. The fourth edition of *The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book* includes "New Zealand Buns", the *N.Z. Truth's Cookery Book* lists "New Zealand Gems," and a coverless anonymous cookbook includes "Kiwis" and "Maori Kisses."³⁷⁷ The women I interviewed also mentioned Anzac Biscuits. The names of these baked goods suggest that, in an area where women expressed their identity, they turned to New Zealand for inspiration. This suggests a broader emphasis on national distinctiveness in Afternoon Tea and that New Zealand women did have budding dreams of what "may yet be seen in Johnsonville and Geraldine."³⁷⁸

Conclusion

A number of cultural influences are evident in the practice of Afternoon Tea and the material culture of the tea table. The influences of the English upper class and 'Better Britishness' seem the strongest, and were evident in every interview, but other influences were apparent too. Icons of American culture, Bambi and Snow White appeared at the tea table, Rita's father drew on Māori culture for his teaspoons, and nationwide women turned to New Zealand for inspiration when naming recipes. This range of influences reflects the hybrid nature of Pakeha culture and the dominant and emergent strands of the time. The commonalities in New Zealand and Australian baked goods suggests a strong Australian influence on baking

³⁷⁶ David Burton, *Two Hundred Years of New Zealand Food Cookery* (Wellington: Reed, 1992), 150-152, 155.

³⁷⁷ *The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Is Especially Compiled and Contains Useful Everyday Recipes also Cooking Hints.*, 4th ed. (Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds Ltd, 1923), 20; *N.Z. "Truth's" Cookery Book : Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes*, rev. ed. (Wellington: Truth (N.Z.) Ltd., 1948), 108.

³⁷⁸ Glover, *Selected poems*, 25.

and perhaps wider New Zealand culture which I have not touched on at all, but which would be a worthwhile topic for further in-depth study particularly given Daley's statement that "if anything makes New Zealand 'exceptional' it is the extent to which it was dominated by American, British and Australian culture."³⁷⁹ Further research could also be done on whether the strong hospitality ethic evident in the practice of Afternoon Tea, was influenced by the Māori concept of Manaakitanga. More detailed research into this field would provide valuable insights into more general influence of Māori on Pakeha culture.

³⁷⁹Daley, "Modernity, Consumption and Leisure," 425.

Chapter Four

“There Mightn’t Be Money About, But the Cows were still In, and the Hens still Laying”: The Depression and Afternoon Tea

The 1930s Depression left a deep imprint on all those that lived through it. It is remembered as a time of national hardship, yet historians argue that there was no unified experience of the Depression, as people from different occupations and social strata were affected in different ways. In this chapter I use Afternoon Tea, with a focus on baking, to examine how different sectors of New Zealand society experienced the Depression in different ways, in this manner extending the revisionist views of other scholars.

New Zealand was in a vulnerable position when the Depression hit in 1929. Its economy depended on the export of primary produce to one main market, Britain.³⁸⁰ Yet because Britain was the only country which did not introduce tariffs on imported goods, all export dependent countries targeted this key market.³⁸¹ The consequent increase in competition caused New Zealand’s export prices to plunge. Between 1928 and 1931, export prices dropped by 40 per cent.³⁸² Government revenue was significantly affected, shrinking by £5 million in 1930 and £8

³⁸⁰ Tom Brooking, “Economic Transformation,” in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey W. Rice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 232; Tony Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years; A Peoples History of the 1930s Depression in New Zealand*, 4th ed. (Auckland: Godwit Publishing Ltd, 1997), 13; James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin, 2001), 254.

³⁸¹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 254.

³⁸² Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 254; Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2003), 346; Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005), 150; Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 13; David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), 149.

million pounds in 1931.³⁸³ To balance its budget, the Government cut costs.³⁸⁴ Public works were slashed by 75 per cent, civil service and award wages were reduced, and widow and old ages pensions were cut.³⁸⁵

Tens of thousands of New Zealanders lost their jobs.³⁸⁶ Unemployed men relied on the Government relief wage to survive – a wage which the British Medical Association declared to be “quite insufficient to maintain the health and working capacity of the normal man.”³⁸⁷ Women were not eligible for the relief wage.³⁸⁸ It was expected that unemployed women would be supported by their families or go into domestic service.³⁸⁹ James Belich tells us that “in terms of economic indicators, although not necessarily of individual despair, the Depression reached its nadir in 1933.”³⁹⁰ By 1935, prices had almost recovered and the number of unemployed was dropping.³⁹¹ New Zealand’s recovery from the Depression was “unusually fast.”³⁹² Historians now attribute this to the establishment of a New Zealand Reserve Bank in 1933 by the Coates Government.³⁹³

³⁸³ King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 346; Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 13.

³⁸⁴ King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 346; Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 13; Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 151.

³⁸⁵ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 151.

³⁸⁶ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 255. King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 347; Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 14. Belich notes that it is difficult to assess the exact number of unemployed, with scholarly estimates varying from ten per cent of the population, up to 32 per cent. However he says that “On the balance, the folk memory of a harsh depression appears to be more accurate than a minimalist portrayal of a mild one.” See Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 256.

³⁸⁷ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 14.

³⁸⁸ Sandra Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women since they Won the Vote* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1993), 230; Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 153.

³⁸⁹ Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine*, 230.

³⁹⁰ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 263.

³⁹¹ King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 354.

³⁹² Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 154.

³⁹³ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 154.

My discussion of how the Depression affected Afternoon Tea is centred on its food component. This is because the women I interviewed focussed on food when they talked about Afternoon Tea during the Depression. I have supplemented my own interview data with interviews from Tony Simpson's book, *The Sugar Bag Years: A People's History of the 1930s Depression in New Zealand*. To provide a broader context I also analysed recipe books from the 1920s and 1930s and the women's section of contemporary issues of the newspaper *N.Z. Truth*. I included pre-Depression recipe books in my analysis to see if/how the recipes changed over this time.³⁹⁴ Because women mainly used the cake and biscuit sections when preparing dishes for Afternoon Tea I focussed on these recipes.

Existing accounts have touched on how the Depression affected women. Eve Ebbett gives a useful general picture across the spectrum of women's lives during the 1930s. Tony Simpson's account, described by Michael King in 2003 as "still by far the most evocative book on the effects of the Great Depression in New Zealand",³⁹⁵ includes a number of interviews with women, providing snapshots of daily life. Barbara Brookes, Sandra Coney and Philippa Mein Smith have all looked at the Depression's impact on women in terms of the increase in abortions and deaths from abortions,³⁹⁶ and Sandra Coney and Philippa Mein Smith have commented on the Depression's effect on working women.³⁹⁷ Within the home realm, the ingenuity of housewives in 'making do' has been noted

³⁹⁴ Unfortunately only a restricted range of recipe books were available at the time I was doing my research because of the redevelopment of the building housing the National Library collection.

³⁹⁵ King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 524.

³⁹⁶ Barbara Brookes, "Reproductive Rights: The Debate Over Abortion and Birth Control in the 1930s," in *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand*, ed Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1986), 119-136; Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine*, 74; Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152.

³⁹⁷ Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine*, 209, 225, 230, 231; Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 153.

by Erik Olssen and Rosemary McLeod, among others.³⁹⁸ Yet in her *Concise History of New Zealand*, Philippa Mein Smith states that “much evidence is hidden” of the “many ways women bore the brunt of hardship [of the Depression].”³⁹⁹

The Depression: Sticking to the Story

I had hoped that my study would bring new evidence to light about how the Depression affected women’s home life. However, I found that when I asked my interview participants about this time, many stopped talking about Afternoon Tea and started talking about the swaggers or about hardships more generally.⁴⁰⁰ This could be because the women I interviewed were all children or young teenagers during the Depression, and as I have explained, it was common for young children to be sent outside during Afternoon Tea. Yet this theory doesn’t fit well with all the other details of Afternoon Tea that the women I interviewed recalled from their childhood. A more likely reason could be that, over time, their personal memories of the Depression have become aligned with the collective myth of the Depression, of which Afternoon Tea has no part. Several historians, including Simpson and Mein Smith, have commented on the collectivisation of experience of the Depression.⁴⁰¹ Mein Smith remarks that “inevitably a myth of ‘The Depression’ evolved because generations tend to collectivise their experiences through story-telling. There was no unified experience during the Depression; only a unified story that smoothed the rough edge of a national memory of hardship.”⁴⁰² Because my participants were children at the time, their

³⁹⁸ Erik Olssen, quoted in King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, 350; Rosemary McLeod, *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s* (Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 233-237.

³⁹⁹ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152.

⁴⁰⁰ Swaggers were men who walked from farm to farm looking for work. They were known as swaggers or swagmen because of the swags (knapsacks) they carried. Jock Phillips, “Walking tracks - Walking for Work,” in *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated March 2, 2009, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/walking-tracks/2>.

⁴⁰¹ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152; Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 17-18.

⁴⁰² Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152.

memories may be more malleable and so more likely to merge with the national mythology of the Depression.

Disrupting the Story: Different Strata, Different Experiences

Mein Smith goes on to say that, rather than a “unified experience”, the Depression was a “class experience”, with “a gulf between the unemployed and the employed, between workers – especially casual labour – and the privileged.”⁴⁰³ Similarly, Tom Brooking contends that occupation determined the experience of the Depression.⁴⁰⁴ The memories of the women I interviewed illustrate this spectrum.

A simple reason why some women did not talk about Afternoon Tea during the Depression might be because, for their families, it indeed ceased to exist. The onset of the Depression was marked by a drop in domestic food consumption.⁴⁰⁵ Both Burton and Veart record that between 1928 and 1931 sales of coffee, wine and spirits fell by half, pork, beef and beer sales went down by 30 per cent, and ice cream consumption fell from 8 pints to 3 pints per annum.⁴⁰⁶ However these statistics suggest cost saving rather than severe deprivation as most of these items can be seen as treats not necessities. At the time few people drank coffee, pork was not commonly on the menu, and although ice cream and alcohol certainly make life pleasant, they are not usually considered integral to a balanced diet.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰³ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152.

⁴⁰⁴ Brooking, “Economic Transformation,” 251.

⁴⁰⁵ David Burton, *David Burton's Food and Cookery in New Zealand* (Auckland, David Bateman Ltd, 2009), 58; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 149.

⁴⁰⁶ Burton, *Food and Cookery*, 58-59; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 149

⁴⁰⁷ Bronwyn Dalley, *Living in the 20th Century; New Zealand History in Photographs 1900-1980* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited and Craig Potton Publishing Limited, 2000), 214, 240.

This is not to say there was not real misery during the Depression. Studies of nutrition suggest that young children suffered,⁴⁰⁸ and there were contemporary reports of widespread malnutrition.⁴⁰⁹ Many of Tony Simpson's interviewees remember a lack of food during the Depression.⁴¹⁰ One woman stated that at school "We had to open up our lunches and our teacher went round dividing them up and giving a share to each girl who had no lunch to eat – in fact, some of the girls didn't even have breakfast."⁴¹¹

Most of the baking for Afternoon Tea calls for butter and/or eggs, both of which could be expensive to buy. Eggs were particularly expensive in winter, when hens stopped laying, and butter was beyond the reach of many families.⁴¹² Another of Simpson's interviewees recalls that "butter I think was one shilling a pound and this was a fair bit. I'm not sure but I think dole was 15 shillings a week or something like that for a married man. Well, a shilling for a pound of butter was a fair portion of that. Imagine today spending one-fifteenth of your income on butter!"⁴¹³ Many families, especially those on the relief wage, would not be able to afford to bake, and without baking there could be no Afternoon Tea.

Lois was one of the women who did not talk about Afternoon Tea when we were discussing the Depression and it seems likely that this was because her family could not afford it. Her father lost his business during the Depression and was out of work for some time. She told me that their neighbour:

Used to collect the scraps and the left over vegetables around town for his pigs. So he would sometimes give us sacks where there were

⁴⁰⁸ Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 155.

⁴⁰⁹ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 16.

⁴¹⁰ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 45, 47, 50, 56, 79.

⁴¹¹ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 74.

⁴¹² Eve Ebbett, *Victoria's Daughters: New Zealand Women of the Thirties* (Wellington: A.H & A.W Reed Ltd, 1981)30, 31.

⁴¹³ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 30.

one or two potatoes or onions [that] had gone rotten and he used to sort those out and so he told my father if he came and sorted those sacks out, he could keep the best ones. So that is what we used to live on.... So it was really only because of that man, that we actually survived that Depression.⁴¹⁴

By contrast Marjorie, who lived on a farm, did talk about Afternoon Tea. She remembers that the food was “pretty plain because it was the Depression and things were pretty short. Mother didn't make her own bread, but she made scones, and plain biscuits. In the morning it was very plain, with a bit more in the afternoon.”⁴¹⁵ If they had guests, Marjorie said that “Mother would have fairly plain biscuits and perhaps a light fruit cake.”⁴¹⁶ Her mother had only one tea cloth of “very very fine grass linen woven underwater she used to say.”⁴¹⁷ This tea cloth was highly prized by her mother and “she always laundered it herself by hand. It was her one and only and she took great care of it and it lasted for years... It was the Depression and she probably only had that one because someone gave it to her.”⁴¹⁸

The families of both these women were affected, but they were not disturbed equally. Marjorie’s mother had only one tea cloth and her baking was plain; however, although undoubtedly suffering hardship, her family were not living off scraps destined for pigs, like Lois’s family were. Looking at cookbooks from the era furthers our understanding of the gamut of experiences of the Depression and suggests that some people fared reasonably well. Both Veart and Leach found that contemporary cookbooks contained few hints of the privation suffered by many at this time.⁴¹⁹ Veart found that only the cookbooks issued by the Self Help Co-Operative grocery stores reflected the hard economic

⁴¹⁴ Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

⁴¹⁵ Marjorie, interview with the author, November 29, 2009.

⁴¹⁶ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

⁴¹⁷ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

⁴¹⁸ Marjorie, November 29, 2009.

⁴¹⁹ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 150-153; Helen Leach, *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2008), 87.

times.⁴²⁰ Referring to five cookbooks produced for charities during the Depression, he concludes that these were clearly aimed at those giving the charity rather than those receiving it, as the recipes contained ingredients that the poor could ill afford.⁴²¹ Similarly, Leach tells us that the second edition of the Women's Division of the New Zealand Farmer's Union cookbook, published at the height of the Depression, contained recipes for more than thirty fruit cakes, thirteen sponge cakes, and thirty three other types of cakes.⁴²² She notes that while there were four eggless cake recipes, most recipes required two to four eggs, with most fruitcakes using four to twelve.⁴²³ She comments that "What we need to remember was that during the Depression, the families of breadwinners whose salaries and wages were not reduced benefited from lower food prices."⁴²⁴

To get a sense of whether baking recipes became thriftier, I compared recipes in the baking section of pre-Depression cookbooks with those in Depression era cookbooks.⁴²⁵ Because access to the National Library's collections was limited during the period I conducted my research, I was only able to find five cookbooks from these times.⁴²⁶ For each book, I

⁴²⁰ See KB Johnstone, *Self Help Recipes and Household Hints* (Wellington: Self Help Co-op Ltd, 1932) cited in Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 150-154.

⁴²¹ Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 151-153. Veart refers to: *The Blue Triangle Cookery Book* (Wellington: YWCA, c 1930); *The Community Sunshine Association's Cookery Book: Tested and Selected Recipes* (Auckland: The Association, 1932); Ethel Cameron, comp., *The Ideal Cookery Book*, 2nd ed. (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1933); *St Andrews Cookery Book* (Dunedin: St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 1927); B. Rickerby, *Tried Recipes* (Victoria League, Auckland, 1935).

⁴²² Anon. *New Zealand Women's Household Guide* [The Women's Division of the New Zealand Farmers' Union], 2nd ed. (Wellington: Lankshear's Ltd, c 1933), 5-29, cited in Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 87.

⁴²³ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 87.

⁴²⁴ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 87.

⁴²⁵ I could not find any post depression, pre World War Two recipe books to include in my analysis, so could not look at whether baking changed after the depression and before World War Two began. In my next chapter I analyse the impact of World War Two on baking.

⁴²⁶ During the period of my research the National Library's Wellington building was closed for redevelopment and only selected collections from both the National library and the Alexander Turnbull were accessible for researchers.

counted the total number of recipes in the cake and biscuit sections and then I counted the number of recipes that used neither butter nor eggs, as such recipes tended to be the most frugal (some recipes, like shortbread, require no eggs but a considerable amount of butter; and some recipes, like many sponge cakes, require no butter but a considerable number of eggs, so can hardly be termed economical). I then calculated the percentage of recipes in each book which used neither eggs nor butter. I also counted how many recipes in each cookbook used four or more eggs, to see whether the proportion of more extravagant recipes diminished during the Depression.

Unfortunately I was only able to access two cookery books from the Depression: the fifth edition of Edmonds' *The "Sure To Rise" Cookery Book* published in 1930, and a 1933 unfinished manuscript cookbook from the Ashhurst Women's Institute.⁴²⁷ Those from the 1920s were: *The Manawatu Red Cookery Book*, *Una Carter's Famous National Cookery Book*, and the fourth edition of Edmonds' *The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book*.⁴²⁸ There was little change in the proportion of eggless and butterless recipes between the two *Sure to Rise* cook books. In fact, at 8.5 per cent the 1923 version had slightly more than the 1930 version, which had 7.7 per cent. Nearly eight per cent of recipes in the "Recipe Book of the Ashhurst Women's Institute" also required neither eggs nor butter. By contrast only one per cent of recipes in *The Manawatu Red Cookery Book* and four per cent of recipes *Una Carter's* book were eggless and butterless.⁴²⁹ This indicates a small increase in frugal recipes during the Depression.

