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Passengers for the war? The involvement of New Zealand women in employment during the Great War 1914-1918

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
List of Illustrations and Abbreviations	ii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Analysis: Women's Work and the Census	9
Chapter Two: Global War: Work and Gendered Limitations	27
Chapter Three: Extending Boundaries: Women's Demands and Contemporary Opinions	52
Chapter Four: Contrasts: The Return to Domesticity and Parliamentary Representation	73
Conclusion	101
Appendices	106
Bibliography	117

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Between pages 51 and 52: Cupid's Way Out. Thomas Ellis Glover, *The Free Lance*, May 7 1919. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, ref. A-313-3-006.

Between pages 72 and 73: A Peep Into The Future. Unknown publisher. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, ref. PUBL-0096-1919-10-08-013.

Abbreviations used in text

AJHR – Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives

EP – *Evening Post*

MW – *Maoriland Worker*

NEB – National Efficiency Board

NZPD – New Zealand Parliamentary Debates

INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the effect of the Great War upon the employment of women and the social issues that were raised by the employment of women. In recent years there has been an upsurge in both scholarly and public interest in the Great War and New Zealand's involvement in it. The focus has not solely been on military aspects of the war, and published works have also investigated topics such as the wartime experiences of New Zealand soldiers.¹ Deborah Montgomerie has noted that the Great War is also a 'burgeoning topic of current graduate student research'.² Public interest in the period has also increased – there has been a notable rise in the number of people attending Anzac day ceremonies, and the sentiment accompanying the return of the Unknown Warrior in 2004 further underlines the present public interest in New Zealand wartime history.³

Despite the growth of scholarly interest in the military aspects of the Great War, the history of New Zealand women and their involvement has thus far been neglected to a large extent. Women have often been relegated to token mentions in chapters in general New Zealand histories. Erik Olssen barely mentions the role of women during the war in his chapter 'Towards A New Society', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, other than to note that the war 'enlarged opportunities for women in white-collar occupations'.⁴ In *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders: From the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Belich devotes a couple of paragraphs to the increase in the number of women working from the 1880s to the 1910s, however he does not investigate whether the war impacted on female employment patterns or attitudes towards women.⁵ Michael King does not address the issue of employment during the Great War in *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, instead focusing on the military actions of the New Zealand forces overseas, and the reaction of those at home to the

¹ See, for example, Christopher Pugsley, *The Anzac Experience: New Zealand, Australia and Empire in the First World War*, Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2004; Matthew Wright, *Western Front: The New Zealand Division in the First World War*, Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2005; Jock Phillips, Nicholas Boyack and E.P. Malone (eds), *The Great Adventure: New Zealand soldiers describe the First World War*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1988; Glyn Harper (ed.), *Letters from the battlefield: New Zealand soldiers write home, 1914-1918*, Auckland: Harper Collins, 2001.

² Deborah Montgomerie, 'Reconnaissance: Twentieth-Century New Zealand War History at Century's Turn', in the *New Zealand Journal of History (NZJH)*, Vol. 37, No. 1, April 2003, p. 65.

³ An estimated 10 000 people paid their respects to the Unknown Warrior whilst he was lying-in-state, and approximately 100 000 people lined the streets of Wellington to watch the funeral procession of the Unknown Warrior in November 2004, see *News From the Ministry*, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, December 2004, p. 4. *The Dominion Post* reported that in 2005, 'New Zealanders turned out in record numbers at Anzac Day services', and the parade marshal for the Wellington service, John Meredith, stated that the 'turnout [for Anzac Day services] had grown remarkably in the past four or five years', see *The Dominion Post*, April 26, 2005, p. A5.

⁴ Erik Olssen, 'Towards A New Society', in Geoffrey Rice (ed.), *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, 2nd ed., Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 278.

⁵ James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders From the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2001, pp. 143-44.

casualties.⁶ The extensive *New Zealand's Heritage* series, published in the early 1970s, describes women's work during the Great War in just one of its articles, concluding that by the end of the war, women were 'still largely occupied in the same areas of employment' that they had been before the war.⁷ The social impact that the war had on New Zealand has not yet been fully addressed, possibly due to the complex nature of the issue – Olssen admits that the impact that the Great War had on society 'is not entirely clear'.⁸

New Zealand historians, many influenced by second wave feminism, began a detailed investigation of the history of New Zealand women in the 1970s, although a few earlier attempts were made.⁹ The publications concentrated on the social history of women, and were often edited collections. The centenary of women's franchise in 1993 also resulted in a rise in the number of publications. However, there is not yet a general history of New Zealand women in the twentieth century, although some edited collections on aspects of women's history have been published.¹⁰ Works looking at labour history do not generally focus on women, although 1993 saw several books published on women workers in government departments.¹¹ Melanie Nolan has researched the relationship between New Zealand women and the state, however the topic of women's employment is not examined in great detail. She maintains that in an economic sense, the Great War was 'only potentially and partially liberating' for New Zealand women, and was followed by a 'perio[d] of regression'.¹²

Literature focusing on the experiences of New Zealand women in wartime has so far concentrated on the Second World War. Dianne Bardsley has written a book on the land girls, based upon oral histories and written interviews with over 200 New Zealand women. The book aimed to bring greater recognition to the work that the Women's Land Service

⁶ Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, Auckland: Penguin Books Ltd., 2003, pp. 295-304.

⁷ Anon., 'Women in the War', in *New Zealand's Heritage: the making of a nation*, Vol. 5, Part 74, 1973, pp. 2063-5.

⁸ Olssen, 'Towards A New Society', p. 278.

⁹ See D.M. Carter, 'An Estimate of the Political Development of New Zealand Women', MA (Hons.) Thesis in History, University of New Zealand, 1947.

¹⁰ See, for example, Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (eds), *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1986; Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (eds), *Women in History 2*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992; Anne Else (ed.), *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand*, Wellington: Daphne Brasell Associates Press & Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1993.

¹¹ Sandra Wallace, *Out of the Home and Into the House: New Zealand Women's Fight To Enter Parliament*, Wellington: Department of Justice, 1993; Carol Rankin, *Women and Parliament 1893-1993: 100 Years of Institutional Change*, Wellington: The Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives, 1993.

¹² Melanie Nolan, *Breadwinning: New Zealand Women and the State*, Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000, p. 16.

undertook during the war.¹³ Deborah Montgomerie has written a book extensively detailing women's work during the Second World War, focusing on the various wartime roles of women as volunteers, manpowered workers, mothers and wives.¹⁴ However, these books do not mention the work that women undertook during the Great War to any great extent. This is in contrast to Britain, where a history of women and work in the Great War was undertaken as early as 1977.¹⁵ Braybon notes that from the 1990s onwards, historians have increasingly recognised 'the complexity of the war's impact on different societies and social groups'.¹⁶

It is only in recent decades that historians have begun to address the social aspects of military history. However, much of the resultant literature in the New Zealand context has focused upon women's activities in voluntary organisations. Whilst attention has been given to the patriotic role New Zealand women played in supporting the war, less consideration has been given to the way in which the role of women changed due to the wartime circumstances. There has been some research carried out on the activities of New Zealand women during the war, both patriotic and employment related, however these have generally been either regional studies or broad overviews of New Zealand women in wartime which do not focus specifically on women's employment.¹⁷ McLeod allocates a chapter to the economic participation of New Zealand women during the Great War, however it is a broad overview of the situation, and does not detail the specific sectors of employment that women entered.¹⁸ She notes that the 'widening of economic opportunities was ... the central phenomenon of women's war experience'.¹⁹ McLeod also investigates the consequences of women's increased role in employment. She notes that the role women played during the war increased their self-confidence and led to an increased interest in public affairs.²⁰ She maintains that despite women's agitation for full political and social equality, their relative

¹³ Dianne Bardsley, *The Land Girls: In a Man's World, 1939-1946*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000. Eve Ebbett has also examined the topic of women during the Second World War, see *When the Boys were Away: New Zealand Women in World War II*, Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed Ltd., 1984.

¹⁴ Deborah Montgomerie, *The women's war: New Zealand women 1939-45*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001.

¹⁵ Arthur Marwick, *Women at War 1914-1918*, London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977.

¹⁶ Gail Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History and the Great War: historians and the impact of 1914-18*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2003, Introduction, p. 5.

¹⁷ Margaret Anderson, 'The Female Front: The Attitudes of Otago Women Towards the Great War: 1914-1918', BA (Hons), University of Otago, 1990; Simon Johnson, 'The Home Front: Aspects of Civilian Patriotism in New Zealand during the First World War', MA Thesis in History, Massey University, 1975; Sarah Jane Piesse, 'Patriotic Welfare in Otago: A History of the Otago Patriotic and General Welfare Association 1914-1950 and the Otago Provincial Patriotic Council 1939- .', MA Thesis, University of Otago, 1981; Graham Hucker, 'When the Empire Calls: Patriotic Organisations in New Zealand During the Great War', MA Thesis in History, Massey University, 1979; Sarah Luxford, "'Partners in the Welfare of the Nation": The Involvement of Cambridge Women in Local Patriotic Organisations during the Great War', BA (Hons) Research Exercise in History, Massey University, 2002. Anna Rogers has written a book on nurses who served in wartime, see *While You're Away: New Zealand Nurses At War 1899-1948*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003.

¹⁸ J.C. McLeod, 'Activities of New Zealand Women during World War I', BA (Hons) in History, University of Otago, 1978.

¹⁹ McLeod, p. 112.

²⁰ McLeod, pp. 98-100.

lack of success illustrates that the war did not eliminate 'beliefs about women's traditional place.'²¹ Simich has undertaken statistical analysis of the employment patterns of New Zealand women for the 1911-1926 period, however she has not investigated how the changing patterns affected women and how the changes were viewed by society. Simich has evaluated the effect of the Great War on women, and concludes that the war can only be considered to have been an emancipatory factor for a small group of women who would not have otherwise taken up employment. She maintains that the major influence of the war was to 'accelerate the movement of women into more skilled occupations'.²²

The theses with a regional focus have concentrated on small rural areas in which employment was primarily of a rural nature. The theses have concentrated on the impact the war had on the regions, however the economic impact has not been noted, instead the social effects of the war have been noted – the loss of local men, and how the returned servicemen were reintegrated into society. The focus on the male experience of war, combined with the lack of detail regarding employment, has meant that women in general have been neglected in the theses. Where women are mentioned, it is in relation to their role as volunteers in patriotic organisations. The theses which cover the war generally have little to say on employment, whilst the theses that look at employment generally have little to say on the war and the wider debates and implications of women in work.

New Zealand women played an important role in the Great War, one that has often been unacknowledged due to the secondary nature of the role when compared to that undertaken by New Zealand men. However, women were responsible for "keeping the home fires burning", not just domestically but on a wider scale as well. The loss of men from the labour force meant that women were substituted as workers, and entered new occupations as they filled the void left by the men. Although this has been acknowledged in general terms, there has been no detailed historical analysis published.

This study investigates the impact that the Great War had on the employment patterns of New Zealand women, and uses evidence from Britain to compare the effect that the Great War had on the employment patterns of women from both countries. I have used data from the 1911-1921 period, in order to provide some context for the war, and to enable a slightly more long term analysis of women's employment. The 1911-1921 period also allowed me to use data from three New Zealand censuses, which were undertaken in 1911, 1916 and 1921. By extending the period outside of the war years, I was able to compare the figures from the

²¹ McLeod, p. 104.

²² Marie-Louise Simich, 'Women in Employment in New Zealand 1911-1926', MA Research Exercise in History, University of Auckland, 1978, p. 29.

1916 census with those of the 1911 and 1921 censuses, and determine the movement of women between the various sectors of employment.