⁴²⁷ *The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Containing Economical Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints*, 5th ed. (Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, ca. 1930).

⁴²⁸ *Manawatu Red Cookery Book: Tested and Tried Recipes*, rev. ed., (Palmerston North, N.Z. : Keeling & Mundy Ltd., 1926); *Una Carter, Una Carter's Famous National Cookery Book : Containing Over 800 Well-Tested Recipes / Demonstrated at Numerous Classes throughout New Zealand by Una Carter*, 6th ed. (Napier. ? : Swailes?, 192-?); *The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Is Especially Compiled and Contains Useful Everyday Recipes also Cooking Hints*, 4th ed. (Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, ca. 1923).

⁴²⁹ I suspect that the low percentage of eggless and butterless recipes of the *Manawatu Red Cookery Book* had more to do with the context of its compilation, than the era – the book is

A larger change is evident when other recipes are examined. There was a noticeable decrease in more lavish recipes requiring more than four eggs. Roughly a quarter of recipes in *The Manawatu Red Cookery Book* and the 1923 *Edmonds* used more than four eggs, by contrast only 14 per cent of the Ashhurst Women's Institute recipes and 15 per cent of the 1930 *Edmonds* recipes asked for four or more eggs. *Una Carter's Book* went against this trend. Although published in 1926, only five per cent of its recipes used over four eggs. Perhaps this reflects the thrift of the author, rather than the economic climate. The preface advises readers that "all Recipes are simple and practical", that "no expensive ingredients are used", and that "a young housewife following through the Recipes given here can order her household without one ounce of waste in food."⁴³⁰

Overall there seemed to be few recipes without eggs and butter in the 1920s and 1930s, with only slightly more during the Depression. These results, taken in tandem with the findings of Veart and Leach, suggest that most books did not modify their recipes much, or at all, for those suffering hardship during the Depression. Of course people who can barely afford food are not the target market for cookbooks, but the fact that cookbooks were produced, and that they paid such scant regard to thrift, suggests that a significant proportion of the population could afford a reasonable standard of living. The more significant decrease in recipes using more than four eggs could suggest that while some lived well, there was not the money for luxury, or it could imply a reluctance to appear too extravagant at a time when so many had so little. It also reflects James Belich's assertion that "The Depression may not have been

made up from recipes submitted by local ladies, and each recipes is attributed to its contributor, in such circumstances women were far more likely to contribute their more extravagant 'party pieces' than their plain cooking.

⁴³⁰ "Preface to Sixth Edition" in Carter, *Carter's Famous National Cookery Book*.

harsh for high-income groups, but they cut their spending as though it was."⁴³¹

These conclusions can only be tentative. My sample size is small; even when the cookbooks Veart and Leach refer to are added in, my conclusions are based on only eleven cookbooks. Additionally, the Depression-era cookbooks that I could access are slightly problematic. The Ashhurst Women's Institute Cookbook has only 18 recipes in total. Although 13 of these are for cakes and biscuits, the small number of recipes makes the inferences drawn from it less useful. The *Edmonds* book I used is from 1930 and the full force of the Depression may not have been apparent at the time it was compiled. A survey of the women's section of the *N.Z. Truth* across 1930 suggests that the severity of the Depression only became evident in the latter half of the year.

I examined the women's section of each *N.Z. Truth* published on the first Thursday of the month throughout 1930. As late as May, the women's section showed no sign of hard economic times. The February, March and May issues of the paper include articles and/or photographs on the latest fashions in afternoon tea gowns.⁴³² The article accompanying the May photo spread tells readers that "voiles are going to be very, popular, either in pure wool or silk and wool mixtures."⁴³³ Silk is not the material of hardship. The first references to economy in the recipe section appear over the winter of 1930, but they are only occasional. In July a recipe for eggless steam pudding appears and in August there is advice on how to make

⁴³¹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 256.

⁴³² "The Tea Gown Possesses Pleasing Features," *N.Z. Truth*, February 6, 1930, 20, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; "Fashion's Forecasts For 1930," *N.Z. Truth*, March 6, 1930, 18, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; "Four o'clock and the Ladies are Ready for Tea," *N.Z. Truth*, May 8, 1930, 18, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

⁴³³ "Silk and Wool Popular, Crazy Patterns," *N.Z. Truth*, May 8, 1930, 18, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

butter go further.⁴³⁴ It is the October issue that signals the arrival of the Depression, with recipes for Mock Pork, Butterless and Eggless Pudding, Cream Substitute, Depression Pudding, Economical Biscuits, Creamless Cream Pie and Economical Plum Pudding.⁴³⁵ There is considerable scope for further research on the impact of the Depression on baking, based on a wider range of cookbooks and print media recipes from before, during and after the Depression, up until the start of rationing in World War II which brought new constraints to baking.

Disrupting the Story: Town and Country

My study also highlighted the differences between townsfolk and farmers during the Depression. Those in towns seemed to think that farmers fared better. When I was speaking to Dorothy (a townswoman) about the Depression she said “I think that everyone was in the same boat, except the farmers were better off.” But, as noted in chapter two, there was a huge gap in wealth between large run holders and struggling dairy farmers.⁴³⁶ Although those with big farms did relatively well during the Depression, times were hard for farmers with smaller farms, and significant numbers of farmers were forced to give up their land.⁴³⁷ One of Simpson’s interviewees recalls that “some of us knew very well that the farmers themselves were in desperate straits and it was very well known that half the dairy farmers in the country were, by 1932-33, insolvent”.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁴“Culinary Chatter,” *N.Z. Truth*, July 3, 1930, 23, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; “Culinary Chatter,” *N.Z. Truth*, August 7, 1930, 23, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>. The recipe for eggless pudding could be attributed to the scarcity of eggs over winter, but because scarcity made eggs expensive, an eggless recipe was a more economical recipe.

⁴³⁵ “Culinary Chatter,” *N.Z. Truth*, October 2, 1930, 21, accessed November 14, 2010, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

⁴³⁶ See chapter two. Miles Fairburn and Steve Haslett, “The New Zealand Social Structure, 1911-1951: Did it become more Middle Class?” *New Zealand Sociology* 20, no. 1 (2005): 34; Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 149 and Sally Parker, “A Golden Decade? Farm Women in the 1950s,” in *Women in History Two*, ed., Barbara Brookes, Charlotte MacDonald and Margaret Tennant (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 217.

⁴³⁷ Brooking, “Economic Transformation,” 251.

⁴³⁸ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 63.

Another remembers that “several farmers who had mortgages on their land... just simply walked off their land. Their land was repossessed.”⁴³⁹

However, those farmers who kept their land could at least feed themselves from farm produce. When I asked Iris about the Depression, her voice dropped and she told me “no that didn’t worry us on the farm, what worried us was young men starving.”⁴⁴⁰ Iris’s family took on government subsidised workers. She went on to say “of course butter fat had dropped, everything had dropped, but at least on the farm we had orchards, we had everything, and they (the workers) got the same food as we got.”⁴⁴¹ Iris’s story echoes Marjorie’s. She implies that the farm was struggling, but like Marjorie, at least there was food. Iris and Marjorie’s memories contrast starkly with Lois’s memories of the Depression and also Dorothy’s.

Dorothy, whose mother was a widow, remembers that “it was terrible, we were a large family, very poor, and if it hadn’t of been for a Chinese market gardener I think we would have starved... every night, this big cauldron of rice and roast potatoes would be just put on our doorstep.”⁴⁴²

Although Iris did not talk about Afternoon Tea, it seems likely that her family continued to have Afternoon Tea during the Depression, albeit in a more restricted form. Another of Simpson’s interview subjects, who lived on a farm, recalls that “we could eat well, fortunately, because we had our own mutton, a vegetable garden, ample fruit for preserving and jam, and of course milk and eggs. I made butter and I’d always made our own bread right from the beginning, as soon as I knew how.”⁴⁴³ Most farms had hens and a house cow, so most farming women could access eggs, cream and butter. Having these ingredients meant that farm women could bake, and so Afternoon Tea could continue, even if money was short. The

⁴³⁹ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 66.

⁴⁴⁰ Iris, interview with the author, July 25, 2009.

⁴⁴¹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

⁴⁴² Dorothy, interview with the Author, Fielding, November 30, 2009

⁴⁴³ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 69.

76 cake recipes in the second edition of the Women's Division of the New Zealand Farmer's Union cookbook, attests to this.⁴⁴⁴ One of Simpson's interviewee's succinctly summarises the situation for farm women. Speaking of his girlfriend's mother, he said; "She brought in a dinner wagon loaded with cream meringues and half a dozen other kinds of rich goodies – there mightn't be money about, but the cows were still in, and the hens still laying."⁴⁴⁵

Conclusion

Many scholars have observed that the Depression affected some people far more severely than others.⁴⁴⁶ Looking at how people had Afternoon Tea has brought out some of the subtle nuances in how different groups experienced the Depression. The lack of frugal recipes in contemporary cookbooks suggests that a significant number of people survived the Depression reasonably well, although the decrease in extravagant recipes could imply few had money for luxuries. If a family had Afternoon Tea that meant they could bake, which in turn meant they had eggs and butter, suggesting that they survived the Depression better than those who struggled to put food on the table at all. In this way, Afternoon Tea can be seen as an indicator of the degree to which the Depression impacted on particular people's lives.

Families who kept hold of their farms, like Marjorie's and Iris's, fared better during the Depression than people in towns like Lois and Dorothy, because they could and did continue to have Afternoon Tea. However the families of Marjorie and Iris were among the more wealthy farming women I interviewed. Lois and Dorothy were among the poorest, so it would be wrong to infer that in general farmers survived the Depression

⁴⁴⁴ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 87.

⁴⁴⁵ Simpson, *The Sugar Bag Years*, 199.

⁴⁴⁶ See eg Brooking, "Economic Transformation," 251; Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 87; Mein Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*, 152; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 150-153.

better than townsfolk. There was great disparity in wealth across the farming community, and many farmers lost their land, as I outlined above. Besides, my sample size of women and recipes is too small to draw any firm conclusions. What it does suggest is that further research could be done comparing experiences of townswomen and country women from different social strata, using Afternoon Tea, or food more generally, as a means of understanding further the different ways the Depression affected New Zealanders.

Chapter Five

Keeping the Tins Full Against All Odds: World War Two and Afternoon Tea

In 1939, four years after New Zealand began to recover from the Depression, the country became embroiled in another world event which would have a much broader and longer impact on life in New Zealand and Afternoon Tea: the Second World War. In particular baking was affected by wartime exigencies, as with the Depression, and, unlike the deprivation of economic hard times, this time there was externally imposed rationing. This chapter has a slightly different focus to the preceding chapters. Rather than looking at how the Second World War (henceforth the War) affected Afternoon Tea as a whole, I have examined how it affected each item of the material culture that makes up Afternoon Tea. This is because my informants rarely discussed Afternoon Tea as a whole, but did enthusiastically discuss its component parts.

The impact of World War Two on New Zealanders has received considerable scholarly and popular attention.⁴⁴⁷ Until the 1980s little notice was taken of women's experiences of the War, as accounts were focused on the male experience of fighting, but since then a number of works have been published on this subject that expand analysis considerably.⁴⁴⁸ Two very different accounts from the 1980s provide a reasonably comprehensive picture of life in New Zealand during the War. Nancy Taylor provides extensive detail about life in New Zealand during the War. Although it is not focused on women, *The Home Front* is a rich source of information about the restrictions with which New Zealand

⁴⁴⁷ For a useful overview of historiography see Deborah Montgomerie, *The Women's War: New Zealand Women 1939-1945* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), 13-18.

⁴⁴⁸ Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 14.

women were coping.⁴⁴⁹ Taylor's volume is part of the Government-commissioned, official history of New Zealand and draws largely on newspapers supplemented by written recollections.⁴⁵⁰ However, because *The Home Front* draws largely on the public record, it can only give limited insight into how women perceived their experiences of War. Further, as Deborah Montgomerie notes Taylor sought to "depict events more as they really happened than as wartime restrictions permitted people to perceive them."⁴⁵¹ In a more subjective frame Eve Ebbett's *When the Boys were Away* combines interviews and a range of contemporary sources to give a more individualised sense of how the War affected women in New Zealand and how women felt about the ways War changed their lives.⁴⁵²

Over the last thirty years, numerous collections of women's personal accounts of the War have been published. Some are general, like Lauris Edmond's *Women in Wartime*, which brings together interviews and writing on women's experiences of World War One and Two.⁴⁵³ Although a significant proportion of the narratives from World War Two are about women in paid work – women working in the armed services or as nurses or in other waged work – there are also tales of women working at home as housewives and mothers. Another general, but slightly narrower, source is *Wartime Experiences: A Collection of Short Stories from Members of the Country Women's Institute*.⁴⁵⁴ Although it does provide some snapshots of farming life in New Zealand during the War, many of the stories are

⁴⁴⁹ Nancy Taylor, *Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45: The Home Front* (Wellington: V.R. Ward, Government Printer, 1986).

⁴⁵⁰ Montgomerie says that Taylor advertised in *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly* for "ration books and recollections." Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 14.

⁴⁵¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, xii, cited in Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 14.

⁴⁵² Eve Ebbett, *When the Boys were Away: New Zealand Women in World War II* (Wellington: A.H. & A. W. Reed, 1984).

⁴⁵³ Lauris Edmond, ed., *Women in Wartime*, (Wellington: Government Printing Office Publishing, 1986).

⁴⁵⁴ The Institute, *Wartime Experiences: A Collection of Short Stories from Members of the Country Women's Institute*, (Wellington: The Institute, 1996).

from women who spent the War in England and emigrated to New Zealand after the War finished.

Other collections of personal accounts focus on a particular aspect of women's experience during the War. Dianne Bardsley uses oral histories and written interviews to tell the story of women who joined the Women's Land Service, an organisation formed to maintain agricultural production during the War.⁴⁵⁵ *Doing Our Bit* compiled by Jim Sullivan brings together interviews with women engaged in a range of paid occupations during the War.⁴⁵⁶

The majority of these collections of personal accounts of war focus on women in the military services and/or paid workforce. Deborah Montgomerie's account also looks at women in paid work during the War and examines how pre-War understandings about the role of women remained influential during and after the War, despite contemporary concern about changes to the social order caused by women entering the paid workforce.⁴⁵⁷

It is not surprising that so many works look at women in the services and/or women in the paid workforce. During the War "women entered the armed services, voluntary organisations and the waged workforce in unprecedented numbers."⁴⁵⁸ Yet despite the female foray into the previously male realm of military life and paid work, historians such as Philippa Mein Smith now argue that the War "did little to change the

⁴⁵⁵ Dianne Bardsley, *The Land Girls: In a Man's World 1939-1946* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2000).

⁴⁵⁶ Jim Sullivan, ed., *Doing Our Bit; New Zealand Women Tell their Stories of World War Two* (Auckland: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002).

⁴⁵⁷ Montgomerie, *The Women's War*.

⁴⁵⁸ James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin Press, 2001), 287.

gender script that decreed a woman's place to be in the home."⁴⁵⁹

Whatever else they might be doing, women were still expected to take care of the cooking, cleaning and childcare.⁴⁶⁰ Montgomerie states that "it is vital to document the complexity of female experience."⁴⁶¹ Looking after the home and the family were still major concerns of women during the War, but this aspect of female experience has not received the same attention as female experience in less traditional roles. While works like *When the Boys were Away*, *Women in Wartime* and *Wartime Experiences* include sections that describe how the War affected the way women ran homes, it is clear that more work could be done on this aspect of War which involved most adult women.

My research into how the War affected the elements of Afternoon Tea contributes to our understanding of female experience in that period by illuminating facets of how the War affected the day-to-day tasks of running a home. The War brought with it shortages and rationing of most consumer goods. By looking at Afternoon Tea—just one aspect of life during wartime—I show the extent to which women's home lives more generally were affected by these restrictions.

Wartime shortages had a significant impact on the way women cooked, cleaned and cared for their families. Although the War officially ended on August 15, 1945, rationing did not. Most goods were rationed into the late 1940s and butter and cream were rationed through to 1950.⁴⁶² When asked what the worst aspect of the War was, one woman replied "oh it sounds awful, but it was the shortages. The things we had to do without."⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁹ Phillipa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), 167. See also Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 23.

⁴⁶⁰ Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 23.

⁴⁶¹ Montgomerie, *The Women's War*, 19.

⁴⁶² Taylor, *The Home Front*, 796.

⁴⁶³ Ebbett, *When the Boys were Away*, 110.

Another woman recalled that “coping with small children, rationing and shortages was no sinecure.”⁴⁶⁴

Every single aspect of the performance and material culture of Afternoon Tea was affected by rationing. From the outset of the War, bone china was virtually unobtainable and table linen and tea were restricted from 1942.⁴⁶⁵ The situation of baking was particularly dire. Sugar was rationed from 1942, butter and cream from 1943 and eggs were in short supply from 1941 and rationed from 1944.⁴⁶⁶ Even the quality of the flour and baking powder was affected by the War.⁴⁶⁷ Yet women managed with the shortages, and some resisted rationing, as this chapter shows in some detail.

In this chapter I supplement interviews with personal accounts of life during the War, mainly from *Women in Wartime* and *Wartime Experiences*. As with the Depression, food was the main subject the women I interviewed discussed and it is the main focus of this section, rather than the other aspects of Afternoon Tea, such as the linen and china. To get a broader picture of how baking recipes were affected by wartime restrictions I looked at a range of contemporary recipes. Because of limited access to the National Library collection during the period of my research I could only access three cookbooks from the period of the War: *Aunt Daisy's Cookery Book of 1,150 Selected Recipes / Broadcast by Aunt Daisy* (referred to as *Aunt Daisy*) from 1942, the 1943 edition of the *War Economy Recipe Book* (referred to as *War Economy*) and the 1946 N.Z. "*Truth's*" *Cookery Book: Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes* (referred to as *Truth's*).⁴⁶⁸ Although the War was over by the time *Truth's* was printed,

⁴⁶⁴ Edmond, *Women in Wartime*, 190.

⁴⁶⁵ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 757, 790.

⁴⁶⁶ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790, 820, 778.

⁴⁶⁷ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 828.

⁴⁶⁸ Maud Basham, *Aunt Daisy's Cookery Book of 1,150 Selected Recipes / Broadcast By Aunt Daisy* (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1942); Housewife, *War Economy Cookbook*

rationing of sugar and butter was not, and so it is still appropriate to analyse this cookbook. According to David Veart, fewer community cookbooks were published during the War in any case, owing to paper restrictions.⁴⁶⁹

To augment this selection of recipes and obtain a more detailed view of how recipes changed as rationing was introduced I also looked at recipes from newspapers and magazines of the era: the *N.Z. Truth*, *The New Zealand Home Journal*, and *The Mirror*. Of these, only the *N.Z. Truth* maintained a regular recipe section throughout the War. Sampling the *N.Z. Truth* at regular intervals was not possible as there are significant gaps in the archive. For 1940, issues were only available up until July so I looked at the first issue of January and the first issue of May to get an idea of how recipes varied from summer to winter. Only the February and May issues were available for 1941 and the April and May issues for 1942, so that determined which months I would look at, and then I looked at the first issue of the month. There were no 1943 issues in the archive. For 1944 and 1945 I sampled recipes every quarter to get examples from Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. I sampled across the year to take into account seasonal variations in the availability of ingredients, particularly eggs.

For *The Mirror* I looked at the first issue of January, April, July and October 1940 and the first issue of February, May, August and November of 1941. From these issues I established that *The Mirror* printed baking recipes infrequently and so for the years 1942 to 1945 I looked at only two issues per year, one winter and one summer. A similar analysis of *The New Zealand Home Journal* showed that baking recipes while more common

(Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1943); *New Zealand "Truth's" Cookery Book: Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes* (Wellington: Truth, 1946).

⁴⁶⁹ David Veart, *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking* (Auckland: Auckland University Press), 174.

than in *The Mirror*, were still sporadic. Those baking recipes I did find tended to be from a special feature on baking, or as part of advertising for the product Bourneville Cocoa. Although irregular, I still included recipes from both these periodicals in my analysis to cover the gaps from the *N.Z. Truth* archive.

I chose to focus my analysis on cake recipes, because this star of the Afternoon Tea table would be most affected by the lack of sugar, butter and eggs. Comparing a random sample of biscuit recipes from *Aunt Daisy* to the cake recipes from *Aunt Daisy* showed that cake and biscuit recipes required roughly the same average amount of sugar, but that cake recipes required on average more than two eggs and nearly seven ounces of butter, whereas biscuit recipes called for on average only around 1 egg and nearly five ounces of butter. I decided to use *Aunt Daisy* for the comparison because it has a large number of recipes, and because it is likely that it was compiled before rationing was introduced and so acts as a kind of 'control' for those recipes.

For cake recipes from cookbooks and magazines alike, I recorded the quantities of butter, sugar and eggs required. I also noted any substitutes used, such as golden syrup, treacle and molasses for sugar, or dripping, shortening and lard for butter. To make comparison between recipes easier I converted all quantities of butter and sugar into ounces. For both butter and sugar, where quantities were measured by cups I equated one cup to eight ounces. I equated one tablespoon to half an ounce.⁴⁷⁰

Although food rationing was the main subject discussed by my interviewees, they also mentioned how rationing and shortages affected other aspects of Afternoon Tea, such as the china, the table linen and even

⁴⁷⁰ Edmonds 'Sure to Rise' *Cookery Book: Containing a Collection of Approximately 570 Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints* (Christchurch: T. J. Edmonds, 1955), 1.

the ability to visit friends. Understanding the impact of the War on these elements of Afternoon Tea confirms how broadly war affected civilian life. Before investigating in detail how the War influenced baking, I examine briefly how the War affected the other elements of Afternoon Tea.

China Shortages

When World War Two began New Zealand imported all of its china. Import restrictions in place from 1938 meant stocks of fine china were already low when the War began and, with all available shipping capacity diverted to the War effort and the sinking of several large crockery shipments, by 1941 New Zealand was suffering a severe shortage of china.⁴⁷¹ Nancy Taylor tells us that the arrival of imported china “caused some of the most strenuous shopping scrambles of the War... In Wellington, two traffic officers were needed to control the crowd outside a store in Willis Street before its doors opened on a supply of plain breakfast cups and saucers, combs and wool.”⁴⁷² The scarcity of fine china made it even more precious to women. A country school teacher’s wife remembers being given “some delightful English china” as a parting gift: “I stroked the pieces – remember it was nearly a year since War had been declared and imports of vital commodities were restricted and superfluous goods were rare.”⁴⁷³

The birth of Crown Lynn china was a direct result of wartime shortages.⁴⁷⁴ Unable to access crockery from overseas, the company that would become Crown Lynn was commissioned first to make crockery for the American Army then for the New Zealand armed forces, hospitals and railway, and

⁴⁷¹ Valerie Ringer Monk, *Crown Lynn: A New Zealand Icon* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006), 14; Taylor, *The Home Front*, 754.

⁴⁷² *Auckland Star*, 13 Oct 42, p.6, in Taylor, *The Home Front*, 757.

⁴⁷³ Edmond, *Women in Wartime*, 244.

⁴⁷⁴ Nicola McCloy, *Made In New Zealand: Stories of Iconic Kiwi brands* (Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2008), 85; Monk, *Crown Lynn*, 14; Taylor, *The Home Front*, 754.

from 1943 the New Zealand public.⁴⁷⁵ However, the industrial china produced was “heavy, ugly and badly made.”⁴⁷⁶ As a former Crown Lynn employee said of the NZ Rail cups “If one hit you on the head it would probably kill you.”⁴⁷⁷ The Paris dinnerware range manufactured for the public from 1943 was more elegant than the industrial china, but was far sturdier than fine bone china and was plain cream, without the flowers and gilding typical of bone china tea sets. At this stage, Crown Lynn was not designed or intended to compete with bone china for a place on the Afternoon Tea table. It was not until the 1950s and 60s that Crown Lynn’s designs became more stylish.⁴⁷⁸

Despite the scarcity of fine china, tea sets were still seen as a necessity for newly married couples setting up house and people still contrived to give brides tea sets for wedding gifts. Iris’s mother-in-law had put aside a bone china tea set at the start of the War, so she would be prepared should either of her two sons marry. As Iris told me, her mother-in-law “presumed possibly the oldest son would marry anyway and he didn't, but I did so I got the [tea set].”⁴⁷⁹ While not all parents may have shown such foresight as Iris’s mother-in-law, according to Taylor it was common for newly-weds to be furnished with china from the cabinets of older friends and relatives.⁴⁸⁰

The Clothing Ration

Table linen too was in short supply. The government imposed a clothing ration from May 1942.⁴⁸¹ The term ‘clothing ration’ is misleading, as in addition to clothing and footwear, manchester and household linen had to be purchased from the 52 clothing coupons allocated annually to each

⁴⁷⁵ Monk, *Crown Lynn*, 17, 18, 21.

⁴⁷⁶ Monk, *Crown Lynn*, 23.

⁴⁷⁷ Monk, *Crown Lynn*, 18.

⁴⁷⁸ Monk, *Crown Lynn*, 44, 45, 78-104.

⁴⁷⁹ Iris, interview with the author, July 25, 2009.

⁴⁸⁰ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 758.

⁴⁸¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790.

person.⁴⁸² Different items required different numbers of coupons. While a man, woman or child's overcoat required 16 coupons, an apron required only one. Household linen was also rationed according to size: while sheets required 3½ to 5½ coupons, towels needed only ¼ to 1¼ coupons."⁴⁸³ A housewife had to judiciously use the coupons allocated to her family to ensure both people and home were adequately provided for. As the Chairman of Farmers Trading Company declared "the government's actions in making customers use clothing coupons to purchase manchester and household linen goods would prove a great hardship."⁴⁸⁴

Despite rationing, fabric stocks were at times exhausted.⁴⁸⁵ According to Helen Laurenson, "Queues formed at the news that cotton or linen goods were available in a particular department store".⁴⁸⁶ A range of fabrics, including upholstery and curtain material, were not rationed. Housewives put these fabrics to use to cover shortfalls in the clothing ration. Edna, an avid embroiderer, worked supper cloths from the coarser and cheaper calico, as linen was unavailable. Although linen stocks were in short supply Iris said that she still embroidered table linen in anticipation of her marriage, but "nothing like the generation before."⁴⁸⁷

The Petrol Ration

While the china shortage and clothing ration limited the setting of the Afternoon Tea table, the petrol ration made it difficult for women living in the country to even get to it. Petrol restrictions were imposed two days

⁴⁸² Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790, 792; Helen Laurenson, *Going Up, Going Down: The Rise and Fall of the Department Store* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005), 74.

⁴⁸³ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 792. Unfortunately I was not able to find data on how table linen was rationed.

⁴⁸⁴ Mr A.D Bell, Chairman of Farmers Board of Directors from 'Press Cuttings 1940-1949' [untitled newspapers], 1942, MS 1400, Box 22, Folder 3, FCTA, AR' quoted in Laurenson, *Going Up, Going Down*, 74.

⁴⁸⁵ John Victor Baker, *The New Zealand People at War: War Economy* (Wellington: Historical Publications Branch, Dept. of Internal Affairs, 1965), 468.

⁴⁸⁶ Laurenson, *Going Up, Going Down*, 77.

⁴⁸⁷ Iris, July 25, 2009.

after New Zealand declared war on Germany and continued until June 1946. Seventeen months later it was reintroduced and finally ended in May 1950. Government propaganda strongly discouraged New Zealanders from using their paltry petrol ration for recreation, branding such use as disloyal.⁴⁸⁸ Socialising was severely curtailed. As Eve Ebbett recounts:

In 1940 the *Rangitikei Advocate* reported that because of the petrol shortage the Women's Institute did not invite members of the neighbouring institutes to a special function, and in 1943 the *Weekly News* noted that friends and relatives were unable to attend a golden wedding function because of petrol rationing and travel restrictions.⁴⁸⁹

Edna told me that Afternoon Tea parties "didn't happen so much during the war."⁴⁹⁰ Edith, May and Nora all remembered that during the War they would only travel into town once a week because of the petrol restrictions. Eileen recalls going in only once a month. "We didn't go out much, partly because of the War, partly because we lived in the country. We sort of just stayed on the farm... We just didn't do much, it was the restriction of not much petrol, being in the country."⁴⁹¹

The Tea Ration

Even tea, described at the time as the "outstanding necessity for every New Zealander," was rationed.⁴⁹² Every person over the age of ten was allocated roughly two ounces of tea per week from June 1942 until May 1948.⁴⁹³ The tea ration was only slightly less than pre-rationing

⁴⁸⁸ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 746.

⁴⁸⁹ Ebbett, *When the Boys were Away*, 114.

⁴⁹⁰ Edna, August 10, 2009.

⁴⁹¹ Eileen, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

⁴⁹² *NZ Herald*, 2 April, 1942, 8, quoted in Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790.

⁴⁹³ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790, 796. Again there was slight variation to the ration. Initially the ration was eight ounces per calendar month and was allocated to all citizens over 6 months. The ration was increased slightly to 2 ounces per week in November 1942, but age eligibility was pushed up to 10. In December 1942 and in March, April and December 1943 additional allowances of 4 ounces were made.

consumption of 7lb per head (including children) per year.⁴⁹⁴ However for those living alone, like many elderly, the two ounces per week did not go far.⁴⁹⁵ It was perhaps in recognition of this deprivation that in 1946 the ration was increased by 4lb per year for people over 70.⁴⁹⁶

Food Rationing

Notwithstanding all of these other shortages and restrictions, it was the way the War affected baking which the women spoke about the most. This reflects the importance women attached to baking and the significant impact the War had almost every ingredient associated with baking. Most notable was the rationing of sugar, eggs and butter.

From April 1942 until 1948, each person was allocated around twelve ounces of sugar per week, which equates to just over one and half cups.⁴⁹⁷ Each year there were additional allowances for jam-making ranging from six pounds to twelve pounds.⁴⁹⁸ By 1941 eggs had become scarce in cities, especially in Auckland and Wellington.⁴⁹⁹ Taylor say that although it had been reasonably common for city dwellers on larger sections to keep hens before the War, during the War chicken feed became scarce and people became busier, so people either reduced their flocks or stopped keeping

⁴⁹⁴ *Yearbook* 1940, p. 887, cited in Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790. 7lb per head per year, works out at approximately 2.2 ounces per week.

⁴⁹⁵ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790.

⁴⁹⁶ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 790.

⁴⁹⁷ There was some variation over this period. The ration was introduced at 12 ounces per week, then changed to 3 pounds per calendar month (just under 12 ounces a week) from August 1 of that year, then in October dropped to two and a half pounds per calendar month (just under 10 ounces per week), and then returned to 3 pounds per calendar month from December. The ration increased slightly to 12 ounces per week from November 1943 to March 1945, then reduced to 10 ounces until September 1945, when it increased to 12 ounces per week where it would remain for the rest of rationing. See Taylor, *The Home Front*, 791; Helen Leach, *The Pavlova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2008), 90.

⁴⁹⁸ Again there was some variation across the years in the amount of sugar allocated for jam making. Six pounds of sugar were allocated in 1942. In 1943 and 1944 12 pounds were allocated each year, then from 1945 to 1947 nine pounds per year were allocated, and in 1948 six pounds were allocated. See Taylor, *The Home Front*, 791.

⁴⁹⁹ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 91; Taylor, *The Home Front*, 778 -780.

hens completely. This meant more people had to buy eggs, and so strained already stretched resources.⁵⁰⁰ Consequently egg rationing was introduced across the whole country in 1944.⁵⁰¹ Butter was rationed from October 1943.⁵⁰² Initially rationed at eight ounces per week, it was reduced to eight ounces per week from June 1945 through late October 1949, when it was increased to eight ounces.⁵⁰³ Butter rationing ended on 4 June 1950.⁵⁰⁴

Less well known are the changes to flour and baking powder. More bran and wheat germ were left in flour during the War, which meant mixtures needed to be moister, required less heat at the start of baking and had to sit before baking.⁵⁰⁵ Early on in the War, cream of tartar, the base of most baking powders, became unavailable.⁵⁰⁶ It was replaced by phosphate, but unlike cream of tartar baking powders, phosphate baking powders did not begin aerating cakes until heated.⁵⁰⁷ Judging by an advertisement for phosphate baking powder advising women not to blame the baking powder if their cakes failed, it seems that the common view was that phosphate powders were not as reliable as their cream of tartar based predecessors.⁵⁰⁸

Although the War decreased the availability of crucial baking ingredients, it created a marked increase in demand for baking. As well as needing to keep the tins full at home, women now baked for their husbands, brothers and sons overseas fighting in the War.⁵⁰⁹ According to Taylor, “Some women with a long list of ‘boys’ baked incessantly.”⁵¹⁰ As well as baking

⁵⁰⁰ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 778.

⁵⁰¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 796.

⁵⁰² Taylor, *The Home Front*, 813.

⁵⁰³ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 819-822.

⁵⁰⁴ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 822.

⁵⁰⁵ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 828.

⁵⁰⁶ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 828.

⁵⁰⁷ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 828.

⁵⁰⁸ “If You Can’t Bake Like This then Write to Us,” *N.Z Truth*, September 5, 1945, 27

⁵⁰⁹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 1054.

⁵¹⁰ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 1054.

for family members, women baked for local patriotic societies who sent parcels to servicemen overseas.⁵¹¹ Ivy Faulkner of Bunnythorpe recalls:

We were able to send monthly parcels of food and comforts to servicemen, alternating fruit, cake and biscuits... Selected cooks were used to maintain a high standard of baking (fruit cake, gingernuts and shortbread requested by the lads) and everyone chipped in with rationed ingredients.⁵¹²

The restrictions and demands of wartime baking tested the ingenuity of women. As Taylor summarised it, "Soldiers' cakes were not threatened, but women accustomed to keeping their tins well stocked with home-made cakes and biscuits had to change their ways, or their recipes."⁵¹³ The evidence of the women I interviewed, published personal accounts and contemporary magazines and cookbooks suggests that most women opted to change their recipes, rather than their ways.