I have deliberately chosen to examine the employment trends of New Zealand women with reference to the comparative experiences of British women. This avoids addressing the New Zealand situation in isolation, and helps to provide some context for the patterns in women's employment in New Zealand. Peter Gibbons has recently called for historians to undertake more 'decentralized' histories of New Zealand. He maintains that 'investigation from wider perspectives may transform understandings of many supposedly locally-centered events, enabling us to see the extent to which they are responses to, and within, larger systems.'²³ New Zealand's close relationship with Britain in the early twentieth century meant that Great Britain was ideal to use for comparative purposes.²⁴ Comparative history can test for 'social or cultural differentiation in the historical development of common institutions, ideas and social, political and economic structures', and usually involve^s the comparison of two countries, rather than regional differences within a nation.²⁵ Recently, historians of comparative history have suggested that 'similarities are more in need of explanation than differences', and I have examined the experiences of women workers in both New Zealand and Britain, and investigated the social and political changes that resulted from their wartime employment.²⁶ When New Zealand was established as a British colony in the nineteenth century, British laws formed the basis of New Zealand's political and legal statutes, resulting in similar regulations determining the employment conditions for women. Recently there has been a re-evaluation by historians of many assumptions regarding the experiences of the British during the Great War. Braybon describes the 'academic upheaval, which has meant that the isolated study of the military, cultural or economic facets of the war is no longer possible.'²⁷ Amongst the revisions that have been made, the benefits that were accorded British women have been debated. Whilst Marwick asserted that the war was beneficial for women, more recent scholarship has viewed the war as part of a longer time span, which places less emphasis on the war as being the primary causal factor in the progression of women's rights in the early twentieth century.²⁸ The re-evaluation of the British experience of the Great War has also led to the recognition that 'more diversity [is needed] in the

²³ Peter Gibbons, 'The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History', in *NZJH*, Vol. 37, No. 1, April 2003, pp. 39, 41.

²⁴ Belich applies the theory of recolonisation to the relationship between New Zealand and Britain in the early twentieth century. He uses the theory to explain the 'tightening of relations between "metropolis" and "periphery" after an era of mass settlement', and maintains that recolonisation 'made modern New Zealand an ideological and economic ... semi-colony of Britain', see Belich, p. 11.

²⁵ George M. Frederickson, quoted in Barbara Harrison and Melanie Nolan, 'Reflections in Colonial Glass? Women Factory Inspectors in Britain and New Zealand 1893-1921', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2004, p. 265.

²⁶ Harrison and Nolan, p. 265.

²⁷ Braybon, *Evidence, History and the Great War*, Introduction, p. 1.

²⁸ Gail Braybon, 'Winners or Losers: Women's Symbolic Role in the War Story', in Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History and the Great War*, pp. 90, 104.

“greater” war story’, and the acknowledgement that the ‘role of colonial troops ... and the effect of war on their home nations [has been] ... shamefully neglected by all but specialist researchers.’²⁹

The employment of women during the Great War was not only an issue in terms of the expectations of gender relations and gender roles, but it also had significant implications for industrial relations. Workers’ rights in Britain had been the cause of extensive conflict in the years preceding the Great War, and the increased participation of women in the workforce during the war led to further friction between trade unions and both male and female workers. In order to answer the question of how the war affected women’s employment, it is necessary to investigate several different perspectives. In his study of British women in the Great War, Pugh notes that in order to accurately assess the significance of women’s employment, attitudes of the Government, employers, trade unions and women need to be analysed.³⁰ I have adopted a similar approach in order to investigate these issues in a New Zealand context. I have used the *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (NZPD)* and the *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)* to investigate government attitudes towards women working during the war. The reports of the Departments of Labour and Agriculture reveal both governmental and individual opinions as to the merits of women’s participation in the workforce. The records of government bodies such as the National Efficiency Board (NEB) and the Women’s National Reserve have also been examined.

The views of mainstream New Zealanders have been accessed through a sample of newspapers. I have consulted several New Zealand newspapers to determine views held by society regarding the issue of women in employment, and the views towards political measures undertaken by the Government during this period. In order to assess the perspectives of organised labour, a movement that was increasingly powerful in New Zealand in the years immediately preceding the Great War, I have examined the *Maoriland Worker*. This newspaper was established in 1910 by the Shearers’ Union, and was originally edited by Ettie Rout and Mick Laracy.³¹ The newspaper was soon taken over by the New Zealand Federation of Labour and became a weekly publication. The *Maoriland Worker* was aimed at working class New Zealanders, and ‘gave advice, presented alternative views and was a voice for the workers of New Zealand.’³² The newspaper also included a women’s page, which featured national and international news on the progress of women, and reported on

²⁹ Braybon, *Evidence, History and the Great War*, Introduction, p. 22.

³⁰ Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women’s Movement in Britain 1914-1959*, London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1992, p. 18.

³¹ Lucy Roberts, ‘Competing Voices: Women and Socialism in the *Maoriland Worker*, 1910-1920, BA (Hons) Research Exercise in History, Massey University, 1989, p. 5.

³² Roberts, p. 8.

educational information and election news whilst also including items of a more domestic nature, such as recipes and home hints.

The records of women's organisations have also been consulted to gain an insight into women's perspectives on employment. Organisations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the National Council of Women (NCW) were at the forefront of agitation for improved rights for women. I have endeavoured to sample viewpoints from sources encompassing the political and social spectrum – from politicians, government agencies, women's organisations as well as the general public. Whilst it would be beyond the scope of the thesis to examine every available source, a reasonable cross section has been identified and accessed for this thesis.

In order to assess the effect of the Great War on employment it is important to first establish the extent to which women were employed in the period encompassing the war. Chapter One focuses on the statistical evidence for the employment of women in the New Zealand workforce. Firstly, I determined the pre-war employment patterns of New Zealand women, before focusing on the 1911-1921 period. This allowed me to test employment patterns during wartime with the immediate pre-war and post-war period. I have used the 1911, 1916 and 1921 censuses to investigate the extent to which the war impacted on the employment patterns of women. I have analysed the data, and used comparative data from Britain to determine whether the employment patterns of New Zealand women were similar to those of British women. This analysis allows me to test whether the rhetoric about women's participation in the workforce reflected the reality of what was actually occurring. The occupational categories women moved into and their implications in terms of social class are also discussed.

Chapter Two investigates the areas in which women increased their participation during the 1911-1921 period. In New Zealand, women's involvement in the professional and clerical sectors increased, whilst in Britain increasing numbers of women entered the industrial. Government actions initiated to exercise control over women's involvement in the workforce are also examined.

Chapter Three investigates contemporary attitudes towards the increased presence of working women through the analysis of the *Maoriland Worker* and the *Evening Post*. The chapter also examines the consequences of women's increased role in the public sector and their demands for equal pay, greater representation in public offices such as judicial and municipal roles, and political representation.

Chapter Four focuses on the post-war period, and examines the treatment given to the issue of continued women's employment in the workforce by the government and the media in New Zealand and Britain. The policies implemented by the New Zealand and British governments regarding the re-entry of servicemen into the workforce are investigated and the effect on women workers is determined. The effect that the war had on women's political and social rights in New Zealand and Britain is also compared and evaluated.

Conclusions are then drawn regarding women's participation in the workforce during the Great War, and whether long term benefits arose from this. Progress for women has been defined as 'being the expansion in women's employment opportunities, higher wages [and] ... work for married women'.³³ These strands were individually undergoing improvement in the early twentieth century so it is difficult to determine exactly what impact the war had on these, and whether improvement was just the natural progression as women's rights improved. However, what cannot be denied is that the war presented an opportunity, albeit somewhat temporary, for women in both New Zealand and Britain to participate in the workforce in greater numbers and new roles.

³³ Braybon, *Evidence, History and the Great War*, Introduction, p. 13.

CHAPTER ONE

ANALYSIS: WOMEN'S WORK AND THE CENSUS

This chapter outlines the limited employment opportunities that existed for New Zealand women in the decades preceding the Great War, before examining the 1911-1921 period in greater depth. I have used the New Zealand census figures to determine the employment trends for women during this period, and analysed whether the war impacted upon the types of employment which women were engaged in. I have investigated the general New Zealand trends for female employment before analysing each of the provinces to determine the similarities and differences in the type of employment undertaken by females within different areas of New Zealand, and the level of female involvement within different sectors of the labour force. I have also included some comparative data from Great Britain, so that differences and similarities between the employment patterns of women from Great Britain and New Zealand can be ascertained. These findings will be used in Chapter Two to measure the extent to which popular rhetoric regarding women in employment was consistent with actual employment patterns, and thus determine the extent to which women entered new areas of employment during the war years, and whether these changes were permanent.

In the period before the Great War, women were entering the New Zealand workforce in ever increasing numbers. Between 1891 and 1911, the number of women working more than doubled, rising from 42 007 in 1891 to 87 638 in 1911.³⁴ Most women who worked outside the home, did so during the period between leaving school and getting married – indeed it was assumed that women would give up work when they married, as men were paid a “family” wage. The concept of the family wage was that a man was paid a wage that was sufficient to support not only himself but a family as well, thus eliminating the need for women to work.³⁵ Olssen notes that by 1914, the majority of married men in New Zealand ‘considered it a humiliating confession of their inadequacy if their wives had to [undertake] ... paid work.’³⁶ Any woman who was not married and thus supported by her husband was assumed to be in the care of her family. Women who undertook paid work did so in the

³⁴ See Appendix One, p. 106; Table One, p. 16.

³⁵ See Shannon R. Brown, ‘Female Office Workers in Auckland, 1891-1936’, MA in History, University of Auckland, 1993, p. 9. Marilyn Lake contends that as long as mothers were provided for under the family wage that men received, then men ‘continued to have a reason to claim a higher wage.’ See Lake, ‘The Independence of Women and the Brotherhood of Man: Debates in the Labour Movement Over Equal Pay and Motherhood Endowment in the 1920s’, in *Labour History*, No. 63, November 1992, p. 4.

³⁶ Erik Olssen, ‘Working Gender, Gendering Work: Occupational Change and Continuity in Southern Dunedin’, in 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, p. 60.

knowledge that they were often considered 'secondary' in importance to male workers, and thus 'both expected and occupied lowly positions' in the workforce.³⁷

Workplace Helpmeets: New Zealand Women in Employment c.1890-1914

During the late nineteenth century, women tended to work in occupations with a domestic focus, however after 1900 opportunities gradually appeared in the public sphere, in occupations such as waitressing, nursing, teaching, and office work.³⁸ This expansion was generally into work that 'required skills traditionally deemed peculiar to females.'³⁹ The expansion was accompanied by a decline in the proportion of women working in domestic service.⁴⁰ In 1891, the Domestic sector employed 46% of women working in New Zealand. By 1911, this had decreased to 38%, as the proportion of women working in the Professional and Commercial sectors increased.⁴¹ A large proportion of working women were employed in domestic work, however the long hours, variable working conditions and the absence of laws regulating the conditions meant that women were attracted to other areas of work as they appeared.⁴² Domestic service tended to be solitary work, and did not provide the social interaction that work in a factory provided. Robertson asserts that compared to domestic service, factory work offered shorter hours, higher wages and gave women the opportunity to live at home.⁴³ Moreover, by the early decades of the twentieth century, working conditions for factory workers had improved, due to the Sweating Commission of 1890 and the actions

³⁷ Brown, p. 9. Just 19% of women were breadwinners in 1911, compared with 68% of males, see 1911 Census Report, p. 60.

³⁸ Erik Olssen, 'Women, Work and Family, 1880-1926', in Phillida Bunkle and Beryl Hughes (eds), *Women in New Zealand Society*, Auckland: George Allen & Unwin, 1980, p. 162. Phillips notes that the 'increasing segregation' of men's and women's employment in early 20th century New Zealand was a 'means of establishing certain jobs as male preserves.' He maintains that this was especially true of jobs considered to be "white-collar", as there was no prerequisite such as physical strength denying women entrance to jobs in that sector. See Jock Phillips, 'Mummy's Boys: Pakeha Men and Male Culture in New Zealand', in Bunkle and Hughes (eds), *Women in New Zealand Society*, p. 229.

³⁹ Olssen, 'Women, Work and Family', p. 165.