When the sugar ration came in, the headline of the cooking section of the *New Zealand Home Journal* optimistically announced "We can still have cakes for tea."⁵¹⁴ Women could turn to numerous sources for advice on how to keep on baking. The *New Zealand Women's Weekly*, *N.Z. Truth* and *New Zealand Exporter* and Aunt Daisy's radio show all gave guidance on how to manage on the ration and gave recipes which used minimal butter, sugar and eggs.⁵¹⁵ Various cookbooks were published advising women how to cope.⁵¹⁶ *Self Help Wartime Cooking Suggestions* grouped its puddings, cakes, breads and biscuits by what was not required i.e. "no butter, no eggs," or "one ounce butter, one egg."⁵¹⁷ Similarly the titles of recipes in the *War Economy Recipe Book* usually announced what the recipes did not contain.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 1054. Ebbett, *When the Boys were Away*, 110.

⁵¹² The Institute, *Wartime Experiences*, 53. See also 80 and 101.

⁵¹³ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 791.

⁵¹⁴ "We Can Still Have Cakes for Tea," *New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1942, 39.

⁵¹⁵ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 826.

⁵¹⁶ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 827.

⁵¹⁷ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 827; Veart, *First Catch Your Weka*, 174.

⁵¹⁸ Housewife, *War Economy Cookbook* (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1943).

Women also swapped recipes amongst themselves. One of the contributors to *Women in Wartime* said that “next to stockings, recipes were the number one item of conversation for women.”⁵¹⁹ May, who was married and raising a young family during the War, told me that:

You had to economise and you sort of got recipes from other people and they’d say try this one, there is no sugar in it.. You’d use honey or sometimes you could get golden syrup or if you had made jam you would sort of use that. Work in something sweet... All of our cooking was done with dripping, you never had butter.⁵²⁰

Substitution was the key to baking during the War. Combinations of dripping, golden syrup, vinegar, glycerine, lemon juice and custard powder were used instead of butter and eggs.⁵²¹ Betty Humphrey recollected that “To get over shortages of butter, lard or dripping was used in cakes with lemon essence to help disguise the taste. One egg less could be used if a tablespoon of vinegar was added instead.”⁵²² Edna told me that her Gran “used to make what she called a vinegar cake which had no eggs in it, and she could make that during the War years when eggs were rationed.”⁵²³

These substitutions did not go unnoticed. After telling readers that “if you have good stock of syrup or honey, use that in place of a quarter of the sugar in the recipe”, the food writer for the *New Zealand Home Journal* admitted that “you will get a darker cake of distinctive flavour, but one which will be enjoyed by the whole family.”⁵²⁴ Dripping seemed especially difficult to disguise. The author of a recipe for “Melting Chocolate Biscuits” declared they had “no dripping taste.”⁵²⁵ Almost all dripping recipes were spiced and most used lemon to hide the taste of the

⁵¹⁹ Edmond, *Women in Wartime*, 248.

⁵²⁰ May, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

⁵²¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 826.

⁵²² The Institute, *Wartime Experiences*, 80.

⁵²³ Edna, August 10, 2009.

⁵²⁴ “We Can Still Have Cakes for Tea,” 39.

⁵²⁵ “Making Good Wives Better,” *N.Z. Truth*, January 5, 1944, 19.

dripping. When I asked May if dripping changed the taste of baking she said “Oh yes. But you learned to live with it. You didn’t like it, but it was food you see. We didn’t have any fancy food we only had what we made.”⁵²⁶

To avoid odd tasting food, a number of contrivances were employed.

Butter and sugar were saved for baking, as May explained:

We did have coupons for sugar and if, like coming in to Christmas or a birthday you would hang on to them coupons because you knew you wanted so much sugar for a special treat... You could ration. You could say you have to have your porridge with honey or something. You would save that sugar and say there is no sugar we haven’t got any and you would not buy any. You had a month to use your coupons up. You could get a whole lot, or you could get a little bit each week. [If]there was something special coming up, you just would not part with those coupons. The family knew, they knew they couldn’t have it and they didn’t mind.⁵²⁷

Edith explained that “some elderly people didn’t use their coupons so they would pass them on.” Dripping could be used on bread, saving butter for baking. According to May, on bread, dripping was quite pleasant: “Dripping was lovely, you would get all the flavours, the onions or the stuffing it all went through the food. The fat you know, and then you would put that dripping on your bread.”⁵²⁸

The Impact of Rationing on Recipes

Analysing the changes to the amounts of sugar, eggs and butter called for in published recipes provides a picture in quantitative terms of how recipes were adapted to wartime restrictions. Sugar rationing reduced consumption by roughly 10,000 tons per year, while the butter ration reduced per head consumption by a quarter.⁵²⁹ In the following pages I have used bar graphs to show the changes in average quantities of sugar,

⁵²⁶ May, October 3, 2009.

⁵²⁷ May, October 3, 2009.

⁵²⁸ Edith, interview with the author, October 3, 2009.

⁵²⁹ Baker, *The New Zealand People at War: War Economy*, 467,470.

butter and eggs required in recipes at different stages of wartime rationing. In each bar graph, the three “Periodicals” bars refer to cake recipes from the *N.Z. Truth*, *The New Zealand Home Journal*, and *The Mirror*. The other three bars chart cake recipes in the three cookbooks examined: *Aunt Daisy*, *War Economy* and *Truth's*.

There are separate graphs for sugar, eggs and butter. In each graph the first two columns show average quantities of ingredients used in recipes before rationing was introduced. Although sugar rationing was introduced in May 1942, the same year that *Aunt Daisy* was published, it is likely that many of the recipes in this book date from pre-rationing times as this cookbook was compiled from recipes sent in by readers over the year. The recipes in the ‘Periodicals 1942- Oct 43’ column are from a time when sugar was rationed but butter was not. The fourth column charts recipes from *War Economy* which was published when sugar was rationed and when butter rationing was anticipated but not in force. The last two columns chart recipes published when sugar, butter and eggs were rationed.

To get a more nuanced idea of how recipes changed, I have used pie-graphs to show the range and frequency of quantities of sugar, eggs, and butter called for in cake recipes in the three cookbooks. When considering these cookbooks, the sources and/or purpose of the recipes in the cookbook need to be factored in. Both *Aunt Daisy* and *Truth's* are assembled from recipes sent in by the public, so the recipes may possibly use slightly more sugar, butter and eggs than women would usually use, as women would want to attach their names to tasty recipes, and tasty recipes tend to require more of these ingredients. However there was a fairly universal desire for economical recipes and the editors of *Truth's*

claimed to have selected recipes that were “simple and inexpensive”.⁵³⁰ *War Economy* was specifically compiled for those who “desire to economise, or for those who unfortunately, owing to a shortage of supplies, cannot secure sufficient ingredients to do their usual baking.”⁵³¹ Hence its recipes may be slightly more austere. Despite these limitations, the cookbooks can give us useful and more particular insights into the impact of wartime rationing on the quantities of rationed ingredients used in recipes.

Sugar rationing

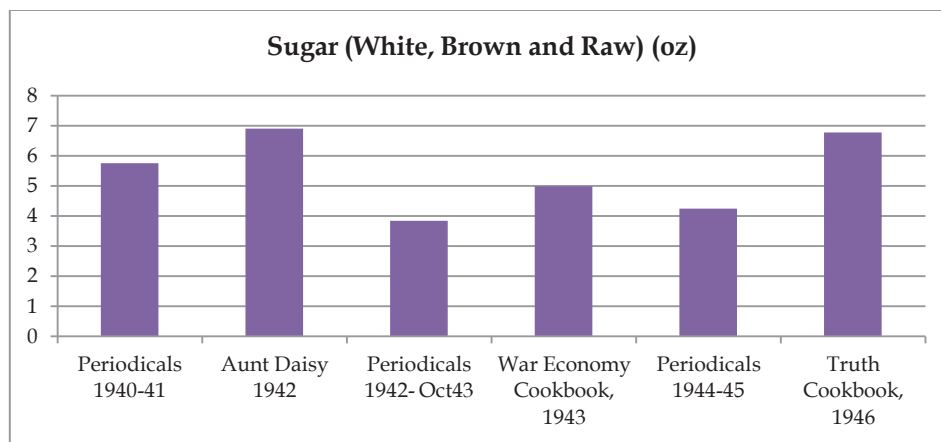


Table 1. Average sugar use in cake recipes 1940-1946

Sources: *N.Z. Truth* (1940-1945), *The New Zealand Home Journal* (1940-1945), *The Mirror* (1940-1945), *Aunt Daisy* (1942), *War Economy* (1943) and *Truth's* (1946).

Table 1 shows that, immediately after sugar rationing came in, recipes called for on average two - three ounces less sugar than before rationing, but that by the end of the War sugar use had returned to almost pre-rationing levels. The increase in sugar use in the 1946 *Truth's* could be attributed to a number of factors, perhaps more people had given up sugar in their tea by that stage and so more sugar was available to cook

⁵³⁰ Introduction to *N.Z. "Truth's" Cookery Book: Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes* (Wellington: Truth, 1946), v.

⁵³¹ Housewife, foreword to *War Economy Recipe Book*

with, or perhaps, with the War over, the recipes sent in were more celebratory in nature and so used more sugar.

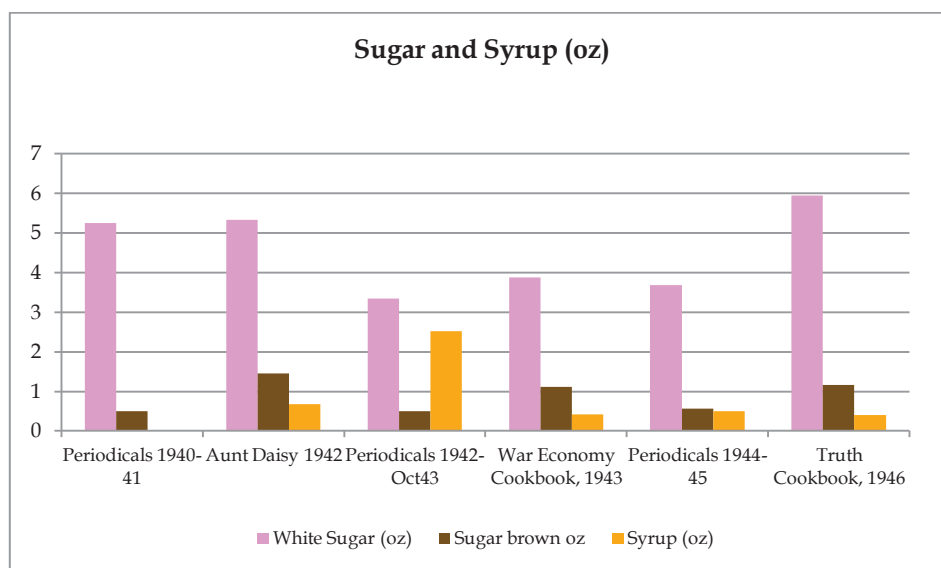


Table 2. Average white sugar, brown sugar and syrup use in cake recipes 1940-1946

Sources: *N.Z. Truth* (1940-1945), *The New Zealand Home Journal* (1940-1945), *The Mirror* (1940-1945), *Aunt Daisy* (1942), *War Economy* (1943) and *Truth's* (1946).

Table 2 shows how the quantities of white sugar, brown sugar and syrup changed during the War. The syrup column includes golden syrup, molasses and treacle. I combined the figures for these sugar syrups together as only a small number of recipes called for them. The graph shows that white sugar use was most affected by rationing. The amount of brown sugar did not vary much when rationing was introduced, mainly because it was never used in large quantities. Only two of the 237 recipes I looked at used raw sugar so I did not include this in the chart. Condensed milk and honey were also substituted for sugar. However, because only five of the 237 recipes I looked at used condensed milk and seven out of the 237 recipes used honey, I did not include them in the graph either. Honey was also in short supply during the War which is probably why it appears in so few recipes.⁵³²

⁵³² Taylor, *The Home Front*, 767.

The most interesting trend this graph shows is the spike in the average amount of syrup used in recipes after rationing came in, which then quickly smoothed out to just under one ounce for the rest of the period. This suggests that after an initial enthusiasm for use of syrup, women found it unsatisfactory as a sugar substitute and that the “distinctive flavour” it gave to cakes was not “enjoyed by the whole family” as promised.⁵³³ The graph indicates that women preferred to use less sugar rather than change the flavour of cakes. It could also suggest that these sugar-based syrups became harder to obtain as the War progressed.⁵³⁴

Tables 3, 4 and 5 show the range and frequency of sugar quantities required for cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*, *War Economy* and *Truth's*.

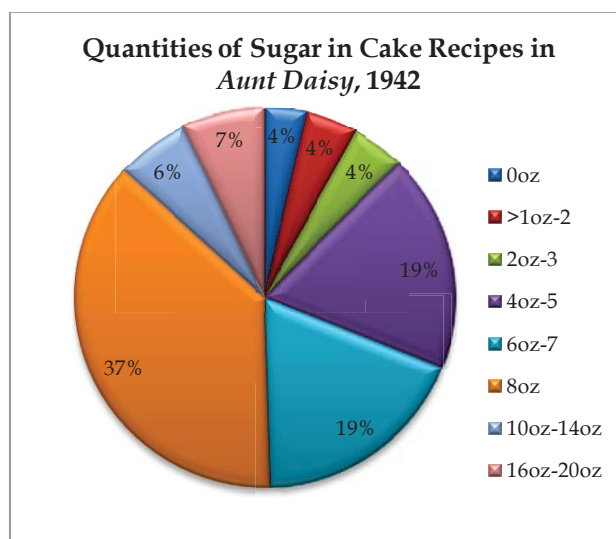


Table 3. Sugar quantities in cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*

Source: *Aunt Daisy* (1942)

⁵³³ “We Can Still Have Cakes for Tea,” 39.

⁵³⁴ Unfortunately I was not able to find information on the availability of syrup etc during the war.

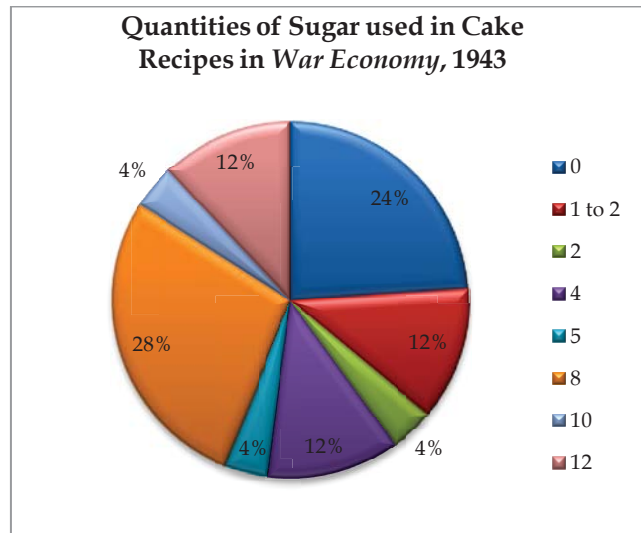


Table 4. Sugar quantities in cake recipes in *War Economy*
Source: *War Economy* (1942)

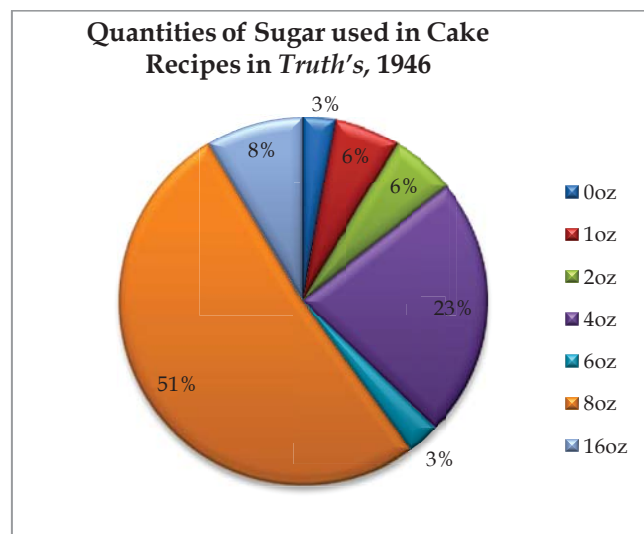


Table 5. Sugar quantities in cake recipes in *Truth's*
Source: *Truth's* (1946).

Tables 3, 4 and 5 illustrate in detail how the amounts of sugar used changed during the War. Only four per cent of *Aunt Daisy* and three per cent of *Truth's* recipes used no sugar, but almost a quarter of recipes in *War Economy* were sugar free. The low percentage of sugarless recipes in *Aunt Daisy* recipes indicates that before rationing was introduced sugarless recipes were not favoured. The high proportion of sugarless recipes in *War Economy* reflects the same enthusiasm for sugar free recipes

immediately after rationing was introduced that was shown in Table 2. However, by 1946, when *Truth's* was published, this enthusiasm for sugarless recipes appears to have palled.

At the other end of the scale, seven per cent of the *Aunt Daisy* recipes and eight per cent of *Truth's* recipes ask for 16 ounces or more of sugar. No recipes in *War Economy* are this extravagant in their sugar use. A cake requiring 16 ounces of sugar would use one and a quarter of a weekly sugar ration. Most cakes with large amounts of sugar were big fruit cakes, baked to mark special occasions, such as weddings. The dramatic spike in the marriage rate in 1946 after the War ended may explain why *Truth's* had almost as many recipes using 16 ounces or more of sugar as *Aunt Daisy*.⁵³⁵ The lack of recipes using large amounts of sugar in *War Economy* most likely reflects the book's stated purpose of providing recipes for those who those who "desire to economise" or "cannot secure sufficient ingredients to do their usual baking."⁵³⁶ Such people would have little use for recipes so profligate in their use of sugar. More research into mid-war recipes to establish whether large cakes continued to be made through this period is needed.

In each cookbook, the most common amount of sugar required was eight ounces or one cup. Recipes using eight ounces of sugar make up 37 per cent of *Aunt Daisy*, 28 per cent of *War Economy* and 51 per cent of *Truth's*. This measure of a cup was probably popular because it was an easy measure to make and did not require scales. It was probably well known that one cup of sugar equated to eight ounces, and if not known, cookbooks often included conversion charts to help new cooks. Eight ounces of sugar makes a reasonably large cake. The significant proportion of recipes using eight ounces of sugar throughout the War suggests that

⁵³⁵ Baker, *The New Zealand People at War: War Economy*, 444.

⁵³⁶ Housewife, foreword to *War Economy Cookbook*.

fairly large cakes were made throughout the period. Many of these cakes were probably being sent overseas rather than used for Afternoon Tea. That 51 per cent of recipes from *Truth's* used eight ounces of sugar suggests an increased demand for larger cakes around 1945/1946. This possibly signals an increased output of celebratory cakes as soldiers returned from War.

Egg Rationing

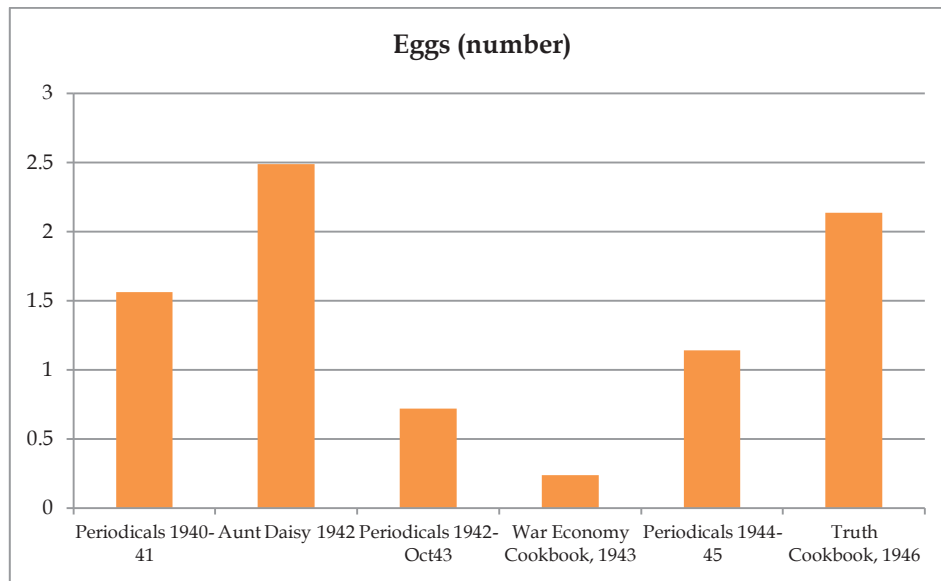


Table 6. Average numbers of eggs in cake recipes 1940-1946

Sources: *N.Z. Truth* (1940-1945), *The New Zealand Home Journal* (1940-1945), *The Mirror* (1940-1945), *Aunt Daisy* (1942), *War Economy* (1943) and *Truth's* (1946).

Table 6 shows the variation in the average numbers of eggs required in recipes between 1940 and 1946. The graph charts a sharp decline in the number of eggs used in 1942 and 1943 and then a steady increase from 1944 to 1946. The recipes in *Aunt Daisy*, published in 1942, have the highest average number of eggs. This is noteworthy because by 1941 eggs were in short supply in some urban centres, particularly Wellington and Auckland, as I noted earlier.⁵³⁷ The high average number of eggs used in

⁵³⁷ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 91; Taylor, *The Home Front*, 778 -790

recipes from *Aunt Daisy* supports Taylor's findings that in other areas eggs were still in plentiful supply.⁵³⁸ The sharp decline in the average number of eggs required in recipes published in 1942 and 1943 suggests that over this period, the egg shortage was more widely felt. The increase in egg use from 1944 coincides with the introduction of egg rationing, and perhaps suggests rationing created a more even distribution of eggs.

Comparing the range and frequency of the number of eggs used in cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*, *War Economy* and *Truth's* shows how the use of eggs in recipes changed over the War. This is charted in tables 7, 8 and 9.

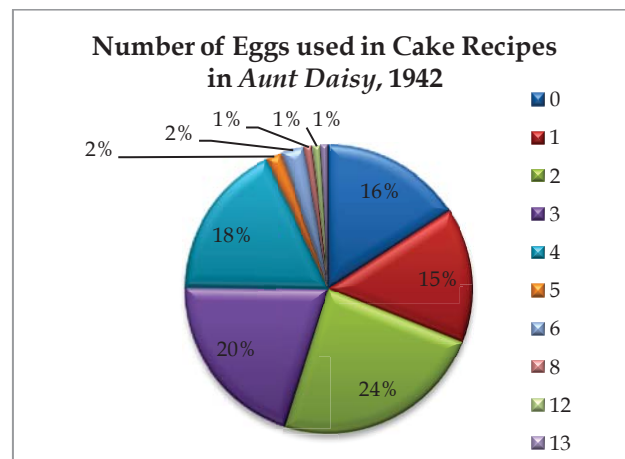


Table 7. Numbers of egg used in cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*
Source: *Aunt Daisy* (1942).

⁵³⁸ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 779.

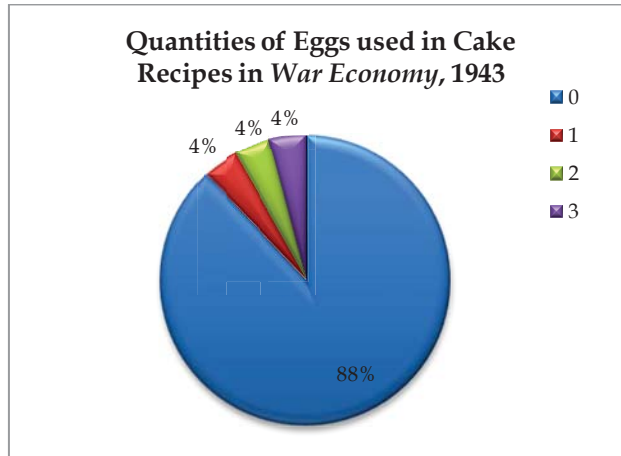


Table 8. Number of eggs used in cake recipes in *War Economy*
Source: *War Economy* (1943).

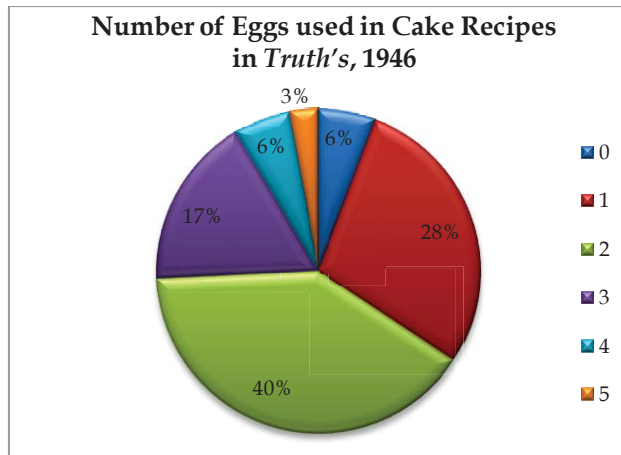


Table 9. Number of eggs used in cake recipes in *Truth's*
Source: *Truth's* (1946).

Comparing Tables 7, 8 and 9 shows that *War Economy* has a considerably larger proportion of eggless recipes than either *Aunt Daisy* or *Truth's*. Even taking into account the deliberately frugal nature of recipes *War Economy*, that 88 per cent of its cake recipes are eggless, compared with 16 per cent of *Aunt Daisy* and six per cent of *Truth's* suggests that the egg shortage was quite severe around 1943. It is interesting that *Aunt Daisy* has almost three times more eggless recipes than *Truth's* while also having far more extravagant recipes than *Truth's*. No *Truth's* recipe uses more than five

eggs and these recipes make up only three per cent of the cake recipes. By contrast *Aunt Daisy* includes recipes that call for five, six, seven, eight, twelve and even thirteen eggs. These recipes make up seven per cent of the cake recipes – more than twice the percentage of five egg recipes in *Truth's*. Comparing the number of cake recipes that used one or two eggs in *Truth's* and *Aunt Daisy* s also shows an increase in demand for recipes with moderate egg use. Thirty-nine per cent of recipes in *Aunt Daisy* use one or two eggs, while such recipes make up 68 per cent of *Truth's* cake recipes.

This suggests that when *Aunt Daisy* was published there was greater variation in the availability of eggs than when *Truth's* was published. The high number of eggless recipes in *Aunt Daisy* points to considerable demand for such recipes, suggesting that a significant portion of the population lacked eggs. At the same time, the inclusion of recipes requiring between five to thirteen eggs suggests that in some areas egg supply was plentiful. Looking at *Truth's* suggests that by 1945/1946 egg supply was steady and had recovered from the scarcity suggested by *War Economy*, but was now more evenly distributed and not as abundant in some areas as when *Aunt Daisy* was published.

Butter Rationing

Prior to rationing butter was cheap and women were used to “slapping a bit of butter into almost everything.”⁵³⁹ Rationing affected butter use more than sugar and eggs. Comparing cake recipes from 1940 to 1946 shows the amount of butter used reduced substantially over the period of the War.

⁵³⁹ *Auckland Star*, October 28, 1943, quoted in Taylor, *The Home Front*, 826.

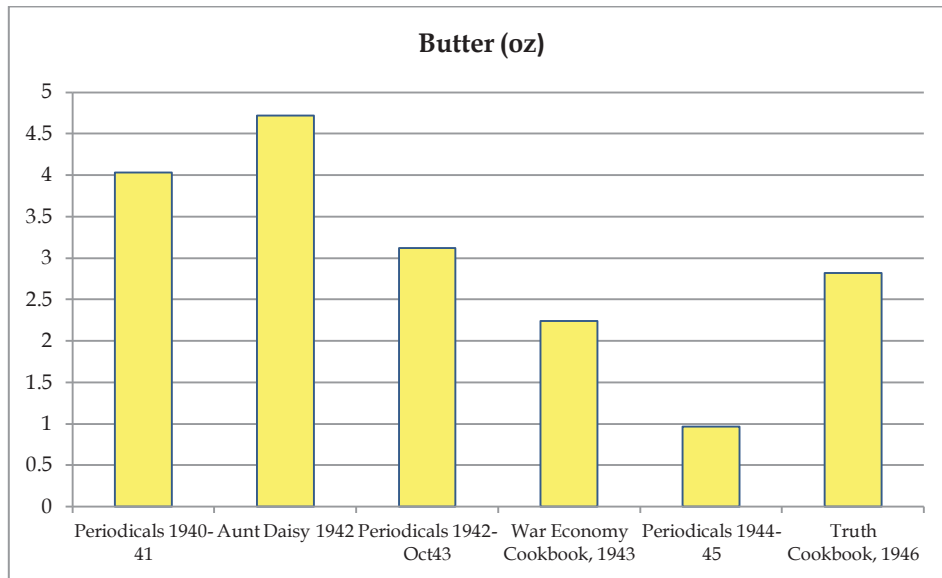


Table 10. Average quantities of butter used in cake recipes 1940-1946
 Sources: *N.Z. Truth* (1940-1945), *The New Zealand Home Journal* (1940-1945), *The Mirror* (1940-1945), *Aunt Daisy* (1942), *War Economy* (1943) and *Truth's* (1946).

Table 10 shows the changes in the average quantity of butter used in cake recipes between 1940 and 1946. The graph charts the steady decrease in butter use from an average of just over 4.5 ounces in 1942 before rationing was introduced, to one ounce in 1944-45 when rationing had been in force for some time. As with sugar, the *Truth's* column indicates that when the War ended there was an increase in the amount of butter used, possibly reflecting a similar increase in demand for celebration cakes. But unlike sugar, which returned to near pre-rationing levels of use, the average amount of butter used in cake recipes was still almost two ounces or less than it was in pre-rationing recipes.

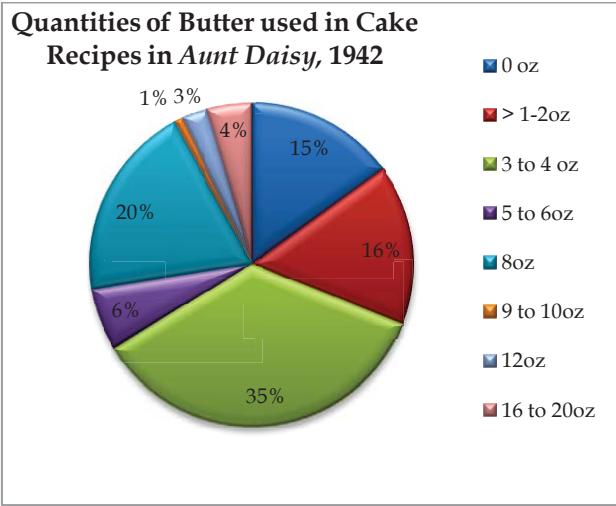


Table 11. Quantities of butter used in cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*

Source: *Aunt Daisy* (1942).

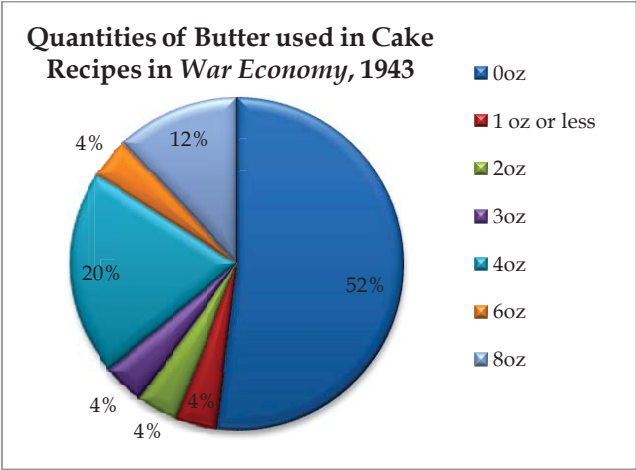


Table 12. Quantities of butter used in cake recipes in *War Economy*

Source: *War Economy* (1943).

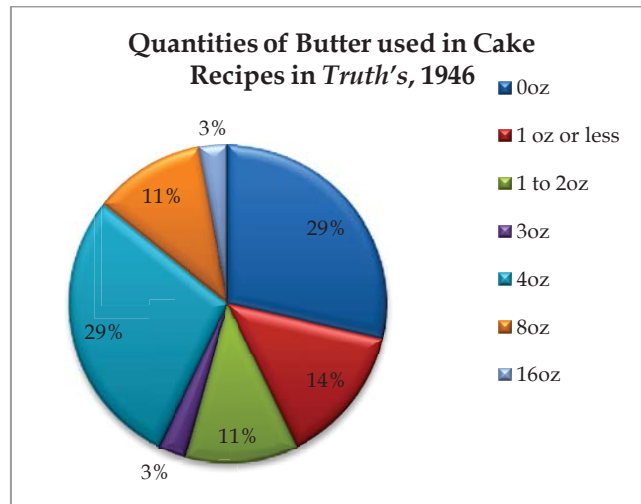


Table 13. Quantities of Butter used in cake recipes in *Truth's*

Source: *Truth's* (1946).

Tables 11, 12 and 13 show the range and frequency of butter quantities required for cake recipes in *Aunt Daisy*, *War Economy* and *Truth's*. The charts show how quantities changed to accommodate wartime restrictions. The most noticeable change is that while only 15 per cent of *Aunt Daisy* recipes used no butter, over half of the recipes in *War Economy* were butterless, even though rationing was not in yet in place. This reflects the widespread public anticipation of rationing well before it was brought in.⁵⁴⁰ The 29 per cent of butterless recipes in *Truth's* implies there was a steady demand for recipes which required no butter.

Many of the recipes in *War Economy* and *Truth's* use dripping or shortening instead of or to supplement butter: such recipes make up 44 per cent of the cake section of *War Economy* and 31 per cent of *Truth's*. However they constitute a mere 0.03 per cent of *Aunt Daisy*, intimating that these substitutes were only used out of necessity, not as a matter of course.

⁵⁴⁰ The government first hinted at butter rationing in April 1943, but it was not implemented until October of that year. See Taylor, *The Home Front*, 815, 819.

Looking at the more lavish end of the scale, in *Aunt Daisy* 28 per cent of recipes used eight ounces or more of butter. This figure halved after butter rationing was introduced, dropping to 12 per cent of recipes in *War Economy* and 14 per cent in *Truth's*. The butter ration was reduced in 1945 to six ounces per person per week. So recipes which used eight or more ounces of butter would have required careful management of the butter ration by the housewife. The fact that the amount of recipes using eight ounces remained similar in *Truth's* and *War Economy*, despite the decrease in the butter ration, points to a demand for recipes for celebratory occasions when *Truth's* was published that has been evident when looking at sugar and eggs as well.