⁴⁰ The decline in the number of women entering the Domestic sector did not prevent Otago University from offering domestic science as a degree course from 1912, see Dorothy Page, *The National Council of Women: A Centennial History*, Auckland: Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books, 1996, p. 54.

⁴¹ The number of women working in the Professional sector increased by 125% between 1891 and 1911, and the number of women working in the Commercial sector increased by 345% in the same period. The total increase in the number of women in the workforce for the 1891-1911 period was 109%, indicating that women were not only entering these sectors as they entered the workforce, but were transferring from other sectors into the Professional and Commercial sectors. For figures, see Appendix One, p. 106; Table One, p. 16.

⁴² Olssen notes that domestic work involved 'humiliation, loneliness and infinite monotony', see Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 74. Martin notes that New Zealand had 'always suffered from a chronic shortage of domestic servants', see John E. Martin, *Holding the Balance: A History of New Zealand's Department of Labour 1891-1995*, Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 1996, p. 68.

⁴³ Stephen Robertson, 'Women Workers and the New Zealand Arbitration Court, 1894-1920', in Raelene Frances and Bruce Scates (eds), *Women, Work and the Labour Movement in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Sydney: The Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, 1991, pp. 31-32.

of the Liberal Government.⁴⁴ The Commission revealed the existence of dire working conditions in many New Zealand factories, such as insanitary workplace conditions, low wages and overcrowding. Consequently, laws and regulations were created to benefit the workers.⁴⁵

In 1891 the Factories Act was passed requiring factories employing women and children, and more than three workers, to be registered. Subsequent revisions in 1892 and 1894 meant that factory inspectors were appointed to oversee conditions and it became compulsory for employers to keep a list of names of employees and wages paid to them.⁴⁶ The Arbitration Court was set up in 1894 to 'provide a mechanism of peaceful settlement of industrial disputes and "encourage the formation of industrial unions".⁴⁷ Sinclair notes that the 'pioneering' legislation introduced by the Liberals was aimed at preventing the 'worst evils of industrialism from taking root in New Zealand.'⁴⁸ These measures helped to regulate the industry and maintain a basic level of employee welfare. The formation of the first women's union had occurred in 1889, with the formation of the Dunedin Tailoresses' Union.⁴⁹ Street maintains that during the 1890s and 1900s, labour struggles 'resulted in varying degrees of unionisation of working women.'⁵⁰ Women working as boot machinists, woollen mill hands, tailoresses and clothing workers formed unions for the purpose of establishing decent minimum wages and safe working conditions.⁵¹ However, during this period the 'political struggles of middle class women [meant that] women's unions languished as women's political organisations flourished'.⁵² An example of the difficulties faced by women's unions during this period is illustrated by the Domestic Workers' Union, which was formed in Wellington in January 1907, and consisted of more than 50 members.⁵³ The primary concern

⁴⁴ Another contributing factor to improved working conditions was a more assertive working class, who increasingly used collective bargaining to gain improvements in working conditions, see Len Richardson, 'Parties and Political Change', in Rice, *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, pp. 201-229.

⁴⁵ The report officially denied the absence of sweating in New Zealand workplaces, however 3 of the 9 members of the Commission believed that when the definition of sweating was widened, there was in fact 'abundant evidence' of sweating in New Zealand, and predicted that unless there was 'prompt legislative action' the situation would become worse. The members wrote an Addendum stating so, which was attached to the official report, see the 1890 Report of the Sweating Commission, *AJHR*, 1890, H-5, Addendum, p. vi.

⁴⁶ *Across the Counter: the lives of the working poor in New Zealand 1890*, Second New Zealand Sweating Commission, Wellington, 1990, Appendix D.

⁴⁷ Richardson, p. 207.

⁴⁸ Keith Sinclair, 'Reeves – The Fabian Reformer', in *New Zealand Heritage: the making of a nation*, No. 56, 1972, p. 1552.

⁴⁹ H. Roth, *Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present*, Wellington: Reed Education, 1973, pp. 12, 128.

⁵⁰ Maryan Street, *The Scarlet Runners: Women and Industrial Action 1889-1913*, Wellington: Working Life Communications, 1993, p. 57.

⁵¹ Street, p. 78. Women had joined the Bootmakers Union before 1891, and the Dunedin Tailoresses Union, which had representative branches in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch had an estimated membership of 2 572 by 1890, see Street, pp. 19, 43.

⁵² Street, p. 57.

⁵³ *The New Zealand Times*, January 8, 1907, no page number, from Bert Roth Notes on Domestic Workers, 94-106-45/05, Turnbull Library.

of the Union was the number of working hours expected of domestic workers, however low wage levels were also a concern of the Union.⁵⁴ Despite their concerns, the Domestic Workers' Union was unable to make use of the Arbitration Court due to the Labour Department denying the union registration, declaring that 'domestic work was not an industrial occupation and was therefore outside the scope of the Arbitration Court.'⁵⁵

The 1890s also saw the expansion of women's work within the public sector, due to the creation and subsequent expansion of the civil service. Work in the public sector was perceived by many women as more desirable than domestic service and as a profession that offered greater job security.⁵⁶ The increase in the number of women employed within this sector was due to a rise in the number of Government departments using machines to carry out routine clerical tasks and the appointment of women to clerical positions.⁵⁷ From the 1880s, women had participated in civil service examinations. Successful candidates were offered cadetships with various government departments. Cadetships were highly sought-after, and considered a stepping stone to permanent management or administrative positions.⁵⁸ The number of women employed as 'cadettes' was limited due to women customarily leaving the service upon marriage. Those women who were accepted as cadettes undertook work similar to that carried out by other clerical staff, such as 'minor accounts work, copying, filing, and letter-writing.'⁵⁹ Female cadettes worked within an environment that was biased towards male employees, and a 'high level of job differentiation' existed.⁶⁰ In 1913-14 new regulations were implemented, resulting in unfavourable working conditions for women. Lower rates of maximum pay were introduced; women were barred from sitting the public service entrance examinations; and upon marriage women were forced to resign their positions.⁶¹

These changes in employment patterns between 1891 and 1911 help explain the patterns of women's employment in New Zealand between 1911 and 1921. Owen notes that the low proportion of women working outside the home in the period before the Great War meant that there was a valuable untapped labour source that could be utilised once the war began

⁵⁴ *The New Zealand Times*, January 8, 1907, no page number, from Bert Roth Notes on Domestic Workers, 94-106-45/05, Turnbull Library. Nolan notes that there was no national minimum wage for women before 1936, and women usually received a wage one-third to one-half of the male wage, see Nolan, p. 142.

⁵⁵ Roth, *Trade Unions*, p. 129.

⁵⁶ Fiona McKergow, *The "Taxwoman": 101 Years of Women Working in the Inland Revenue Department 1892-1993*, Wellington: Inland Revenue Department, 1993, p. 13.

⁵⁷ McKergow, p. 8.

⁵⁸ McKergow, p. 8. See also Bronwyn Dalley, *Women of Value: A History of Women in the Valuation Department and Valuation New Zealand 1896-1993*, Wellington: Valuation New Zealand, 1993, p. 14.

⁵⁹ McKergow, p. 9.

⁶⁰ McKergow, p. 22.

⁶¹ McKergow, p. 17.

to affect the number of men available to work in key sectors of the workforce.⁶² The Public Services Commission 'temporarily reversed its policy of restricting female employment in the public service' in order to cope with the shortage of men.⁶³ The Commission also reopened the public service entrance examinations to women from 1916.⁶⁴ The Labour Department's Annual Report for 1918 states that the wartime labour shortage was filled in several ways:

(1) The employment of women and girls in occupations hitherto filled by male workers, especially in offices ...; (2) the absorption of workers from unessential industries to essential work, and the postponement of various kinds of non-urgent work; (3) the employment of [retired] persons...; (4) the employment of boys and girls on leaving school to a far greater extent than usual; (5) longer hours of work, and the assistance rendered by one farmer to another.⁶⁵

The trends identified in the above Department of Labour report are evident in greater detail in the censuses of 1911, 1916 and 1921. The census data is the best available means of analysing female workforce participation due to the lack of detail in Labour Department records. It is possible to draw conclusions from the censuses through an analysis of national and provincial employment patterns. The five-year gap between each census does not allow detailed analysis of the ways in which the war affected employment trends, however definitive changes are evident within the available data. When comparing the different censuses, the 1921 census proved slightly problematic, due to the addition of a category entitled 'Other groups'. This category included 'all persons of independent means, annuitants, [and] pensioners'.⁶⁶ This description seemed to place the 'Other groups' category outside the scope of my thesis, and so I have not included statistics in this category when calculating the findings. Whilst this is not ideal, in order to most accurately compare figures from the different censuses it was important to use categories that existed in each census, and were included in earlier censuses.

When assessing the census data, I chose to focus on the employment statistics relating to women in the workforce. For this reason I have deliberately left out the statistics regarding those who were employed in the Indefinite Breadwinner and Dependent categories. The Indefinite category in the Breadwinners section was comprised of people who were 'living on incomes earned in the past, or indefinitely described'.⁶⁷ Female breadwinners in the Indefinite category comprised just 2.9% of the total number of female breadwinners in 1911, with similar figures in the 1916 and 1921 censuses, so the absence of these women from

⁶² Judith Ann Owen, 'Women Just Want A Job, Not A Career: A Study of the Relationship Between Women's Domestic Role and Their Participation in the Labour Force', MA Thesis in Sociology, Massey University, 1984, p. 10. Robertson describes the wartime demand for women workers as 'threaten[ing] the sexual division of labour', see Robertson, p. 37.

⁶³ McKergow, p. 19.

⁶⁴ Dalley, p. 21.

⁶⁵ Department of Labour Annual Report 1918, *AJHR*, 1918, H-11, p. 1.

⁶⁶ 1921 Census report, p. 134.

⁶⁷ 1921 Census report, p. 60.

calculations has not substantially affected my findings.⁶⁸ The Dependent category consisted 'chiefly of wives, relatives, and others employed in household duties but unpaid, children, [and] persons supported by charity'.⁶⁹ In 1911, 81% of the New Zealand female population was classified as belonging to the Dependent, and the inclusion of this category in calculations detailing the participation of women in the workforce would not allow me to examine the employment patterns of women in sufficient detail.⁷⁰ It must be noted that unpaid work, which for women included much domestic work as well as agricultural work, proves problematic when an accurate assessment of women's work is desired. Unpaid work would not have been considered "real" work as it did not provide income, and thus may not have been recorded in the census records. Work not carried out in the public sphere may have also gone unrecorded in the census statistics.⁷¹ Thom states that a similar problem existed in Britain, and notes that women's employment was under-recorded in employment statistics, due to the notion that women's work 'did not count as "occupied"'.⁷² It must be noted that the census data excludes Maori women, as Maori were surveyed in a separate census, and only basic information was collected.

Using the census data I have focused on the six main sectors of employment. The classification of occupations into the different sectors was determined by guidelines noted in each census. The Professional sector consisted of 'persons ... engaged in Government, defence, law and order, or ministering to religion, charity, health, education, art, science, or amusement'.⁷³ The Domestic sector was comprised of 'persons supplying board and lodging, or personal services for which payment is rendered'.⁷⁴ The Commercial sector consisted of 'all persons directly connected with the hire, sale, transfer, distribution, storage, and security of property and materials'.⁷⁵ The Transport and Communication sector included 'persons engaged in the transport of passengers and goods, and in effecting communication'.⁷⁶ The Industrial sector consisted of 'persons engaged in manufacture or other processes where materials are employed'.⁷⁷ The Agricultural, Pastoral, Mineral and other Primary Producers sector (hereafter referred to as the Agricultural sector) was comprised of 'persons engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits, fishing, and mining'.⁷⁸

⁶⁸ 1911 Census report, p. 61. 2.6% of female breadwinners were in the Indefinite category in 1916, and 1.8% of female breadwinners in 1921, see the 1916 Census report, p.109; 1921 Census report, p. 134.