The Butter Ration and Notions of Nationhood

According to Taylor, “there was no general grumbling” when the butter ration was introduced, because it was brought in so that the British could continue to have butter.⁵⁴¹ Elsewhere Taylor records that before rationing was in place New Zealanders made various proposals to gift large amounts of butter to Britain.⁵⁴² James Belich also notes the wide acceptance of rationing (up until 1949) and the generosity of private New Zealanders in giving to British people affected by war even while they were still subject to rationing themselves.⁵⁴³ Individuals sent 800,000 food parcels to Britain: “helping Britain became almost an obsession with New Zealanders.”⁵⁴⁴ Belich uses this acceptance of rationing and willingness to give to Britain as an example of recolonisation, proof of Pakeha New Zealanders continued identification with Britain.

⁵⁴¹ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 820.

⁵⁴² In some cases these were very large quantities indeed, a southland farmer offered to gift 1 million pounds. Taylor, *The Home Front*, 139-140.

⁵⁴³ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 296.

⁵⁴⁴ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 296; Maxine Inverson “*Inextricable links: Pakeha Perceptions of Identity and their Relationships with Britain at the Time of the Statute of Westminster*,” M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1996, 60-63, cited in Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 296.

But not all New Zealanders reacted to the butter ration so enthusiastically. There is evidence that the ration was resisted or rejected in some quarters, and this resistance to the ration can also tell us something about Pakeha identity during the War. In June 1943 *The Mirror* ran an editorial headed “Butter of All Things” criticising the government’s proposed butter ration. The editor declared that “to ration butter in New Zealand is to ration tea in Ceylon or coal in Newcastle.”⁵⁴⁵ The editor went on to say that “to the average man and woman in must seem incongruous and incompatible for the ‘World’s Dairy Farm’ to ration its own family as it were.”⁵⁴⁶ It is perhaps significant that the butter rationing was not announced until just after the 1943 election.⁵⁴⁷ The ration was particularly unpopular amongst farmers and concern about their reaction was a factor in the government’s delayed implementation of butter rationing.⁵⁴⁸

Although the evidence of published cake recipes suggests the butter ration curtailed butter use, oral history tells a different story – at least for those on farms. Nora, Lois, and Iris all commented that the butter ration didn’t affect them much because they had cows. When I asked Iris how the War affected her baking she said that “well of course we could still get butter.”⁵⁴⁹ Similarly Nora said her family were not badly affected because “you could always keep some cream and make some butter.”⁵⁵⁰ Lois, whose family had suffered much during the Depression, told me that “this was a time when we were fortunate because we had cows and pigs and chooks and vegetable gardens, so we were fortunate that we had those things so we weren’t as deprived as some were.”⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁵ “Butter of All Things,” *The Mirror*, June, 1943, 18.

⁵⁴⁶ “Butter of All Things,” 18

⁵⁴⁷ Taylor, *The Home Front*, 819.

⁵⁴⁸ The government first hinted at butter rationing in April 1943, but it was not implemented until October of that year. See Taylor, *The Home Front*, 815, 819, 821.

⁵⁴⁹ Iris, July 25, 2009.

⁵⁵⁰ Nora, interview with the author, November 30, 2009.

⁵⁵¹ Lois, interview with the author, October 12, 2009.

Published personal accounts of other women who lived in the country during the War tell a similar story. Coral Conlan, who lived near Palmerston North during the War, remembered that “our place was on the edge of town and my brother and I were sent down the road to a farm to get a billy full of milk every day. Mum would put it to set, skim off the cream and make ‘dairy butter’ to help with the butter ration.”⁵⁵² Similarly Ivy Faulkner said that “Farm milk cans were surreptitiously skimmed and a family billy of milk from the factory was often too rich for tea making, so that the egg beaters could be kept busy augmenting the butter ration.”⁵⁵³ A contributor to *Women in Wartime* recalled that “Most country people didn’t entirely keep to the regulations and would give their friends extra butter.”⁵⁵⁴

In her work on the history of the pavlova, Helen Leach found a similar resistance to rationing. From October 1943 through to February 1950 the sale of cream was also prohibited and officially available only to those with a doctor’s permit.⁵⁵⁵ Yet Leach found recipes and personal accounts which suggest there was relative free use of this supposedly unobtainable substance. She quotes minister Lloyd Geering who said that “During my tenure in Kurnow I must have consumed more cream-cake and pavlova than at any other period of life – and this at a time when cream was officially unavailable because of the War effort.”⁵⁵⁶ Drawing on the evidence of contemporary recipes Leach argues that by 1945 New Zealanders were tired of rationing and that by 1947 there was little stigma in flouting regulations and using cream in recipes.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵² The Institute, *Wartime Experiences*, 111.

⁵⁵³ The Institute, *Wartime Experiences*, 53.

⁵⁵⁴ Edmond, *Women in Wartime*, 150.

⁵⁵⁵ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 92.

⁵⁵⁶ Lloyd Geering, *Wrestling With God: The Story of My Life* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books in association with Craig Potton Publishing, 2006), 76-7. Cited in Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 92.

⁵⁵⁷ Leach, *The Pavlova Story*, 92-93.

Leach observes that the War “Could have led to the pavlova’s extinction because its key ingredients (eggs, sugar and cream) were all subject to rationing that persisted for most of the 1940s.”⁵⁵⁸ The same could be said of many cakes baked for Afternoon Tea. Yet cake baking persisted, in rural areas aided and abetted by clandestine butter use. Leach proposes that during rationing the pavlova took on new roles “as marker of resistance against wartime regulations and symbol of a land which we believed should flow, not just with milk and honey, but cream and eggs as well.”⁵⁵⁹

This argument can be extended to cake baking more generally. It seems that throughout the War in rural areas it was fairly common for butter and cream regulations to be ignored. This suggests that there was a strong sense of a New Zealand identity as a place of plenty with free access to fresh produce, an identity which was as strong as the belief that we were part of Britain and should go without to help the ‘Mother Country’.

Conclusion

By exploring how the War affected each element of Afternoon Tea I have also shown how it affected the housekeeping and daily life more generally. This contributes to the body of research on women during World War Two, the bulk of which has been focussed on women in the paid workforce. In this chapter I have used cookbooks to add detail to existing research about the impact of rationing, showing that butter, sugar and egg use were all affected by the War, but that butter use was most affected. By looking at the changing quantities used, I show that when the War ended, use of sugar and eggs returned to roughly pre-rationing levels – although rationing itself was not over. In contrast, according to the cookery books at least, although the amount of butter used in cake recipes increased when the War finished it did not return to pre-rationing levels.

⁵⁵⁸ Leach, *The Pavlova Story* 163.

⁵⁵⁹ Leach, *The Pavlova Story* 163.

However, the oral narratives tell a slightly different story. According to the accounts of farming women, those with dairy cows were not affected by the butter ration. These findings demonstrate the value of using oral narratives in combination with cookbooks when examining food history. In this case the oral narratives revealed a slightly different story of Pakeha identity in this era; although better Britishness was present, Pakeha women also believed they lived in a land where the cake tins could and *should* always be kept full.

Conclusion

This thesis has contributed to an understanding of female Pakeha cultural history through the study of an important social occasion: Afternoon Tea. Using oral narratives, photographs, cookbooks and contemporary periodicals, I have told a story of Afternoon Tea in the Manawatu region of New Zealand in the 1930s and 1940s. This study makes a distinction between 'afternoon tea' and 'Afternoon Tea'. The former was family's snack between meals, the latter was an event; hostess and guests dressed in their best clothes and the hostess put out her best china, linen and silver and served her best baking. My research demonstrates the insights that can be gained by using a wide range of sources, such as material culture, cookery books, oral narratives and contemporary periodicals.

Because this is the first study focused on Afternoon Tea in New Zealand, I began by outlining the constituent elements of Afternoon Tea hosted in women's homes. The country women remembered that Afternoon Tea happened on a Sunday and was attended by both men and women, whereas townswomen remembered it as a ladies-only affair that happened on weekdays. Most women recalled that as children, they were 'banished' during Afternoon Tea until they were old enough to be useful. Country Afternoon Teas were probably held on Sundays because few women drove and so relied on their husbands to drive them to visit their friends. By contrast women in town lived closer and could transport themselves by foot or by bicycle. In her study of an earlier era Daley found that although men accompanied their wives on Sunday visits, they sat outside, separate from the women, indicating that whether in town or country, Afternoon Tea was a female event.⁵⁶⁰ More research could usefully be done on this subject, which would bring out differences in gender interaction in rural and urban communities. Whether in town or

⁵⁶⁰ Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 93.

country Afternoon Tea was an opportunity to catch up with friends and family. As Rita said "I think it was a real gossip session."⁵⁶¹

Every woman reminisced about the same items when describing Afternoon Tea: baked goods and dainty bread, embroidered linen and bone china. Silver tea services were also mentioned frequently. Baked goods included cakes and biscuits which were made from recipes obtained from cookbooks, off the radio or from other women. Most women did not learn to cook until they got married, but everyone developed a dish at which they excelled that they served for Afternoon Tea. Cooking was one of the most valued skills of the housewife and by developing a specialty dish women demonstrated their expertise in this important arena.

Women would also lay out their best table linen for Afternoon Tea. This was mostly hand embroidered according to a pattern which was either pre-stamped on to the linen or ironed on from a transfer. Only a few types of stitches were used and it was very unusual for women to deviate from the pattern or invent their own patterns. Any future research into New Zealand's textile history should factor this in, particularly when analysing the decorative motifs as a source of information about the past.

When guests came, women set out their finest bone china tea cups. Poorer women might only have one or two, but most women had whole tea sets and some women had several. They all remembered the brands of bone china, and there was a clear hierarchy to the brands. Most women I interviewed had a silver tea pot, several had silver tea services, and one had a complete set of cutlery specifically for Afternoon Tea, although brands of silver were rarely mentioned.

⁵⁶¹ Rita, interview with the Author, August 24, 2009.

Certain rules were followed during Afternoon Tea: the hostess poured the tea and she or her children would pass around the food. Typically the elderly guests were served first. Most of the women I interviewed really enjoyed Afternoon Tea. For them it was an opportunity to catch up with their friends and gave them a break from their house work to “play ladies.” However unlike the genteel ladies of leisure they were imitating, the delectable food, embroidered linen, gleaming silver and tidy house were all the products of the housewife’s labour.

Through studying the occasion of Afternoon Tea my thesis contributes to an under-researched area of New Zealand’s history. Over several decades a number of important works on women’s history and more recently gender history have emerged. However there remains a lack of research on women’s domestic lives in the 1930s and 1940s, particularly from a cultural history perspective. In the era of my study young women were expected to marry, and once married they were expected to leave the paid workforce and become housewives. By utilising both oral narratives and material culture, my research revealed important and enduring connections between Afternoon Tea, marriage, womanhood, and women’s identity as good housewives. Tea sets, tea trolleys and tea services were common marriage gifts and the practice of making supper cloths for a bride’s ‘Glory Box’ was widespread. Taken together, this suggests that the community these women were part of, and most of the women themselves, expected that Afternoon Tea would be a part of their married lives.

In the society that my oral informants grew up in, being a good housewife was integral to contemporary understandings of adult female identity and Afternoon Tea can be viewed as a performance of this identity. Using performance theory to examine Afternoon Tea enabled me to elucidate key aspects of the role of housewives. In this frame of analysis, the objects of Afternoon Tea become crucial to understanding that performance. The

food, linen and china of Afternoon Tea reveal the critical importance women placed on cooking, cleaning and their own creativity.

First and foremost of these aspects was cooking. Contemporary cookbooks advised housewives that the happiness of their homes depended on their prowess in the kitchen. Of all forms of cooking, baking required the most skill, so the display of baked goods at Afternoon Tea can be seen to represent both the work of the housewife cooking for her family and also demonstrated her skill at this task, thus conveying to her guests that she was a 'good housewife.' The practice of placing the baked goods on a tiered cake stand, thereby giving them pre-eminence at the tea table also suggests that cooking was one of the most valued skills of the housewife.

As well as cooking, cleanliness and creativity were also valued. The focus on the cleanliness of Afternoon Tea linen rather than the skill with which it was embroidered suggests that the linen stood for the housewives' work doing her family's laundry using the copper – an arduous and time consuming task. The display of clean linen was further proof to her guests that she was a good housewife. This indicates that laundering was another of the more valued tasks of the housewife. That women continued to make embroidered table clothes and napkins for Afternoon Tea, despite the difficulties of laundering them and the lack of recognition they received for it, shows that the women enjoyed embroidery and valued the creativity and workmanship it entailed. The linen of Afternoon Tea served yet another purpose. Together with the fine china and silver tea service it gave a sense of refinement to Afternoon Tea by mirroring the Afternoon Teas of the English upper-classes. This linked both hostess and guests to the idea of being genteel ladies of leisure, indicating that refinement and gentility were also valued qualities of housewives at the time.

In addition to connecting the informants with the English upper-class, the material culture of Afternoon Tea also marked out class differences within the Manawatu. Class has been an area of New Zealand history which, until recently, has been largely overlooked by historians. This is possibly because of “the power of the myth of classlessness in New Zealand.”⁵⁶² The words of Edith, May, Nora and Eileen quickly dispelled this myth. These women who fell at the lower end of the hierarchy were most articulate about class distinctions and said Afternoon Tea was one of the sites where class identity was made apparent. Edith, May, Nora and Eileen felt that the material culture of Afternoon Tea was a class signifier – the posh put out fine linen and china as a matter of course, the non-posh did not. Iris and Marjorie were at the higher end of the hierarchy and were far more reticent when discussing class. However they also revealed that the material culture of Afternoon Tea marked status. They told me that it was easy to discern the quality of china used at Afternoon Tea by its thickness, but they also emphasised that it was not done to show too much interest in the brand of your hostess’s china or display too much pride in the brands that you owned. This shows that for those at the higher end of the social scale it was considered improper to be overly concerned with status and wealth. Although the china and linen of Afternoon Tea varied amongst the women I interviewed, the foods of Afternoon Tea did not. This similarity suggests that Pakeha society had a reasonably flat structure in terms of access to basic goods, but that there was a perceived hierarchy of status. My discussion of class focussed on rural women because they were the only ones that mentioned class; studying aspects of class identity amongst urban women would be a worthwhile area for further study.

As well as social status and class, this study explored wider cultural influences, broadly defined. Scholars investigating Pakeha culture inevitably conclude that Pakeha culture is a hybrid of cultural influences.

⁵⁶² James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin Press, 2001), 126.

Through a discussion of aspects of the performance of Afternoon Tea, and a close examination of the decorative motifs of the linen and china, I drew out understandings of the degree to which some of these influences were apparent in contemporary Pakeha culture. Recently researchers have begun to explore the way the cultures of different colonial immigrant groups influenced Pakeha culture into the twentieth century. They found a strong upper-class English influence, a considerable Scottish influence and little Irish influence. Afternoon Tea comes from the English upper class, and its widespread practice supports the existing research about the strong influence of the English upper-class. However I found little evidence to support the more general findings that the Scottish had a considerable influence on Pakeha culture. One woman did have Irish linen, Irish china and a recipe for Irish biscuits but she did not remember these being used, suggesting that her family treasured their Irish heritage but that it was not a feature of their day to day lives. This supports the general scholarly findings about Irish influence. The Danish were an important immigrant group in the Manawatu, about which little research has been done. However, although some of the informants had Danish connections, their connections did not seem apparent in the way they hosted Afternoon Tea. This suggests that the Danes assimilated into the dominant British culture; however more research is needed in this area. The growing influence of American culture at this time has been noted by several researchers however I found only a slight American influence at the tea table - a supper cloth embroidered with Disney's Bambi motifs and a promotional tea casket featuring Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. That both items feature Disney characters supports Belich's finding that film was the biggest source of American influence. They also point to a nascent influence of commercialisation on Pakeha culture.

Belich theorised that "Better Britishness" was a major feature of Pakeha identity from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century.

Central to this ethos was the notion of New Zealand as an idealised rural England.⁵⁶³ The dominance of English cottage flower motifs on both linen and china suggests that women aspired to this cottage idyll of Better Britishness. Although the majority of the linen embroidered in 1930s and 1940s was inspired by English flowers, the naming of baked goods such as Māori Kisses and New Zealand buns suggests that women were also influenced by contemporary cultural nationalist inclinations which sought to signal New Zealand's cultural distinctiveness from Britain.

This range of influences on Afternoon Tea reflects the hybrid nature of Pakeha culture and its dominant and emergent strands at the time of my study. Traces of influence from the English upper-class, America, Better Britishness and cultural nationalism were all apparent in the material culture of the tea table, pointing to the dominance of upper-class Englishness and Better Britishness on Pakeha culture, while showing the beginnings of American influence, and a growing sense that Pakeha were culturally distinct from the British.

The period of this study was deliberately chosen to encompass two significant world events: the Depression and World War Two. Changes over time, and the impact of key economic and political events, also provide further keys to understanding the nature and significance of Afternoon Tea. Researchers examining the impact of the Depression on New Zealand have found that experience has been collectivised into a story of universal hardship, whereas in reality some sectors of society were affected far less than others. When I examined contemporary cake and biscuit recipes I found that there was a slight decrease in the more lavish recipes, but no increase in more frugal recipes, and this aligns with the existing arguments of Helen Leach and David Veart. Taken together

⁵⁶³ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 83.

these findings indicate that there was still a significant proportion of the population living reasonably well, although not extravagantly. The baking of Afternoon Tea required butter and eggs, which were expensive during the Depression, so whether a family continued to have Afternoon Tea was a signifier of how well their family survived the Depression. Farming families, who kept hold of their farms still had access to eggs and butter and so continued to have Afternoon Tea, although in a plainer form. However some of the informants were so poor during the Depression that their families only survived through the kindness of their neighbours. These women did not talk about Afternoon Tea during the Depression and it seems likely that this is because they did not have it. My research into Afternoon Tea provides further evidence of the differential impact the Depression had on distinct parts of society.