⁶⁹ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

⁷⁰ 1911 Census report, p. 60. 82% of women were classified as being a dependent in 1916, with a comparative figure of 79% for 1921, see the 1916 Census report, p. 108; 1921 Census report, p. 134.

⁷¹ Glucksmann, p. 7.

⁷² Thom, p. 104.

⁷³ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

⁷⁴ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

⁷⁵ 1911 Census report, p. 57.

⁷⁶ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

⁷⁷ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

⁷⁸ 1911 Census report, p. 59.

I have first calculated the proportion of the New Zealand workforce employed in each sector, for example the Professional sector employed 7% of the New Zealand workforce in 1911.⁷⁹ I have then worked out the gender proportion of each sector, and it can be seen that females working in the Professional sector in 1911 made up 3% of the New Zealand workforce.⁸⁰ I have then focused on the female workforce, so that the employment patterns of women can be examined in isolation. I have calculated the distribution of women amongst the various sectors – for example, 15% of the female workforce worked within the Professional sector in 1911. Finally, I have calculated the gender distribution within each sector, so that it can be seen that women constituted 39% of Professional sector employees in 1911.⁸¹

Problems have also been encountered when trying to locate data from Labour Department records. The wartime strategy of saving paper meant that the 1918 Annual Report from the Department of Labour contained 23 pages, whereas the 1913 Annual Report was 117 pages in length.⁸² Unfortunately the individual reports for the Women's Employment Bureaux were among those reports sacrificed for the duration of the war. The Women's Employment Bureaux was set up by the Department of Labour in 1895 as a means of organising women's domestic employment.⁸³ Whilst the surviving records for the Bureaux are incomplete, the statistics that appeared in the monthly Journal of the Department of Labour indicate that the Bureaux were set up in five districts – Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin. The inclusion of a much smaller centre such as Nelson indicates the prevalence of fruit picking in the region, and the trouble the region had with finding enough employees.⁸⁴ The statistics also indicated whether the women were married or single, and where they originated from, including columns for women from the Commonwealth and Great Britain. The reports also noted the number of jobs filed by employers, and the number of women successfully engaged for work. The Bureaux were each overseen by an inspector, whose job involved administering the employment service and related clerical duties, and occasionally inspecting factories.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ See Table Two, p. 17.

⁸⁰ See Table Two, p. 17.

⁸¹ See Table Three, p. 17.

⁸² See Department of Labour Annual Report 1918, *AJHR*, 1918, H-11, p. 1.

⁸³ Martin, p. 68. The Bureau was closed in 1904 when it became too expensive to run, but was re-established in 1908, see Martin, pp. 69, 73.

⁸⁴ For example, see the February 1916 report, which noted that there was a 'scarcity of female labour' for hop-picking, and the region was advertising in Wellington for hop-pickers, and women had come from 'the West Coast and other districts' to work, see the *Journal of the Department of Labour*, 1916, p. 181.

⁸⁵ Appeal of Miss H. Morrison, Officer-in-Charge, Women's Employment Bureau, Auckland, February 19, 1915, L9 – Departmental Conduct of Staff Files re: Miss Morrison 1907-1917, National Archives, p. 2; Martin, p. 140.

The work advertised through the Bureaux was solely of a domestic nature, and included such positions as housekeeper, pantry maid, charwoman, cook, waitress and domestic worker. The Bureaux was a successful means of filling domestic positions, and a large number of women used its service. Approximately 2 000 women used the services of the Bureaux each year from 1908-1916, however the numbers declined in the latter war years, and in 1920 just 1 406 women were placed in jobs by the Bureaux.⁸⁶ This number was determined by the Department of Labour to be 'insufficient to justify the existence of separate bureaux' and did not 'justif[y] the expenditure involved' in running the offices, which led to closure of the Women's Bureaux in 1920.⁸⁷

Limited Gains: A National Perspective on Women's Participation in the Workforce 1911-1921

An examination of the censuses of 1911, 1916 and 1921 indicates an increase in the numbers of women involved in the workforce. As previously mentioned, these increases are to some extent attributable to wartime circumstances, but the 1921 census indicates that in some sectors at least, women's participation increased from the 1916 levels. The continued participation of women in the workforce was the subject of considerable debate, and will be discussed in Chapter Three. The analysis of the census figures commences with a discussion of changes in New Zealand employment patterns between 1911 and 1921.

TABLE ONE

NEW ZEALAND	1911			1916			1921		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
PROFESSIONAL	19 796	12 920	32 716	24 797	17 304	42 101	29 803	22 082	51 885
DOMESTIC	10 891	33 376	44 267	10 119	31 796	41 915	8 927	32 762	41 689
COMMERCIAL	52 994	12 768	65 762	49 490	16 714	66 204	58 519	20 601	79 120
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	35 212	1 221	36 433	40 253	2 269	42 522	52 665	2 670	55 335
INDUSTRIAL	113 684	19 871	133 555	97 045	19 874	116 919	98 613	20 319	118 932
AGRICULTURAL	123 099	7 482	130 581	122 814	9 685	132 499	142 736	9 200	151 936
TOTAL	355 676	87 638	443 314	344 518	97 642	442 160	391 263	107 634	498 897

Source: 1911 Census, Part VIII, pp. 423-424; 1916 Census, Part IV, pp. 139-140; 1921 Census, General Report, p. 134.

Table One shows the number of New Zealand workers employed in the period 1911-1921, as distributed between the 6 main sectors of employment.

⁸⁶ See *The Official New Zealand Yearbook 1908-1920*. In total, the Bureaux placed 24 855 women in the 1908-1920 period, see *The New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1921-1922*, p. 558.

⁸⁷ Martin, p. 140; *The Official New Zealand Yearbook 1921-22*, p. 558.

TABLE TWO

NEW ZEALAND	TOTAL WORKFORCE %			% OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE					
	1911	1916	1921	M 1911	F 1911	M 1916	F 1916	M 1921	F 1921
PROFESSIONAL	7	10	10	4	3	6	4	6	4
DOMESTIC	10	9	8	2	8	2	7	2	7
COMMERCIAL	15	15	16	12	3	11	4	12	4
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	8	10	11	8	0	9	1	11	1
INDUSTRIAL	30	26	24	26	4	22	4	20	4
AGRICULTURAL	29	30	30	28	2	28	2	29	2

In Table Two, the section of the table labeled 'Total Workforce %' shows the percentage of working people employed in each sector. The section labelled '% of the Total Workforce' shows the gender percentages for each sector in greater detail, indicating the percentage of the total workforce the male/female section of each sector workforce represents.

TABLE THREE

NEW ZEALAND	FEMALE WORKFORCE (%)			FEMALE GENDER (%)		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	15	18	21	39	41	43
DOMESTIC	38	33	30	75	76	79
COMMERCIAL	15	17	19	19	25	26
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	3	5	5
INDUSTRIAL	23	20	19	15	17	17
AGRICULTURAL	9	10	9	6	7	6
OVERALL AVERAGE				20	22	22

Table Three focuses on the female employment figures, and the section labelled 'Female Workforce' indicates the distribution of the female workforce between the six main sectors. The section labelled 'Female Gender' shows the female percentage of each sector workforce. The 'Overall Average' figure indicates the female percentage of the total New Zealand workforce for each year.

The general New Zealand trend between 1911 and 1921 shows that the Professional sector of employment had the largest increase – in the 1911 census 7% of New Zealand employees worked within the Professional sector; by 1916 this proportion had increased to 10%, which was maintained in the post-war census of 1921. The post-war figure of 10% indicates that the Professional sector had increased its share of workforce employment permanently, and not just for the duration of the war. When the figures for female employment in the Professional sector are examined, it can be seen that the proportion of the female workforce employed in this sector rose continuously during the 1911-1921 period. In 1911, 15% of women were employed in the Professional sector. By 1916 the comparative figure was 18%,

and in 1921, 21% of working women were employed in the Professional sector. The gender ratio in this sector changed slightly during the 1911-1921 period. In 1911, women comprised 39% of the employees in the Professional sector; this proportion had risen to 43% by 1921.

The Domestic sector decreased its sector share of the workforce throughout the 1911-1921 period. In 1911, 10% of the New Zealand workforce was employed in the Domestic sector. This declined slightly by 1% in each of the succeeding censuses to reach 8% by 1921. The sector employed 1 500 less women in the 1916 census than in the 1911 census, which is notable since there were an extra 10 000 women in the workforce by 1916. This strongly suggests that women left domestic work to pursue other forms of work during the war years. The Domestic sector was the only sector to experience a decrease in the number of women employed in the period between the 1911 and 1916 censuses. The 1916-1921 period saw a continuation of the fall in the total number of those employed in the Domestic sector, with a further decrease of 226 people, despite an increase in the total workforce for the same period of 56 737. However, the number of females working within the Domestic sector between 1916 and 1921 increased by 966, indicating that some women were drawn back into this traditionally female sector of industry.

The Commercial sector experienced slight growth during the 1911-1921 period, employing 15% of the New Zealand workforce in the 1911 and 1916 censuses to 16% in the 1921 census. This small percentage increase conceals the 13 000 extra workers that were working in the Commercial sector by 1921. The gender ratio within this sector also changed significantly in the 1911-1921 period, and women became a more noticeable part of the workforce. In 1911 women comprised one of every five workers in the Commercial sector, however this had risen to one of every four by 1916, and remained at this level in 1921. The large increase between 1911 and 1916 suggests that it was due to the wartime circumstances that the proportion of women working within the sector increased sharply, however the permanence of the increased participation of women indicate that women's increased involvement in the Commercial sector was not simply a result of the war.

The Transport and Communication sector underwent steady expansion during the 1911-1921 period. In 1911 the sector employed 8% of the New Zealand workforce, in 1916 it employed 10% of the workforce, and in 1921, 11% of the workforce was working in the Transport and Communication sector. This represented an increase of almost 19 000 people throughout the period. This sector employed only a very small proportion of the New Zealand female workforce. In 1911, the Transport and Communication sector employed 1% of female workers, and in 1916 and 1921 the sector employed 2% of the female workforce, indicating that women maintained their position in this sector after the war. However, the very low

percentage increase does not show the increasing number of women in this sector throughout the period. The number of women employed in the Transport and Communication sector rose from 1 221 in 1911 to 2 269 in 1916 – an increase of 86%, and rose again to 2 670 in 1921. The war opened up previously unavailable areas of work in this sector for women, and these opportunities continued to some extent after the war.

The Industrial sector underwent a steady and significant decline in both male and female employees throughout the period, dropping from 30% to 26% to 24% in the three successive censuses. This represented a decrease in the number of people employed in this sector of nearly 15 000 people. The sector lost 16 636 workers from 1911-1916, indicating that Industry was one of the key sectors to be affected by the lack of man power available during the war years. The number of women working within the sector increased by just 3 between 1911 and 1916 - evidence that the Industrial sector did not replace or dilute its workforce with women, and apparently managed without the 16 000 male workers. The proportion of women working within the sector declined from 23% in 1911 to 20% in 1916, and 19% in 1921. The largest decrease occurred in the 1911-1916 period, indicating that the war led to women being drawn away from the Industrial sector, and as has been noted already, the figures show that the percentage of women working in the Commercial and Professional sectors increased during this period.

The percentage of the New Zealand workforce employed in the Agriculture sector remained steady throughout the period, rising from 29% in 1911 to 30% in 1916 and 1921. However, this disguises some important fluctuations. The 1916 census results show an increase of approximately 2 000 people into the sector, comprised of an influx of 2 203 women, and a loss of 285 men. Approximately 1 000 of these additional agricultural workers in 1916 worked in Taranaki, signifying the importance of this sector to the province. There was a large increase in the number of people working in the Agricultural sector between 1916 and 1921, with 19 000 more people working in this sector by 1921. This increase was entirely male – whilst there had been a noticeable rise in the number of women working in the sector between 1911 and 1916, the number of females working in the Agricultural sector decreased by 485 in the 1916-1921 period, indicating that when males returned from military service they reasserted themselves within the sector and forced some women out of their jobs. Women constituted 6% of the Agricultural workforce in both 1911 and 1921, indicating that the influx of women in 1916 was not permanent and the increased role that women played within the sector did not permanently affect the gender proportions within the Agricultural sector.

Overall Participation Rates for New Zealand Women

TABLE FOUR

NEW ZEALAND	1911			1916			1921		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
PROFESSIONAL	19 796	12 920	32 716	24 797	17 304	42 101	29 803	22 082	51 885
DOMESTIC	10 891	33 376	44 267	10 119	31 796	41 915	8 927	32 762	41 689
COMMERCIAL	52 994	12 768	65 762	49 490	16 714	66 204	58 519	20 601	79 120
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	35 212	1 221	36 433	40 253	2 269	42 522	52 665	2 670	55 335
INDUSTRIAL	113 684	19 871	133 555	97 045	19 874	116 919	98 613	20 319	118 932
AGRICULTURAL	123 099	7 482	130 581	122 814	9 685	132 499	142 736	9 200	151 936
TOTAL	355 676	87 638	443 314	344 518	97 642	442 160	391 263	107 634	498 897

Source: 1911 Census, Part VIII, pp. 423-424; 1916 Census, Part IV, pp. 139-140; 1921 Census, General Report, p. 134.

The percentage of females classified as Breadwinners increased slightly during the 1911-1921 period. 19% of women were classified as Breadwinners in the 1911 census. The percentage of female Breadwinners dropped slightly to 18% in 1916 before rising to 21% in the 1921 census.⁸⁸ Sectors of the labour force in which permanent change for women seems evident includes the Professional and Commercial sectors, which were the only sectors to experience long term growth between 1911 and 1921. The Professional sector employed 15% of the female workforce in 1911, and was the third most popular sector - tied with the Commercial sector - behind the Domestic (38%) and Industrial (23%) sectors. By 1921, the percentage of New Zealand women employed in the Professional sector had risen by 6%, to 21%. The increase made the Professional sector the second largest employer of women behind the Domestic sector, which employed 30% of women. This steady increase suggests that the Professional sector was being opened up to women permanently as an employment option during the 1911-1921 period. The other sector to experience significant growth during the 1911-1921 period was the Commercial sector. In 1911, 15% of the female workforce was employed in the Commercial sector. By 1921 the sector employed 19% of New Zealand women. As has been noted above, the gender composition of both of these sectors also changed during the 1911-1921 period, with women constituting a greater proportion of the workforce in the Professional and Commercial sectors by 1921. However, the growing number of women employed in 'professional' jobs did not necessarily mean that women were in higher paying jobs. Women were paid less than men, especially when employed on a 'temporary' basis, as was often the case during the war. Thus, increased women's participation in the Professional and Commercial sectors during the Great War did not

⁸⁸ 1911 Census report, p. 63; 1916 Census report, p. 108; 1921 Census report, p. 134.

necessarily mean that women had more financial power in 1916 and 1921 than they did in 1911. This indicates that the war did not have a significant long term impact on the economic balance of power between the genders. This point will be examined more fully in Chapters Two and Three.

Provincial Variations in Women's Employment in New Zealand

The analysis of women's employment on a national level provides a general overview of the employment patterns in New Zealand, however the census also investigated employment on a provincial level.⁸⁹ As indicated in Appendix Two, the nationwide patterns of women's employment were on the whole shared across all provinces. In all of the provinces, the percentage of the female workforce employed in the Professional sector rose between 1911 and 1921. A similar trend is evident for the Commercial sector. The percentage of the female workforce employed in the Domestic and Industrial sectors declined between 1911 and 1921 in all provinces, which again follows the national trend. In the Transport and Communication sector, all provinces saw the percentage of the female workforce employed in this sector increase, apart from Marlborough, where the percentage remained the same during the 1911-1921 period. The long term trends in the provinces for the Agricultural sector varied between Provinces. The Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Marlborough, Nelson, Westland and Otago provinces saw an increase in the percentage of the female workforce working within the sector during the 1911-1921 period, whilst the sector share of the female workforce decreased in the Taranaki, Canterbury and Southland provinces during the same period. In the Wellington province the percentage of the female workforce working in the Agricultural sector remained static during the 1911-1921 period, which was also the national trend.

Whilst there is not scope in the thesis for a detailed discussion of regional trends, there are interesting features which would be worthy of further research. In particular, the employment patterns of females in the Taranaki province significantly deviated from the national trend. Taranaki had the highest proportion of women working in the Agricultural sector throughout the 1911-1921 period, with significantly higher figures than the national average. 25% of the Taranaki female workforce was working in the Agricultural sector in 1911, whilst the corresponding national figure for the sector in 1911 was 9%. This indicates that in the Taranaki region, agricultural work was undertaken by women to a much larger extent than elsewhere in New Zealand.⁹⁰ This is especially evident in the 1916 census figures, where 10% of the New Zealand female workforce was working in the Agricultural

⁸⁹ For provincial statistics, see Appendix Two, p. 107.

⁹⁰ The gender distribution of the sector also reflects a higher percentage of women. Whilst women constituted 6-7% of workers in the Agricultural sector of the New Zealand workforce in the 1911-1921 period, women made up 9-14% of the Agricultural sector workforce in Taranaki during the same period, see Appendix Two, p. 107.

sector was 10% - an increase of 1% from 1911 - whilst the corresponding Taranaki figure for 1916 was 33% - 8% higher than 1911. In 1921 the percentage of the Taranaki female workforce employed in the Agricultural workforce was 24%, whilst the corresponding national figure was 9%. The continuing disparity between the Taranaki and New Zealand figures indicates that the higher rate of female participation in the Agricultural sector was not simply due to a drop in number of male workers in the province during the war, but seems to have been a constant due to the rural nature of much of Taranaki's industry.

Due to the high proportion of the female workforce in Taranaki working in the Agricultural sector, female employment in some other sectors - particularly the Commercial and Industrial sectors - was lower than the national average. The percentage of Taranaki women working in the Commercial sector was 20-35% lower than the national average during the 1911-1921 period.⁹¹ Taranaki also had a significantly lower percentage of women working in the Industrial sector. The percentage of the female workforce employed in the Industrial sector in Taranaki dropped from 12% in 1911 to 9% in 1921. In contrast, 23% of the New Zealand female workforce was employed in the Industrial sector in 1911, with a comparative figure of 19% for 1921 - the Taranaki figures are 48-60% lower than the national average.

Despite the variations between Taranaki's statistics and the national employment figures, the patterns identified at a national level were predominantly reflected in the various provinces, and therefore the analysis of newspapers, government reports, figures and organisations in the following chapters is reasonably applicable to New Zealand as a whole. These works discussed women in employment in a national context and didn't distinguish along provincial or urban/rural lines.

⁹¹ The proportion of the female workforce in Taranaki working in the Commercial sector was 12% in 1911, 11% in 1916 and 14% in 1921. The national average for females in this sector was 15% in 1911, 17% in 1916 and 19% in 1921, see Appendix Two, p. 107.

Comparison between New Zealand and Great Britain

TABLE FIVE

NEW ZEALAND	TOTAL NZ FEMALE WORKFORCE		TOTAL GB FEMALE WORKFORCE	
	1911	1921	1914	1918
PROFESSIONAL	12 920	22 082	542 000	652 500
DOMESTIC	33 376	32 762	1 658 000	1 250 000
COMMERCIAL	12 768	20 601	505 200	934 500
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1 221	2 670	18 200	117 200
INDUSTRIAL	19 871	20 319	2 178 600	2 970 600
AGRICULTURAL	7 482	9 200	190 000	228 000
TOTAL	87 638	107 634	5 092 000	6 152 800

Source: Arthur Marwick, *Women At War 1914-1918*, London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977, p. 166, Table 3.

Table Five shows the comparative number of women in the workforce for New Zealand and Great Britain.

TABLE SIX

NEW ZEALAND	NZ FEMALE WORKFORCE (%)			GB FEMALE WORKFORCE (%)	
	1911	1916	1921	1914	1918
PROFESSIONAL	15	18	21	11	11
DOMESTIC	38	33	30	33	20
COMMERCIAL	15	17	19	10	15
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	0	2
INDUSTRIAL	23	20	19	43	48
AGRICULTURAL	9	10	9	4	4

Table Six shows the comparative distribution of female employees between the six main sectors of the workforce in New Zealand and Great Britain.⁹²

It can be seen from the tables above that the employment trends of women in Great Britain were significantly different from that of New Zealand women. Firstly, the number of women employed in Great Britain was much greater than the number of women employed in New

⁹² I was unable to find employment figures for British employment which corresponded exactly with the years and sector definitions that were used in the New Zealand censuses. I have chosen to use figures from Marwick as his key sectors were similar to those used in the New Zealand figures, however Marwick has not identified the source of his statistics, which does not allow me to examine the primary source and limits the extent to which I can utilise the information.

Zealand. Table Six allows comparisons to be made between women workers in New Zealand and Great Britain. In New Zealand, the largest sector of employment for women during the 1911-1921 period was the Domestic sector, whilst in Great Britain the greatest number of women were employed in the Industrial sector. This reflects the industrial nature of much of Great Britain's wartime production. The number of British women working in the Industrial sector increased by 5% between 1914 and 1918, so that it employed almost half of the female workforce by 1918. The increased prominence of war related industries such as textile manufacturing, and munitions production accounted for much of the wartime increase. By the end of the 1911-1921 period, the proportion of the British female workforce working within the Industrial sector was more than twice the comparative figure for New Zealand.

In Britain, the Domestic sector was the only sector in which the number of female workers declined during the 1914-1918 period, with the number of women working within the sector falling from 33% in 1914 to 20% in 1918. The 13% decline in this sector occurred as women moved into other areas of employment due to the dissatisfaction of women with working conditions in domestic work and the increased opportunities available in other sectors. The downward trend evident in the Domestic sector in Britain was also apparent in the employment figures for New Zealand women. In 1911, 38% of New Zealand women were employed in the Domestic sector, however by 1921 only 30% of women were working in the Domestic sector.

The Professional sector employed 11% of the female workforce in Great Britain in both 1914 and 1918. This was significantly less than the comparative figures for New Zealand, where the Professional sector employed 15% of the female workforce in 1911 and 21% in 1921, which was 10% higher than the comparative British figure for 1918. The Commercial sector employed a similar proportion of the female workforce in both New Zealand and Great Britain. In both countries, the proportion of the female workforce working within the Commercial sector rose during the war period, which reflects the gradual process of women entering work in more public sectors.

The Transport and Communication sector employed only a small proportion (2%) of the female working population in both Great Britain and New Zealand by the end of the period. However the proportion of women employed within the sector did increase during the period in both countries, which indicates that this sector was not immune from the expansion of women into new areas that occurred during the Great War.

The Agricultural sector employed just 4% of British women during the war period, whilst more than double that proportion were employed within the sector in New Zealand. This

may be a result of the agricultural nature of much of New Zealand during this period – a greater proportion of the population in New Zealand lived away from cities and large towns, which resulted in there being fewer women who had the opportunity to find work in other occupations.

Women in Britain constituted a greater percentage of the general workforce during the war years than women in New Zealand. The female proportion of the British workforce rose 10% during the war years, from 26% in 1914 to 36% in 1918, whilst the female proportion of the New Zealand workforce rose just 2% to reach 22% in 1916 and 1921.⁹³ The much larger increase that is visible in the British workforce can be attributed to the greater involvement that Great Britain had in the war – not only in manpower numbers but in the production of goods for the war – uniforms, food and weapons.