In contrast, World War Two affected the various elements of Afternoon Tea in a more comprehensive fashion. The lives of women during the War have received growing scholarly attention, but most of this research has focused on women in the paid workforce or women in auxiliary military roles. Less research has been done on the way the War affected home life. Through examining the various facets of Afternoon Tea it became clear that shortages and rationing affected the way women ran their homes, but at the same time they revealed how women used their ingenuity to cope with rationing, and in some cases resisted official regulations. During the War fine china was exceptionally scarce and linen was rationed. Women improvised by embroidering un-rationed fabrics instead. Petrol was also rationed which limited opportunities for socialising, particularly for farming women.

While tea was rationed, it was the baking of Afternoon Tea that was most affected by the War. Sugar, butter and eggs, the key ingredients of baked goods, were all rationed. Women adapted recipes by using substitutes for sugar, butter and eggs, but these substitutes changed the taste of baked

goods and led to baking failures. To get around this some women saved their sugar, butter and eggs for baking, using substitutes in other meals. Recipes in contemporary periodicals and cookbooks indicate that consumption of butter, eggs and sugar dropped dramatically when they were first rationed, but that by the end of the War, sugar and eggs were being used in almost pre-war quantities. The exception is butter. The evidence of the recipes suggest that rationing had the biggest impact on butter use, even by the end of the War it was not being used in anywhere near the same amounts as it was before butter rationing was introduced in 1943. However, the evidence of the women I interviewed and other personal accounts from those who lived through the War shows that women in the country continued to use butter and cream (which was also rationed) as if the ration did not exist. Belich uses Pakeha enthusiasm for sending food parcels to Britain as an example of their continued identification with Britain. However the resistance to the butter ration suggests a loyalty to the ideal of New Zealand as a land of plenty, which tempered their support for Britain.

In all these ways this research contributes to a more detailed and more nuanced understanding of this particular aspect of Pakeha women's cultural history. But the tale I have told is just one of many stories that could be told about the Afternoon Tea. Because this is the first study of Afternoon Tea I have looked at a broad range of topics, and in each chapter there is detail which would benefit from further research. Afternoon Tea survived the poverty of the Depression and the shortages and rationing of the War. Its resilience during wartime was remarkable. All of the elements of the Afternoon Tea table – tea, china, linen – and crucial ingredients of the baked goods – sugar, butter and eggs – were rationed and yet still Afternoon Tea persisted. The women in my study who married during the War years expected Afternoon Tea would be a part of their adult lives and for some it still is. But for most women in my

study Afternoon Tea is a memory and for most women of my generation it is a novelty. So how could something that endured through such odds almost disappear from the lexicon of social events? It seems probable that its interconnection to women's work as housewives, which ensured its survival through the Depression and the War, was the very attribute which led to its decline in the second half of the twentieth century; as women moved into the paid workforce they had less time and less need for Afternoon Tea. Perhaps too, the new modes of shopping and the popularity of department stores with their alluring tearooms made it a social excursion rather than a domestic event. But that is a topic worthy of another thesis. The decline, fall and resurrection of Afternoon Tea would be a fascinating topic for further research or, at least, discussion over a cup of tea and some lovely cake.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Books

Anonymous recipe book, possibly the *Rainbow Recipe Book*. Masterton: Hansell's, 194-?: In possession of the Author. The cover has fallen off this book, making it difficult to date and name.

Edmonds "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Containing a Collection of Approximately 500 Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints. 7th ed. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, 1939.

Edmonds "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Containing a Collection of Approximately 570 Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints. Christchurch: T. J. Edmonds, 1955.

Manawatu Red Cookery Book: Tested and Tried Recipes. rev. ed. Palmerston North: Keeling & Mundy Ltd., 1926.

N.Z. "Truth's" *Cookery Book: Over 600 Specially Selected Prize Recipes*. rev. ed. Wellington: Truth (N.Z.) Ltd., 1948.

Recipe Book: Ashhurst Women's Institute (Unpublished Manuscript, 1933)
Hand written recipe book: Te Manawa Archives.

The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Containing Economical Everyday Recipes and Cooking Hints. 5th ed. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, ca. 1930.

The "Sure to Rise" Cookery Book: Is Especially Compiled and Contains Useful Everyday Recipes also Cooking Hints. 4th ed. Christchurch: T.J. Edmonds, ca. 1923.

Basham, Maud. *Aunt Daisy's Cookery Book of 1,150 Selected Recipes / Broadcast by Aunt Daisy*. Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1942.

Basham, Maud. *Aunt Daisy's Cookery Book of Selected Recipes / Broadcast by Aunt Daisy*. Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1939.

Beeton, Isabella Mary. *Beeton's Everday Cookery and Housekeeping Book*. London: Ward, Lock, Bowdon and co., 1893.

Carter, Una. *Una Carter's Famous National Cookery Book: Containing Over 800 Well-Tested Recipes / Demonstrated at Numerous Classes Throughout New Zealand by Una Carter*. 6th ed. Napier: Swailes, 192-.

Housewife. *War Economy Recipe Book*. Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1943.

Interviews

Dorothy, interview with the author. November 30, 2009.

Edith, interview with the author. October 3, 2009.

Edna, interview with the author. August 10, 2009.

Eileen, interview with the author. October 12, 2009.

Iris, interview with the author. July 25, 2009.

Jane, interview with the author. November 30, 2009.

Jean, interview with the author. November 30, 2009.

Lois, interview with the author. October 12, 2009.

Marge, interview with the author. August 10, 2009.

Marjorie, interview with the author. November 29, 2009.

May, interview with the author. October 3, 2009.

Millie, interview with the author. November 30, 2009.

Nell, interview with the author. July 13, 2009.

Nora, interview with the author. November 30, 2009.

Rita, interview with the author, August 24, 2009.

Magazine articles

"Butter of All Things!" *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, June, 1943.

"Cooking for the Family." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, March, 1944.

"Dorothy Dix's Letterbox." *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, September 5, 1935.

"The Editress Says... New Zealand Women must be Prepared." *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, March 23, 1939.

"A Family Chocolate Cake." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, January 10, 1943.

"Fill up the Biscuit Tins." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, October 10, 1942.

"For Your Tea Ration Coupon You get 2 oz. of Tea per Week which is Sufficient if you use Bell Brand." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, October 10, 1942.

"Ill Fares the Farmer." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, June 1944.

"The Legion of the Unloved. " *The New Zealand Women's Weekly*, November 9, 1933.

"Mary Barkers Food Calendar, a Line a Day." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, January, 1940.

"Mary Barkers Food Calendar, a Line a Day." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, April, 1940.

"Mary Barkers Food Calendar, a Line A Day." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, September, 1940.

"More Tea This Month! Thank Goodness for that - and Thank Bell Tea for Goodness." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1943.

"Must We Knit?" *The New Zealand Home Journal*, October 10, 1942.

"The New 2lb Roma Tea Casket, Illustrating in Seven Colours *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*." *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, March 23, 1939.

"To Every Listener... Why?" *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service*, June 30, 1939.

"'Poppy' Design Cheval Mat." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1942.

"Preparing for Daddy-Boy's Leave: Experiences of a War-Wife." *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, July 3, 1941.

"Small Cakes." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, January 10, 1943.

"Special!" *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, November, 1941.

"Spring Quartette... For Afternoon Overtures." *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, September 5, 1935.

"Thank Goodness 'Cold Sweet' Time is Coming." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, October 10, 1942.

"These Phosphate Baking Powders are Marvellous." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, May, 1944.

"Two Great Bells: 'Big Ben' and Bell Tea." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1942.

"Two Sugarless Recipes." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, January 10, 1943.

"Two Way Chocolate Cake." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, January 10, 1943.

"Unrationed Recipes from our Readers." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, June, 1944.

"What I Want to Know about the Man I Marry." *The New Zealand Women's Weekly*, January 12, 1933.

"What No Eggs? Economical Chocolate Cakes." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1942.

"We Can Still Have Cakes for Tea." *New Zealand Home Journal*, May 10, 1942.

"Woman and the Home." *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service*, July 7, 1939.

Newspaper articles

"After Xmas - Task Still Goes On." *N.Z. Truth*, January 3, 1940.

"Art of Afternoon Tea." *N.Z. Truth*, October 16, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Cakes are Real Test: Lore of Pot and Pan." *N.Z. Truth*, 25 September, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Culinary Chatter." *N.Z. Truth*, July 3, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Culinary Chatter." *N.Z. Truth*, August 7, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Culinary Chatter." *N.Z. Truth*, October 2, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Delicious Dessert until Fruit Toes the Line." *N.Z. Truth*, December 6, 1944.

"Fashion's Forecasts For 1930." *N.Z. Truth*, March 6, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Four o'clock and the Ladies are Ready for Tea." *N.Z. Truth*, May 8, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Keeping Cake Tins Full: Sensible and Helpful Ideas for Houswives." *N.Z. Truth*, May 1, 1940.

"If You Can't Bake Like This then Write to Us." *N.Z. Truth*, September 5, 1945.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, April 1, 1942.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, May 6, 1942.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, January 5, 1944.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, February 23, 1944.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, June 7, 1944.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, September 6, 1944.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, January 3, 1945.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, May 2, 1945.

"Making Good Wives Better." *N.Z. Truth*, September 5, 1945.

"More Leisure at Home." *N.Z. Truth*, February 5, 1941.

"Silk and Wool Popular, Crazy Patterns." *N.Z. Truth*, May 8, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>

"Simplicity Gives Best Results." October 16, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"Simplicity Gives Best Results." October 16, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

"The Tea Gown Possesses Pleasing Features." *N.Z. Truth*, February 6, 1930. Accessed November 14, 2010. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>

"Wild Duck Requires Right Cooking." *N.Z. Truth*, May 7, 1941.

"Woman's War Made Equality." *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, July, 1942.

"Women at War." *The New Zealand Home Journal*, January 10, 1942.

“Won’t you stay to Tea?” *New Zealand Woman’s Weekly*, December 8, 1932.

Cluett, Isobel M. “Home or Business –Which?” *The New Zealand Women’s Weekly*, December 8, 1932.

Department of Home Science, University of Otago. “The Farm Home and Kitchen: The Menu for Midwinter.” *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, July 20, 1938.

Department of Home Science, University of Otago. “The Farm Home and Kitchen: Good Food Combinations and Why.” *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, September 20, 1938.

Department of Home Science, University of Otago. “The Farm Home and Kitchen: The Balanced Diet.” *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, November 21, 1938.

S, L. M. “Cooking for Husbands.” *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, September, 1940.

Steward, Anne. “What We Need Are Homes for New Zealanders.” *New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Services*. September 26, 1941.

Taylor, D. D. Cottington. “Cooking Without Sugar: Some Useful Hints.” *Mirror: The Home Journal of New Zealand*, July, 1942.

Wild, E. L. “Money Making Wives – Are they Successful in Bringing Happiness to the Home?” *The New Zealand Women’s Weekly*, December 15, 1932.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, June 30, 1939.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, September 29, 1939.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, September 26, 1941.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, November 5, 1943.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, February 2, 1945.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, March 7, 1947.

New Zealand Listener, Journal of the National Broadcasting Service, May 20, 1949.

Official Sources

The Census and Statistics Office of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1950.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1951.

The Census and Statistics Office of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1951-52.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1952.

The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1935.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1934.

The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1936.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1935.

The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1940.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1940.

The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1941.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1941.

The Census and Statistics Office of the Dominion of New Zealand. *The New Zealand Official Year-Book 1946.* Wellington: Government Printer, 1948.

Secondary Sources

Books

Alexander, Lynn Mae. *Women, Work and Representation: Needlewomen in Victorian Art and Literature.* Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2003.

Ames, Kenneth. *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.

Ames, Kenneth L. "The Stuff of Everyday Life: American Decorative Arts and Household Furnishings." In *Material Culture: A Research Guide*, edited by Thomas J. Schlereth, 79- 112. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985.

Attfield, Judy. "Barbie and Action Man: Adult Toys for Girls and Boys, 1959 -93." In *The Gendered Object*, edited by Pat Kirkham, 70- 79. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Bailey, Ray and Mary Earle. *Home Cooking to Takeaways: Changes in Food Consumption in New Zealand During 1880-1990*. Wellington: Royal Society Publishing, 1999.

Baker, John Victor. *The New Zealand People at War: War Economy*. Wellington: Historical Publications Branch, Dept. of Internal Affairs, 1965.

Bardsley, Dianne. *The Land Girls: In a Man's World 1939-1946*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2000.

Baxter, James K. "Poetry in New Zealand." In *1946: Second Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*, edited by Howard Wadman, 111-114. Wellington: H.H Tombs Ltd, 1946.

Belich, James. *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*. Auckland: Penguin Press, 2001.

Bell, Avril. "'Half-castes' and 'White Natives': The Politics of Maori – Pakeha Hybrid Identities." In *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman, 121 - 138. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Bell, Claudia. "Kiwiana Revisited." In *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman, 175-187. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Berezin, M. "Western European Studies: Culture." In *International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, edited by Neil Smelser and Paul Baltes. Permagon, 2001.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/B7MRM-4MT09VJ-42K/2/5a9910899adaf788b515b2949d552842>

Bloom, Lisa. "Introducing With Other Eyes: Looking at Race and Gender in Visual Culture." In *With Other Eyes: Looking at Race and Gender in Visual Culture*, edited by Lisa Bloom, 1-18. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Bloy, Lydia. "Class in the Eye of the Beholder in 1930s and 1940's New Zealand Society." In *Class, Gender and the Vote: Historical Perspectives of New Zealand*, edited by Miles Fairburn and Erik Olssen, 175-192. Otago: Otago University Press, 2005.

Brookes, Barbara. "Marriage: The Gendered Contract." In *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, 348-355. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003.

Brookes, Barbara. "Reproductive Rights: The Debate Over Abortion and Birth Control in the 1930s." in *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant, 119-136. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1986.

Brookes, Barbara. "Women's History." In *The Future of the Past: Themes in New Zealand History*, edited by Colin Davis and Peter Lineham, 76-97. Palmerston North: Department of History, Massey University, 1991.

Brookes, Barbara, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law. "Situating Gender." In *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, 1-14. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003.

Brooking, Tom. "Economic Transformation." In *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, edited by Geoffrey W Rice, 230- 253. Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Buchli, Victor, ed. *The Material Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2002.

Burton, David. *David Burton's New Zealand Food and Cookery*. Auckland: David Bateman Ltd, 2009.

Burton, David. *Two Hundred Years of New Zealand Food Cookery*. Wellington: Reed, 1992.

Carter, Ian. "Eternal Recurrence of the Trivially New: Food and Popular Culture." In *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place* edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman, 84-102. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Carter, Ian and Angela Maynard. "Tell Me What You Eat..." In *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand*, edited by Claudia Bell, 89-112. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 2001.

Casey, Andrew. *Twentieth Century Ceramics*. Woodbridge, England: Antiques Collectors Club, 2007.

Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 2004.

Clarke, Alison. *Tupperware: The Promise of Plastic in 1950s America*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999.

Cole, John Reece. *It was So Late and Other Stories*. Edited by Cherry Hankin. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1978.

Coney, Sandra. *Every Girl: A Social History of the Y.W.C.A. in Auckland 1885-1986*. Auckland: Auckland YWCA, 1986.

Coney, Sandra. *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women since they Won the Vote*. Auckland: Penguin Books, 1993.

Cooper, Annabel, Erik Olssen, Kristen Thomlinson and Robin Law. "The Landscape of Gender Politics: Place, People and Two Gendered Mobilisations." In *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, 15-49. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003.

Cowan, Ruth Swartz. *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.

Daley, Caroline. *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999.

Daley, Caroline "Modernity, Consumption and Leisure." In *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, edited by Giselle Byrnes, 423 - 445. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Daley, Caroline and Deborah Montgomerie. "Introduction." In *The Gendered Kiwi*, edited by Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, 7-15. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999.

Dalley, Bronwyn. *Living in the 20th Century: New Zealand History in Photographs 1900- 1980*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited and Craig Potton Publishing Limited, 2000.

Dalley, Bronwyn and Bronwyn Labrum. "Introduction." In *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, 1-13. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000.

Dant, Tim . *Material Culture in the Social World*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999.

Davidson, Caroline. *A Woman's Work is Never Done: A History of Housework in the British Isles 1650 -1950*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1982.

Downes, Peter. "Basham, Maud Ruby 1879 - 1963." In *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Updated 22 June, 2007. <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>.

Ebbett, Eve. *Victoria's Daughters: New Zealand Women of the Thirties*. Wellington: A.H &A.W Reed Ltd, 1981.

Ebbett, Eve. *When the Boys were Away: New Zealand Women in World War II*. Wellington: A.H. & A. W. Reed, 1984.

Edmond, Lauris, ed. *Women in Wartime*. Wellington: Government Printing Office Publishing, 1986.

Eggleton, David. *Towards Aotearoa: A Short Story of Twentieth Century New Zealand Art*. Auckland: Reed, 2007.

Else, Anne, ed. *Women Together: A History of Women's Social Organisations in New Zealand, Nga Ropu Wahine o te Motu*. Wellington: Historical Branch, Dept. of Internal Affairs: Daphne Brasell Associates Press, 1993.