SUMMARY

During the 1911-1921 period, New Zealand women entered the workforce in increasing numbers. Trends reveal that women were drawn to the Professional and Commercial sectors, whilst the percentage of women employed in the Domestic and Industrial sectors declined. The Transport and Communication and the Agricultural sectors remained relatively static. The gender distribution of sectors also changed over the period, with females constituting a greater proportion of the workforce in all sectors apart from the Agricultural sector by 1921. The percentage of women within the New Zealand workforce rose from 20% in 1911 to 22% in 1916 and 1921. Whilst the percentage increase is not large, it does represent an increase of approximately 20 000 women between 1911 and 1921. There was an influx of females into employment, particularly into work in the public sphere, and the influx was of a permanent nature. The movement of women out of domestic work into work in more public settings helps explain the public perception of women's increasing numbers in the workforce. However, it must be noted that the great majority of New Zealand women were still classified as dependents in 1921.

When the employment patterns of New Zealand and British women are compared, distinct differences are apparent. In New Zealand, the sectors that expanded its share of the female labour market during the 1911-1921 period were the Professional and Commercial sectors, whilst in Great Britain, the Industrial and Commercial sectors had the greatest increase in the number of female employees. By 1921, 40% of the New Zealand female workforce was employed in either the Professional or Commercial sectors – occupations perceived to be white collar, whilst in Britain just 25% of women were employed in the Professional and

⁹³ See Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munitions Workers in the Great War*, California: University of California Press, 1994, p. 18; for New Zealand figures see Table Three, p. 17.

Commercial sectors. These trends indicate that the expansion of women's employment opportunities in New Zealand women tended to be in white collar/semi-professional occupations, and were often temporary positions. In Britain, job opportunities for women were often factory work of a working class nature. In both countries, the proportion of the female workforce working in the Domestic sector declined significantly, however the Domestic sector was still the largest employer of women in both countries in the immediate post-war period. The governments of both New Zealand and Britain encouraged women to leave the workforce after the war, however the British government was more aggressive in its post-war measures. This may be attributed to the working class nature of the majority of jobs held by women, and the desire of the British government to prevent a large group of disaffected unemployed working class males from forming.

CHAPTER TWO

GLOBAL WAR: WORK AND GENDERED LIMITATIONS

Chapter One examined the employment trends of New Zealand women as revealed in the census findings of 1911, 1916 and 1921, and compared the findings with statistics pertaining to women in the workforce in Great Britain in Chapter One. Having determined the number of women in the workforce, this chapter will focus on why increased numbers of women came to enter the workforce during this period, how the women were treated and how their experiences led them to demand equal pay, greater representation in public offices such as judicial and municipal roles, and political representation. I will also examine the problems faced by British women as they too entered the workforce in greater numbers. I will first examine the increasing number of women in urban workplaces, especially the professional sector. As the number of men leaving the workforce for military service increased, the Government was forced to address the issue of women in employment. The Women's National Reserve was formed to provide a body of workers to the Government that could be used for any type of war work. The National Efficiency Board was formed by the Government to ensure that New Zealand's labour force was being utilised to its full capacity. It investigated the most efficient way that New Zealand could maintain production, and amongst its recommendations was the greater use of women in the workforce.

Employment opportunities for women in New Zealand

The employment of women during the Great War both altered the nature of the workforce and acted as a catalyst for separate, yet interconnected, debates on women's role in society and labour issues. An examination of both the *Maoriland Worker (MW)* and the *Evening Post (EP)* indicates that employment issues were in the public sphere during the war years and newspapers provided a forum for this.⁹⁴ McLeod asserts that the 'stance taken by the press was crucial in sanctioning the legitimacy' of women working in new occupations.⁹⁵ Both of these newspapers seem to have given a qualified legitimacy to women working during the 1914-1918 period. McLeod's assertion can therefore be supported to some extent, however not all commentary on women's participation in the workforce was positive. Some statements were ambivalent, praising women's contributions whilst also expressing concern that wages would drop due to the entry of women into the workforce on a greater scale. The debate surrounding women's place in the New Zealand workforce was connected to wider agitation regarding labour issues, which dated from the late nineteenth century.

⁹⁴ The editor of the Women's page in the *MW* stated that 'short letters on subjects of interest to women' and 'reports of women's societies' would be 'gladly received' for publication, see *MW*, February 14, 1917, p. 7.

⁹⁵ McLeod, p. 84.

In December 1914, the *Evening Post* ran an article from the *London Daily Mail* which detailed Germany's answer to the labour shortage caused by the war. The article noted that the 'calling up of every available man in Germany ... has imposed on the German woman the burden of carrying out many duties which in normal times are performed by the men.'⁹⁶ The German government was described as having:

an extremely clear idea of utilising every scrap of human force at its disposal, ... [and had] mapped out a much more important programme for the weaker sex ... than the mere manufacture of "woollies" for the troops. Wherever men can be conveniently spared women are now being employed.⁹⁷

Amongst the examples given were female tramway-conductors, accountants and cashiers.⁹⁸ It was implied in the article that Germany was using all available resources in an effort to win the war, and thus if the Allies were to beat the German forces, they too must use every means available to them, including the use of women in industry.⁹⁹ By 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* noted that in the 'banking and mercantile institutions we everywhere see women being employed to do the work hitherto done by men; the same is true in a large number of our industries and professions.'¹⁰⁰ This observation reflects the statistical findings of Chapter One, in which the key sectors of the labour market to experience a major influx of female workers during the 1914-1918 period were commercial and professional orientated.

The entrance of women into the workforce during wartime was contrary to pre-war ideals, which resulted in the replacement of men by women in jobs not always being received favourably by society.¹⁰¹ Schools taught girls traditionally "feminine" subjects, and Tennant maintains that the 'interests of the individual girls were ... subjugated to the ideal of State preservation, and any resistance eliminated by a stiff dose of domestic science in her formative years.'¹⁰² In July 1914, the Minister of Education was asked in Parliament whether 'a system of compulsory training in domestic science' should be instituted in public schools for

⁹⁶ *London Daily Mail*, October 18, 1914, reported in *EP*, December 21, 1914, p. 9.

⁹⁷ *London Daily Mail*, October 18, 1914, reported in *EP*, December 21, 1914, p. 9.

⁹⁸ *London Daily Mail*, October 18, 1914, reported in *EP*, December 21, 1914, p. 9.

⁹⁹ See Celia Briar, *Working For Women? Gendered Work and Welfare Policies in Twentieth-Century Britain*, London: UCL Press, 1997, p. 31 for further details of British concern at the German practice using women to free up greater numbers of men for the military.

¹⁰⁰ *MW*, June 20, 1917, p. 7. The employment of women in banks was a direct result of the war – Simich notes that before the war, there were no female employees in banks, see Simich, p. 9. By June 1917 there were 278 women employed in clerical positions in banks, although McLeod notes that these women were not allowed to serve customers, presumably because contact with males was not considered desirable, see McLeod, pp. 87, 89. Mathieson states that the Bank of New Zealand justified the employment of women in 1915 by stating that large numbers of women were employed in banks in the United States, Canada and France and 'had given entire satisfaction', see K.H. Mathieson, 'A Study of Auckland Society in the First Year of the Great War: August 1914-August 1915', MA Research Essay in History, University of Auckland, 1979, p. 24. Women also replaced male clerks in banks in Britain, undertaking tasks such as the sorting and classifying of cheques and completing ledger entries, see *New Zealand Farmer*, September 1915, p. 1231.

¹⁰¹ See *MW*, May 30, 1917, p. 8 for a report of two wagon-driving women in Wairoa and the implied criticism of women doing a job which 'only the most robust of the male sex should undertake'.

¹⁰² Margaret Tennant, 'Matrons with a Mission: Women's Organisations in New Zealand 1893-1915', MA Thesis in History, Massey University, 1976, p. 117.

female pupils, 'so that they may fit themselves for their future responsibilities in the home[,] in the same manner as the lads of the Dominion have to prepare themselves for their future responsibilities as citizens.'¹⁰³ The Minister replied that the previous syllabus issued in December 1913 had suggested that where practical, 'there should be a course of home science for girls'.¹⁰⁴ The syllabus stated that the course 'should have reference to the elementary facts and principles underlying the efficient management of a home.'¹⁰⁵ The stance taken by the Government seems to indicate that before the Great War, the increased number of women entering employment was never seen as a long term addition to the labour force, and thus there was no need to teach girls any skills other than those of a domestic nature.

Newspapers also voiced concerns over the extent to which women were entering the workforce. In 1915, the *Maoriland Worker* ran an article detailing the current employment situation in New Zealand. The article stated that there had been suggestions that women should replace men in jobs such as tramway conductors, however, the paper noted that 'there is no real need for this work to be done by women. There are plenty of men available for it.'¹⁰⁶ The article also declared that this suggestion was 'mainly the outcome of the desire of certain enthusiastic young flappers to run round in tram-conductors' caps with a Union Jack round their waist.'¹⁰⁷ The comment that there were still men who were not currently employed indicates that not all eligible men had yet signed up, however once conscription was introduced in 1916 there would have been fewer men unemployed as the proportion of men neither employed in an essential industry nor engaged in military service significantly declined.¹⁰⁸ That there were plenty of men available for work may also indicate that the popular belief that most of New Zealand's available men rushed to enlist once war was declared may not reflect reality, and that some men did not at first feel obligated to join in the Empire's fight.¹⁰⁹ Reluctance for women to enter the work force may also be seen as a self-protective response to safeguard the jobs of male workers.¹¹⁰ Some employers discretely discriminated against eligible men who had not yet enlisted. The Public Service Commissioner noted in his 1916 Annual Report that 'during the present crisis applications will

¹⁰³ Mr Myers to Mr Allen, *NZPD*, Vol. 168, July 10, 1914, p. 515.

¹⁰⁴ Mr Allen, *NZPD*, Vol. 168, July 10, 1914, p. 515.

¹⁰⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 168, July 10, 1914, p. 515.

¹⁰⁶ *MW*, November 10, 1915, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ *MW*, November 10, 1915, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ Martin asserts that the outbreak of war, and the consequent surge in work for manufacturing industries due to the equipping of the Expeditionary Forces meant that unemployment was 'quickly eliminated' and a surplus of labour 'rapidly changed' to a shortage that lasted until 1921, see Martin, pp. 123-24.

¹⁰⁹ Belich notes that before October 1915, recruits had 'little idea' of what they were volunteering for, and after the 'initial honeymoon of recruiting, resistance to both volunteering and conscription was greater than legend allows', see Belich, pp. 98-9.

¹¹⁰ Harrison and Nolan, p. 268.

not be considered from single men eligible for military service.¹¹¹ The 1917-18 Annual Report for the Board of Agriculture noted that cheese factories and dairy companies 'were having a great difficulty in filling vacancies, which was now being [dealt with] ... by the employment of boys under military age and men unfit for military service with no experience.'¹¹²

In New Zealand, the predominant area in which women tended to replace men was in clerical work.¹¹³ Olssen maintains that women 'exploit[ed]' the job opportunities created by the 'absence of thousands of young men' and contends that at the time it was 'far from apparent that [the women] ... would leave when the young men came home'.¹¹⁴ This suggests that women entered this sector with a confidence that the war had instigated permanent change in employment patterns and gender discrimination. Whilst it is probable that women were aware of the increased employment opportunities that arose due to the absence of a significant proportion of the male workforce, I am not sure that women's position in employment was so secure that they could exploit the situation, as Olssen has contended. I have found very little evidence of women refusing to work unless certain conditions were met – whilst women campaigned for improved working conditions and higher wages, there does not seem to be widespread evidence of women refusing to work under the existing conditions.

McLeod notes that it was the 'simultaneous development' of two factors which led to the large increase in the clerical sector.¹¹⁵ Firstly, it was due to the large number of men who left to join in New Zealand's war effort, and secondly it was the 'creation of new [Government] services and Department branches' that were set up to better manage New Zealand's war

¹¹¹ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916 Vol. II, H-14, p. 11.

¹¹² 1917-1918 Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 2. See also Dairy Division Report, 1916-1917 Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1917, Vol. II, H-29, p. 30, where it was noted that in particular, skilled dairy factory employees were scarce, and that it had been 'extremely difficult to fill these vacancies'. Labour shortages were also noted in the dairying and horticultural sectors, see the Dairy Division Report, 1916-1917 Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1917, Vol. II, H-29, p. 30; Horticultural Division Report, 1918-1919 Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1919, Vol. II, H-29, p. 29.

¹¹³ Hughes notes that women were accepted more easily into professions where the work 'can be viewed as an extension of women's traditional and approved role', see Beryl Hughes, 'Women and the Professions in New Zealand', in Bunkle and Hughes (eds), *Women in New Zealand Society*, p. 120. Wilson notes that women were considered suitable for clerical work due to their 'patience and docility, their gentility, accuracy and attention to detail, ... [and] their better manners.' See R. Guerriero Wilson, 'Women's Work in Offices and the Preservation of Men's "Breadwinning" Jobs in Early Twentieth-Century Glasgow', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2001, p. 463.

¹¹⁴ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', pp. 83, 86. The use of the term 'exploit' indicates Olssen's belief that women had strong control over the conditions under which they entered the workforce, which is perhaps an overstatement given the demands made by both the Government and the press.

¹¹⁵ McLeod, p. 87.

effort.¹¹⁶ Olssen notes that the absence of trade unions in this sector meant that that it was harder for employers to 'resist market demand' and use lower-priced female labour.¹¹⁷ Women had been employed in Government branches before the war, however Martin maintains that there had been a decline in the number of women within the public service, and suggests that the death of Seddon in 1906 had contributed to this, as he had advocated employing females in the public service from 1897.¹¹⁸ Female employees in the public service worked under inferior conditions to their male counterparts due to the findings of the 1912 Hunt Commission.¹¹⁹ This royal commission had investigated the 'working[s] of ... various unclassified Departments of the Public Service with a view to ... adopting such methods as will increase the efficiency of the Service'.¹²⁰ The Commission had found that women were 'good steady workers, [however] they [could not] ... stand the strain of a rush or pressure of work in the same way that men [could], ... and we think therefore that female officers should be paid at a reduced rate'.¹²¹ The report also predicted that it 'would probably be found that [women] ... would not rise so high in the Service as the male officers. Except, perhaps, in exceptional cases, the bulk of them would remain in the lower classes of the Service'.¹²² Nicholls contends that this attitude that women should receive lower rates of pay and less responsibility than men 'remained entrenched' for decades after the war, despite women subsequently proving that they could work competently under pressure.¹²³

In 1916, the Annual Report of the Public Service Commission mentioned the employment of women in a separate section - the first time a specific space had been allocated to discussing women's employment. The report noted that since the war began, the employment of women 'ha[d] assumed a new aspect, and Departments which prior to the war objected to female officers [we]re now utilizing[sic] women for such work as assisting auditors, ledger work, and other minor accounting and clerical work'.¹²⁴ At this stage of the war, the Public Service Commission had employed 513 women to 'fill [the] places of male officers absent

¹¹⁶ McLeod, p. 87.

¹¹⁷ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 83.

¹¹⁸ Martin, f.n. 48, p. 403. Brown contends that in the early twentieth century, technical high schools provided domestic courses exclusively for girls, however these 'consistently lacked popularity', and girls preferred to take commercial courses so that they could find work as typists, see Brown, p. 74.

¹¹⁹ Nicholls asserts that few women worked in the civil service before 1912, see Roberta Nicholls, 'The PSC and the Equal Pay Campaign', in Alan Henderson, *The Quest for Efficiency: The Origins of the State Services Commission*, Wellington: GP Print Ltd., 1990, p. 248.

¹²⁰ Hunt Report, 1912, quoted in Henderson, p. 45.

¹²¹ Hunt Report, 1912, quoted in Nicholls, 'The PSC and the Equal Pay Campaign', p. 247. See also Brown, p. 57.

¹²² Hunt Report, 1912, quoted in Nicholls, 'The PSC and the Equal Pay Campaign', p. 247. Brown notes that existing stereotypes, which indicated that women were not as capable as men, resulted in women office workers being 'confined to their own grades and tasks', see Brown, p. 178.

¹²³ Nicholls, 'The PSC and the Equal Pay Campaign', pp. 247-8. In 1914 the Public Service Commissioner had introduced lower maximum salaries for women. This was lifted briefly in 1919, before being reapplied in 1922. Equal pay was 'not fully phased in' until 1963, see Harrison and Nolan, p. 280.

¹²⁴ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11. See also Brown, p. 58.

with the Expeditionary Forces' and an additional 125 to fill 'new positions in connection with the Defence and other Departments.'¹²⁵ The Defence Department employed 28 women in Base Records, where it was noted that the 'fairly well educated women rapidly learn[t] to provide good service' and the Pay Branch employed 72 'experienced women'.¹²⁶ Variations in the level of previous experience and training possessed by the female employees indicate that the need for labour meant that unskilled workers were sometimes employed. It may have also been an economic measure on the part of the Government, since unskilled workers could legitimately be paid less. It was also decided in 1916 to 'throw open the Public Service Examinations to girls' – a courtesy which had been taken away in 1912.¹²⁷ The reason for allowing girls to sit the exam was a 'result of the conditions existing' at the time, presumably the wartime situation and military obligations which were eroding the number of males who were potential employees of the Public Service Department.¹²⁸ In 1917, the Public Service Department had 1 890 positions to be filled, and it was only through the use of female labour to a great extent that such departments were able to function at full capacity.¹²⁹ The dearth of male labour meant that women were being employed in areas which had not previously been available to them. In 1917, the Post and Telegraph Department operated classes for the 'tuition of young women in telegraphy' in the four main centres.¹³⁰ It was reported that the 'result has been entirely satisfactory', and by the end of June, 113 women had already completed the course and 'taken up practical work in telegraph-offices'.¹³¹ In 1918, the Labour Party campaigned for 'perfect equality between the sexes in every department of public life', and by March 1918, the Public Service Department employed 4 153 women, of

¹²⁵ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11.

¹²⁶ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11. These women seem to have had a certain level of education, which may indicate they were likely to have been middle class women, which may have aided the extent to which their presence was accepted by employers. Curiously, the Railway Department employed women as car-cleaners, an occupation which may have been seen as an extension of domestic work, and it was stated that these women were 'employed under war conditions'. See *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 17, 1919, p. 593.

¹²⁶ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11.

¹²⁷ 1916 Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11. Girls had been banned under a stipulation of the 1912 Public Service Act. The WCTU had agitated for girls 'not [to] be banned from sitting the entrance examinations', see *White Ribbon*, Vol. 21 no. 248, September 1915, p. 9.

¹²⁸ 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. 11, H-14, p. 11. This consideration was once again taken away in 1921, when the Clerical Division was closed to women. Instead, the 'exclusively female clerical position of "office assistant" was created', see Brown, p. 33; Harrison and Nolan, p. 280. When the Exam was closed to girls, the Public Service Junior and Senior Typing examinations were introduced, which were solely for girls, see Brown, p. 177. This placed distinct limitations upon the type of office work which girls could undertake.

¹²⁹ McLeod, p. 87.

¹³⁰ 1917 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1917, Vol. II, H-14, p. 11.

¹³¹ 1917 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1917, Vol. II, H-14, p. 11. This helps to explain the increase in the proportion of women working within the Transport and Communication sector during the 1911-1921 period. The proportion of the female workforce working within this sector doubled from 1% in 1911 to 2% in both 1916 and 1921, see Table One, p. 16.

which 2 079 (50%) occupied permanent positions as officers.¹³² Women constituted 16% of all permanent officers working for the Public Service Department.¹³³ Before the war, the Department had employed 1 826 women, so women had far greater access to employment in this area due to the labour shortage caused by the war.¹³⁴ The 1918 Annual Report declared that whilst there were:

many positions in the Public Service which, for good reasons, cannot be filled by women, the Commissioners record that women are now satisfactorily performing work which Departments would have hesitated to entrust to them before the war. The zeal, diligence, and good conduct of the large number of women, of whom the greater proportion had no office experience before joining the Service, merits praise.¹³⁵

Once again the lack of training of many female employees is noted, reflecting the census statistics which showed an influx of women entering the workforce, and in particular the Professional and Commercial sectors, for the first time during the 1914-1918 period.

Although there was a stream of women into the clerical workforce during the war, the extent to which they could progress within their field was limited. The temporary nature of many jobs offered to women meant that employers did not take time to train women to a level which could lead to promotion.¹³⁶ In 1918 the Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner noted that the 'system of ... recruiting ... temporary employees [during the war years] ... ha[d] avoided many difficulties and kept expenditure to a minimum.'¹³⁷ This statement reveals that by assigning a particular job a temporary status, a lower pay rate could be designated for it. Roth maintains that as soon as the war was over, women that had been employed on a temporary basis were dismissed, and women on the regular staff who 'comprised almost a fifth of the total staff, were relegated to the bottom of the ladder.'¹³⁸ Women were also often limited by the type of work they carried out. Certain aspects of clerical work, such as taking shorthand and routine clerical work, were considered "more suitable" for women than more specialised areas such as accounting.¹³⁹ Brown maintains that the New Zealand Public Service was 'reflect[ing] the concerns of New Zealand

¹³² Nolan, p. 153; 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-14, pp. 2, 10. In Britain, the Civil Service took on an additional 163 000 women during the war, see Ross Davies, *Women and Work*, London: Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd., 1975, p. 84.

¹³³ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 10.

¹³⁴ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 2. This increase helps to explain the 1911-1916 increase shown in the census figures for the Professional sector of the workforce which was discussed in Chapter One.

¹³⁵ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 2.

¹³⁶ The Department of Labour conducted interviews with many of its employees in early 1919, and several female employees were described as working in the absence of male employees, see Reports on Staff Members, 1919, L9 - Department of Labour records, Staffing 1906-31, National Archives.

¹³⁷ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 2.

¹³⁸ H. Roth, *Remedy For Present Evils: A History of the New Zealand Public Service Association from 1890*, Wellington: New Zealand Public Service Association, 1987, p. 52.

¹³⁹ McLeod, p. 89.

society when it restricted the employment of women to particular grades and tasks.¹⁴⁰ Placing restrictions on the type of work that women could undertake also helped to protect male employees from female competition. King notes that there 'was a "near-universal maxim" at this time that women could not hold authority over men, [which] ... further limited potential advancement in almost any job.'¹⁴¹ Brown asserts that these restrictions also helped to enforce the notion that office employment for women was 'of a limited nature', and that marriage was 'the ultimate destination for women workers.'¹⁴²

The official records of the Public Service appear to provide additional evidence that the wartime employment of women was seen largely as a temporary measure. In 1915 the *Public Service Journal* noted that there was debate whether female typists who had reached their maximum salary as typists, should be allowed to sit 'certain examinations [after which time] their applications for clerical positions [would] ... be entertained'.¹⁴³ The Journal noted that some typists had been told that the clerical positions were open to them, whilst others who had 'passed the specified examinations, [had still] been unable to obtain clerical positions'.¹⁴⁴ In 1918 the Public Service Department was 'suffering from a lack of short-hand writers' and it was noted that:

it is apparently difficult to induce boys to take up the study of this useful art. Whilst there are many women in the Public Service whose skill is of a high order, there are positions to which, for known reasons, it is not desirable to appoint women.¹⁴⁵

The 'known reasons' for not allowing women to enter some positions are not elaborated upon. Olssen maintains that 'segmented labour markets were not necessarily an effective method of male domination' in the workplace, as from the time of the Great War onwards, these markets 'often created opportunities for women', however this statement does not seem valid, as the restrictions on women in employment were constant through the period.¹⁴⁶ Concern had been voiced by the Public Service Association during the war regarding the pay inequality of its members. The Association, first formed in 1913, had first declared that 'female employees of equal competence with male employees and doing similar work shall receive equal treatment as to equal pay and privileges.'¹⁴⁷ Female officers in the clerical

¹⁴⁰ Brown, p. 59. Despite the limitations placed on women's employment within the Public Service, Roth maintains that women 'had gained some measure of equality during the war', see Roth, *Trade Unions*, p. 129.