Fairburn, Miles and Erik Olssen, eds. *Class, Gender and the Vote: Historical Perspectives of New Zealand*. Otago: Otago University Press, 2005.

Fraser, Kate. *Cooking Times: A Culinary Journey through Kiwi Kitchens from the 1930s to the Present Day*. Auckland: Harper Collins, 2008.

Fromer, Julie E. *A Necessary Luxury: Tea in Victorian England*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008.

Glover, Denis. *Selected poems / Denis Glover*. Edited by Bill Manhire. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1995.

Goldsmith, Susette. *Tea: A Potted History of Tea in New Zealand*. Auckland: Reed, 2006.

Graves, Jane. "The Washing Machine: Mother's not Herself Today." In *The Gendered Object*, edited by Pat Kirkham, 30-42. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Griffin, Rose. *Handycrafts: At Home with Textiles*. Auckland: Te Tuhi – the mark, 2003.

Hendershot, Heather. "Dolls: Odour, Disgust, Femininity and Toy Design." In *The Gendered Object*, edited by Pat Kirkham, 90-102. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Herda, Phyllis. "Women and Food." In *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women*, edited by Julie Park, 144-172. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1991.

Higgins, John. "Part 1: Introduction." In *The Raymond Williams Reader*, edited by John Higgins, 3-9. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

Hill, Amelia Leavitt. *The Complete Book of Table Setting and Flower Arrangement: With Service and Etiquette*. 2nd ed. New York: Greystone Press, 1957.

Hoey, Douglas. "There will always be a Taupo: Some reflections on Pakeha culture." In *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place* edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman, 188-202. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Holcroft, Montague Harry. *The Line of the Road*. Dunedin: John McIndoe Limited, 1977.

Hood, David. "Appendix II, Quantitative and Qualitative Databases of the Caversham Project." In *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law, 362-370. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003.

Hughes, Bernard and Therle Hughes. *The Collector's Encyclopaedia of English Ceramics by Bernard and Therle Hughes*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1957.

Huneault, Kristina. *Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, Britain 1880 - 1914*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002.

Ice, J. "Feminist Readings of Folk Material Culture Studies." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez, Kenneth Ames, 217 - 236. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.

Johnson, Alexa. *Ladies a Plate: Traditional Home Baking*. North Shore: Penguin, 2008.

Johnson, Alexa. *A Second Helping: More from Ladies, a Plate*. North Shore: Penguin, 2009.

Kean, Hilda. *London Stories: Personal Lives, Public Histories*. London: Rivers Oram Publisher Ltd, 2004.

Keith, Hamish. *The Big Picture: A History of New Zealand Art from 1642*. Auckland: Random House, 2007.

Keith, Hamish and William Main. *New Zealand Yesterdays: A Look at our Recent Past*. Sydney: Readers Digest Services, 1984.

Kimmel, M. "Introduction: The Power of Gender and the Gender of Power." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez, and Kenneth Ames, 1-6. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.

Kinchin, Juliet. "Interiors: Nineteenth Century Essays on the Masculine and Feminine Room." In *The Gendered Object*, edited by Pat Kirkham, 12 - 29. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

King, Michael. *The Penguin History of New Zealand*. Auckland: Penguin, 2003.

Kirkham, Pat and Judy Attfield. "Introduction." In *The Gendered Object*, edited by Pat Kirkham, 1 -11. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Labrum, Bronwyn. "Dressing History Up: Introduction." In *Looking Flash: Clothing in Aotearoa New Zealand*, edited by Bronwyn Labrum, Fiona McKergow, and Stephanie Gibson, 1-11. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007.

Labrum, Bronwyn. "Thinking Visually: Doing History in Museums." In *Going Public: the Changing Face of New Zealand History*, edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Jock Phillips, 176-186. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001.

Labrum, Bronwyn. *Women's History: A Short Guide to Researching and Writing Women's History in New Zealand*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited, 1993.

Labrum, Bronwyn, Fiona McKergow and Stephanie Gibson, eds. *Looking Flash: Clothing in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007.

Laurenson, Helen. *Going Up, Going Down: The Rise and Fall of the Department Store*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005.

Leach, Helen. "Culinary Traditions in Twentieth Century New Zealand" In *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks*, edited by Helen Leach, 49-68. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2010.

Leach, Helen. *The Paolova Story: A Slice of New Zealand Culinary History*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2008.

Leach, Helen, ed. *From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen: New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2010.

Lemire, Beverly. "Draping the Body and Dressing the Home: The Material Culture of Textiles and Clothes in the Atlantic World." in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, edited by Karen Harvey, 85-102. London: Routledge, 2009.

Lewis, Lesley. *The Private Life of a Country House*. Newton Abbot Devon: Davis and Charles Ltd, 1980.

Lubar, Steven and W. David Kingery. "Introduction." In *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*, edited by Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery, vii -xvii. Washington: Smithsonian Press, 1993.

Lynch, Jenny. *New Zealand Woman's Weekly, 70 years: From Pavlovas to Prime Ministers*. Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2002.

- McCloy, Nicola. *Made In New Zealand: Stories of Iconic Kiwi brands*. Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2008.
- McKergow, Fiona. "Opening the Wardrobe of History: Dress, Artefacts and the Material Life of the 1940's and 1950's." In *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, 163-187. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000.
- McLeod, Rosemary. *Thrift to Fantasy: Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s- 1950s*. Auckland: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005.
- Mansfield, Katherine. "Prelude." In *Bliss and Other Stories* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1924), 54-55. Accessed June 5, 2011. <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-ManBlis-t1-body1-d1-d10.html>.
- Matthewman, Steve. "Introduction." In *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, edited by Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman, vii to xiv. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Mein Smith, Philippa. *A Concise History of New Zealand*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Monk, Valerie Ringer. *Crown Lynn: A New Zealand Icon*. Auckland: Penguin Books, 2006.
- Moore, Sally Falk and Barbara G. Myerhoff. "Introduction; Secular Ritual: Forms and Meanings." In *Secular Ritual*, edited by Sally Falk Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff, 3-24. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1977.
- Montgomerie, Deborah. *Love in the Time of War: Letter Writing in the Second World War*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005.
- Montgomerie, Deborah. *The Women's War: New Zealand Women 1939-1945*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001.
- Morgan, Sally. "My Father's Photographs: The Visual as Public History." In *Seeing History: Public History in Britain Now*, edited by Hilda Kean, Paul Martin, Sally Morgan, 19-35. London: Francis Boutle Publishers, 2000.
- Morris, Matt. "Unpaid Domestic Work - Housework and Caregiving." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 4, 2010. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/unpaid-domestic-work/2>.
- Nolan, Melanie. "Constantly on the Move, but Going Nowhere? Work, Community and Social Mobility." In *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, edited by Giselle Byrnes, 357 - 387. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Nolan, Melanie. *Kin: A Collective Biography of a New Zealand Working Class Family*. Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2005.

O'Donnell, Jean-Marie. "Electric Servants' and the Science of Housework: Changing Patterns of Domestic Work. 1935-1956." In *Women in History Two*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant, 168-183. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992.

Olssen, Erik. "Families and the Gendering of European New Zealand in the Colonial Period, 1840 -80." In *The Gendered Kiwi*, edited by Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, 37-62. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999.

Park, Julie. "Connections: Women in Relationships." In *Ladies a Plate: Change and Continuity in the Lives of New Zealand Women*, edited by Julie Park, 96-143. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1991.

Parker, Rozsika. *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*. London: Women's Press, 1984.

Parker, Sally. "A Golden Decade? Farm Women in the 1950s." In *Women in History 2*, edited by Barbara Brookes, Charlotte MacDonald and Margaret Tennant, 205-224. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992.

Peterson, Anna Katrina Caughey. *New Zealanders at Home: A Cultural History of Domestic Interiors 1814-1914*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2001.

Peterson, George Conrad. *Palmerston North: A Centennial History, with an Introduction on Landforms in the Manawatu by Norman Whatman*. Wellington: Reed, 1973.

Pettigrew, Jane. *A Social History of Tea*. London: National Trust Enterprises Ltd, 2001.

Phillips, Jock. "Rural Recreation - Country halls, 1890-1960." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 1, 2009.
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/rural-recreation/4>.

Phillips, Jock. "Walking tracks - Walking for work." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 2 2009.
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/walking-tracks/2>.

Phillips, Jock and Terry Hearn. *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008.

Przybysz, Jane. "Quilts and the Colonialization/ Colonization of the American Women." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth Ames, 411 -443. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.

Purbrick, Louise. *The Wedding Present: Domestic Life beyond Consumption*. England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2007.

Raine, Katherine. "Domesticating the Land: Colonial Women's Gardening." In *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, 76-96. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000.

Rappoport, Leon. *How We Eat: Appetite, Culture and the Psychology of Food*. Toronto: ECW Press. 2003.

Robertson, C. "From Cult to Profession: Domestic Women in Search of Equality." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth Ames, 75-110. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.

Romines, Ann. "Putting Things in Order: The Domestic Aesthetic of Wilder's Little House books." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth Ames, 181-196. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.

Schnapp, Jeffrey T. "The Romance of Coffee and Aluminium." In *Things*, edited by Bill Brown, 304-329. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Simpson, Tony. *A Distant Feast: The Origins of New Zealand's Cuisine*. Auckland: Godwit, 2008.

Simpson, Tony. *An Innocent Delight: The Art of Dining in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985.

Simpson, Tony. *The Sugar Bag Years: A Peoples History of the 1930s Depression in New Zealand*. 4th ed. Auckland: Godwit Publishing Ltd, 1997.

Smith, Philippa Mein. *A Concise History of New Zealand*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005.

Stuart, Murray. *Never a Soul at Home: New Zealand Literary Nationalism and the 1930s*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1998.

Sullivan, Jim, ed. *Doing Our Bit: New Zealand Women Tell their Stories of World War Two*. Auckland: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.

Symons, Michael. *A History of Cooks and Cooking*. Totnes: Prospect Books, 2001.

Taylor, Nancy. *Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45: The Home Front*. Wellington: V.R. Ward, Government Printer, 1986.

The Institute. *Wartime Experiences: A Collection of Short Stories from Members of the Country Women's Institute*. Wellington: The Institute, 1996.

Uckers, William H. *All About Tea Volume II*. New York: The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1935.

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of American Myth*. New York: Vintage, 2001.

Veart, David. *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008.

Vincentelli, Moira. *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Walrond, Carl. "Building Trades - Trades Culture." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 4, 2010.
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/building-trades/6>.

Walsh, Frances. *Inside Stories: A History of the New Zealand Housewife, 1890-1975*. Auckland: Godwit 2011.

Williams, Des. "Shearing - From Blades to Shearing Machines." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 1, 2009.
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/shearing/2>.

Williams, Raymond. "Culture is Ordinary [1958]." In *The Everyday Life Reader*, edited by Ben Highmore, 91-100. London: Routledge, 2002.

Wilson, John. "Government and Nation - From Colony to Nation." In *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated March 3, 2009.
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/government-and-nation/2>.

Woodward, Ian. *Understanding Material Culture*. London: Sage, 2007.

Journal Articles

Borsay, Peter. "New Approaches to Social History. Myth, Memory, and Place: Monmouth and Bath 1750 -1900." *Journal of Social History* 39, no.3 (Spring 2006): 867-889.

Chattopadhyay, Swati. "Goods Chattels and Sundry Items: Constructing 19th Century Anglo-Indian Domestic Life." *Journal of Material Culture* 7, no.3 (2002): 243 -271.

Cooper, Annabel. Review of *Kin: A Collective Biography of a New Zealand Working-Class Family*, by Melanie Nolan. *New Zealand Journal of History* 40, no. 2 (2006): 257-258.

Daley, Caroline. "He Would Know, but I Just have a Feeling: Gender and Oral History." *Women's History Review* 7, no.3 (1998): 343-359.

Fairburn, Miles and Steve Haslett. "The New Zealand Social Structure, 1911-1951: Did it become more Middle Class?" *New Zealand Sociology* 20, no. 1 (2005): 20-49.

Fass, Paula S. "Cultural History/Social History: Some Reflections on a Continuing Dialogue." *Journal of Social History* 37, no.1 (Fall 2003): 39-46.

Formes, Malia. (2005). Post-Colonial Domesticity amid Diaspora: Home and Family in the Lives of Two English Sisters from India. *Journal of Social History* 39, no.2 (Winter 2005): 467 - 482.

Frank Rogers. "The New Zealanders: The Decline of Immigrant Dominance in New Zealand." *Professional Historians Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa e-Journal*. Updated on 6 January, 2008.
<http://www.phanza.org.nz/node/177>

Gassan, Richard. "Social History for Beginners: A "Young Scholar" Looks at His New Profession." *Journal of Social History* 37, no.1 (Fall 2003):157-163.

Gerber, David A. "Acts of Deceiving and Withholding in Immigrant Letters: Personal Identity and Self-Presentation in Personal Correspondence." *Journal of Social History* 39, no.2 (Winter 2005): 315-330.

Honeyman, Katrina. Review of *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780 - 1870: a Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Class*, by R. J. Morris. *The Historical Journal* 49 no.3 (2006): 967-969.
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=HIS>

Hurdley, Rachel. "Dismantling Mantelpieces: Narrating Identities and Materializing Culture in the Home." *Sociology* 40, no.4 (August 2006): 717 - 733.

Jobs, Richard and Patrick McDevitt. "Introduction: Where the Hell are the People." *Journal of Social History* 39, no.2 (Winter 2005): 309-314.

Kean, Hilda. "East End Stories: The Chairs and the Photographs." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6, no. 2 (June 2000):111-127.

Labrum, Bronwyn. "Material Histories in Australia and New Zealand: Interviewing Distinct Material and Social Domains." *History Compass* 8, no.8 (August 2010): 805-816.

- McAloon, Jim. "Class in Colonial New Zealand: Towards a Historiographical Rehabilitation." *New Zealand Journal of History* 38, no.2 (2004): 3-21.
- McAloon, Jim. Review of *Class and Occupation: The New Zealand Reality*, by Erik Olssen and Maureen Hickey. *New Zealand Journal of History* 40, no. 2 (2006): 265-266.
- Marcoux, Jean-Sébastien. "The 'Casser Maison' Ritual: Constructing the Self by Emptying the Home." *Journal of Material Culture* 6, no.2 (2001): 213-235. <http://mcu.sagepub.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/content/6/2.toc>
- Morgan, Sally. "Heritage Noire: Truth, History and Colonial Anxiety in *The Blair Witch Project*." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7, no.2 (June 2001): 137-148.
- Naji Myerium, "Gender and Materiality in-the-Making: The Manufacturer of Sirwan Femininities Through Weaving in Southern Morocco." *Journal of Material Culture* 14, no.1 (2009): 47-73. <http://mcu.sagepub.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/content/14/1.toc>
- Noble, Greg. "Accumulating Being." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7, no. 2 (2004): 233-256. <http://ics.sagepub.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/content/7/2.toc>
- Rakueruhiru "A Little Land With No History": Pakeha Identity in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Kanagawa University, Humanities Research* 154 (2004): 113-144. Accessed September 7, 2010. <http://human.kanagawa-u.ac.jp/gakkai/publ/>
- Ryan, Greg. Review of *First Catch Your Weka: A Story of New Zealand Cooking*, by David Veart. *New Zealand Journal of History* 43, no.1 (2009): 106-108.
- Scott, Joan W. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1986): 1053-1075.
- Schlereth, T. J. "Domestic Life and Material Culture." In *International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, edited by Neil Smelser and Paul Baltes. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B0080430767041243>
- Shaw, Louise and Barbara Brookes. "Constructing Homes: Gender and Advertising in *Home and Building*, 1936 -1970." *New Zealand Journal of History* 33, no.2 (1999): 200- 220.

Steel, Frances. "“New Zealand is Butterland’: Interpreting the Historical Significance of a Daily Spread.” *New Zealand Journal of History* 39, no.2 (2005):179-194.

Wajda, Shirley Teresa. Review of *Eat my Words: Reading Women’s Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*, by Janet Theophano; *Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, by Jessamyn Neuhaus and *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America* by Laura Shapiro. *Winterthur Portfolio* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 77. Accessed October 14, 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/528906>.

Conference Proceedings

Blythe, Mark and Andrew Monk. “Notes Towards an Ethnography of Domestic Technology.” *Proceedings of the Conference on Designing Interactive Systems: Processes, Practices, Methods and Techniques*, 276 – 281. New York: ACM Press, 2002.

Websites

“About the Project.” Last modified November 4, 2010. <http://caversham.otago.ac.nz/about/project.php>.

Ditchfield, Simon. Review of *History in Practice* (review no.217). <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/217>

Te Whaanke Maori Language online. s.v. “Koruru.” Accessed on May 31, 2011. <http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/>

Theses

Markwick, Moira. “Eating as a Cultural Performance in Early 21st Century New Zealand: An Exploration of the Relationships Between Food and Place.” MA thesis, Massey University, Auckland, 2009. Accessed on July 10, 2011. <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/1234>

Clarke, Alison Jane. “Feasts And Fasts: Holidays, Religion and Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century Otago.” PhD Thesis, University of Otago, 2003. Accessed on July 10, 2011. <http://hdl.handle.net/10523/1739>

van Beek, Hanne “Picnic in paradise: blootstelling van een onschuldig plekje.” MFA exegesis, Massey University, Wellington, 2009. Accessed on July 10, 2011. <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/949>