¹⁴¹ King, p. 268.

¹⁴² Brown, p. 59.

¹⁴³ *Public Service Journal*, January 20, 1915, p. 23. The Journal was the mouthpiece of the Public Service Association. See Corner's book for further information - Margaret Corner, *No Easy Victory: Towards Equal Pay for Women in the Government Service 1890-1960*, Upper Hutt: New Zealand Public Service Association, 1988, p. 14.

¹⁴⁴ *Public Service Journal*, January 20, 1915, p. 23.

¹⁴⁵ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 12.

¹⁴⁶ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 80.

¹⁴⁷ Draft of the History of the Public Service Equal Pay Campaign book by Margaret Corner, 94-106-16/10, Turnbull Library, p. 7.

division were prohibited from receiving a salary of more than £220, and in July 1915, the Association 'advocated that equal pay be given for equal work irrespective of sex'.¹⁴⁸ However, the Association believed that Public Service Commission had 'apparently failed to recognise the justice of the Association's claim'.¹⁴⁹ The Association had sought legal advice on the matter and maintained that the Commissioner had 'no power to fix a separate scale of salaries for one sex The whole system [should be] ... one of promotion on merit'.¹⁵⁰ The lawyer declared that the pay scale should be fixed according to 'the character and importance of the work performed by ... each officer Sex is not a test except so far as it may relate to the fitness of the individual'.¹⁵¹ Despite these findings, it seems that the majority of promotions within the Public Service during this period did take gender into consideration. Brown maintains that in the post-war period, the Public Service Commissioner showed a 'determination to lessen the number of female employees'.¹⁵²

Although the majority of the new occupations that were opened up to New Zealand women during the war were an extension of pre-war jobs, some new areas of employment were opened up. For example, there is evidence that women were employed in the production of ammunition. In a letter from the Colonial Ammunition Company regarding its Military Service Board classification, it was noted that 'at the present time [January 1918] we have only one man making shot and he is overage [for military service]. He is assisted in the manufacture by women labour'.¹⁵³ The letter also asserts that the company believed that it was 'supplying all Shot required by the Trade throughout New Zealand'.¹⁵⁴ Whilst British women were employed in large numbers in munitions factories, the sheer multitude of factories in Britain made this a necessity.¹⁵⁵ In contrast to this, New Zealand seems to have only had one munition factory, which could have been staffed solely by men if the work was not considered suitable for women. The employment of just one male indicates that the job was not considered too "masculine" or unsuitable for women.

New Zealand women also entered factory work in increasing numbers and, like Britain, the wages received by these women were constantly scrutinised in an attempt to prevent

¹⁴⁸ *Public Service Journal*, July 20, 1915, p. iii.

¹⁴⁹ *Public Service Journal*, July 20, 1915 p. iii.

¹⁵⁰ *Public Service Journal*, July 20, 1915, p. iii.

¹⁵¹ *Public Service Journal*, November 20, 1915, p. 44.

¹⁵² Brown, p. 34. In the inter-war period, females constituted just 5% of public service employees, which was one of the 'lowest [rates] among Western countries', see Harrison and Nolan, p. 280.

¹⁵³ Letter from the Colonial Ammunition Company Ltd. to the Prime Minister, January 1918, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917-1918, Vol. 2, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526.

¹⁵⁴ Letter from the Colonial Ammunition Company Ltd. to the Prime Minister, January 1918, National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917-1918, Vol. 2, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526.

¹⁵⁵ There were approximately 1 000 000 British women employed in munitions work during the Great War, see Woollacott, p. 18.

"sweating" from occurring.¹⁵⁶ Working conditions in New Zealand factories had improved after the 1890 Sweating Commission, however concern was still present during the war. In 1915 the *Maoriland Worker* reported that 60 'girls' from the Hannah's shoe factory in Wellington had walked out due to their grievances not being addressed. The women claimed that methods were being implemented to turn them into 'human machines'.¹⁵⁷ They also claimed that all the small privileges that they had previously enjoyed were being cut out. However, the *Maoriland Worker* noted that the 'Hannah's girls [had] score[d] a victory', so their actions resulted in their concerns being dealt with.¹⁵⁸ In 1916, Dr Thacker, the Member of Parliament for Christchurch East, claimed that due to the wartime manufacturing demand, large contractors had taken large contracts which they couldn't fulfil, so they sublet their work to 'sweating shops'.¹⁵⁹ Dr Thacker claimed that a girl working in a 'sweating factory' in Christchurch East received only 3s 3d for a dozen soldiers shirts, and the girl had told him that other such sweat shops existed. He declared that 'it was a gross shame that the female workers should be treated this way.' Dr Thacker also declared that wives of some New Zealand soldiers were not receiving adequate money, and thus they 'had to go into these sweating shops and make what his informant called "scamped goods"'.¹⁶⁰ The informant stated that her boss had directed her to 'scamp the work, to get it done.' Dr Thacker declared that it 'was a gross shame that the female workers ... [were] treated this way'.¹⁶¹ In 1918 concerns were again raised with regard to the possibility of sweating occurring in some New Zealand workplaces. The Prime Minister was asked to 'make inquiries as to whether "sweating" had been going on in some of the tailoring-establishments'.¹⁶² The Prime Minister replied that a report had been commissioned from the Labour Department regarding this matter, however the report does not appear to have been made public.¹⁶³ In 1919 the Auckland branch of the National Council of Women was concerned about the matter, and made a request to the Government that a Commission of Inquiry be made into the clothing industry and the wages and prices charged to the public.¹⁶⁴

Although the employment of increased numbers of women may have been temporary, it did have some important consequences. Women who entered the workplace for the first time during the Great War received an income of their own, which was a new experience for many

¹⁵⁶ Whilst the proportion of employed women working within the Industrial sector declined during the 1911-1921 period, the gender ratio within the sector did change slightly, resulting in women constituting a greater proportion of the sector workforce. In 1911 women constituted 15% of the Industrial workforce, in 1916 and 1921 this rose to 17%, see Table Three, p. 17.

¹⁵⁷ *MW*, November 24, 1915, p. 5.

¹⁵⁸ *MW*, November 24, 1915, p. 5.

¹⁵⁹ *NZPD*, Vol. 176, June 27, 1916, p. 206.

¹⁶⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 176, June 27, 1916, p. 206.

¹⁶¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 176, June 27, 1916, p. 206.

¹⁶² Mr Glover, *NZPD*, Vol. 182, April 15, 1918, pp. 264-5.

¹⁶³ Mr Massey, *NZPD*, Vol. 182, April 15, 1918, p. 265.

¹⁶⁴ Auckland Branch of the NCW '20 Years of Community Betterment 1918-1938', n.d., Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-1371-404, p. 8.

of them. Financial independence allowed women to have an 'increased autonomy' over their affairs, and enabled them to 'seek more education and attack yet further stereotypes of female incompetence or inadequacy.'¹⁶⁵

Another effect of the opening up of some areas of work for women was that women could move out of what many women saw as less desirable areas of traditional employment, such as domestic work. As has been shown in Chapter One, the number of women working within the domestic sector declined significantly between 1911 and 1921. This decline was noticeable, and was considered severe enough in 1915 for the North Canterbury Farmers' Union to consider and approve a scheme involving the importation of British soldiers' widows for the purpose of working as domestic servants.¹⁶⁶ The Union resolved to contact the Immigration Department to suggest assisted passages. It is not known whether the scheme was ever implemented.¹⁶⁷ In 1919, it was suggested in Parliament that in order to deal with 'the great shortage of domestic servants' it would be beneficial to 'arrange for regular batches of domestic servants [to be on] ... each boat leaving England for New Zealand.'¹⁶⁸ The domestic employment situation was described as being 'so acute that a number of domestic servants should be imported at the earliest possible moment.'¹⁶⁹ The Prime Minister replied that the matter would be addressed in time, however large scale immigration would not be possible until all of the soldiers and New Zealand citizens currently waiting to come home had returned.¹⁷⁰

Comparisons with Britain

Trends in New Zealand mirrored, to some degree, what was happening in Britain, where the war also led to increased job opportunities for women, however this was on a much larger scale than was experienced by New Zealand women.¹⁷¹ In July 1914, women in Britain

¹⁶⁵ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendered Work', p. 90. This link between further education and improved working opportunities was strengthened due to women's increased employment opportunities during the war. Toynbee notes that until the early 1900s, education was not considered 'the gateway to a career for women, but more as a desirable attribute of a middle-class wife', see Clare Toynbee, *Her Work and His: Family, Kin and Community in New Zealand 1900-1930*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1995, p. 23. The WCTU believed that education was 'the hope of women's suffrage', see *White Ribbon*, Vol. 19 no. 224, February 1914, p. 1.

¹⁶⁶ *New Zealand Farmer*, September 1915, p. 1096.

¹⁶⁷ *New Zealand Farmer*, September 1915, p. 1096.

¹⁶⁸ Mr Myers to Mr Massey, *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 17, 1919, p. 483.

¹⁶⁹ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 17, 1919, p. 483. A similar situation existed in Britain, where the large shortage of domestic servants was seen as an 'extremely serious problem', see Miriam Glucksmann, *Women Assemble: Women Workers and the New Industries in Inter-War Britain*, London: Routledge, 1990, p. 8.

¹⁷⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 17, 1919, p. 483.

¹⁷¹ The First World War is viewed by many historians as being the first "total war" which depended upon a 'total mobilization[sic] of national resources' and the British Government had to concede that 'only the mass participation of women made efficient war-making possible', see David Mitchell, *Women on the Warpath: The Story of the Women of the First World War*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1966, p. 377. In July 1914 there were 3 280 000 women in employment, and by November 1918 this figure had risen to 4 950 000, see Sidney Pollard, *The Development of the British Economy 1914-1980*, 3rd ed., London:

comprised 26% of the workforce, a figure which increased significantly throughout the war, and had reached 36% in November 1918.¹⁷² The early part of the war led to expansion within clerical and commercial work for women, and Marwick claims that it was not until later in the war that women expanded into other industries.¹⁷³ Thom notes that very few women undertook work that was traditionally considered to be of an "unsuitable" nature, and those who undertook heavy outdoor work 'were explicitly there for the duration [of the war] only.'¹⁷⁴ Pollard contends that women's employment in shop and office work, hotels, theatres and some public transport occupations increased to such an extent that these sectors 'permanently' became 'female preserves'.¹⁷⁵

Women were used immediately as substitutes for men, and Briar contends that this practice was 'actively promoted by the State.'¹⁷⁶ Briar also maintains that women were not interchangeable substitutes, but were considered inferior substitutes. She attributes the lower rate of pay given to women, the way that women were 'purposely kept in subordinate positions to men in occupational hierarchies' and the lack of consultation of women in matters affecting them to be evidence of this assumed inferiority.¹⁷⁷ Although women may have been portrayed as directly replacing men, they were not extended the same considerations that were given to and expected from men. DeGroot notes that women were seen as 'cheap, easily exploitable labour ... possessing very little value in their own right.'¹⁷⁸

In Britain, the practice of dilution was also common during the Great War.¹⁷⁹ Dilution consisted of men's jobs being 'altered[,] ... broken down, and adapted to a less trained workforce'.¹⁸⁰ Dilution was not totally acceptable to all women, since it benefited men who

Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1983, p. 42. It must be noted that even in 1918 the majority of British women were still at home, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 12.

¹⁷² Woollacott, p. 18. The figure was probably higher than 36% during the war, as the process of laying off women munitions workers began in 1917, see Woollacott, p. 17.

¹⁷³ Marwick, p. 48. See also Deborah Thom, *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: Women Workers in World War One*, London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1998, p. 34. Thom notes that at first it was skilled men's work being done by women, but once conscription was introduced in 1916, women began replacing unskilled or semi-skilled men as more men left for military involvement, see Thom, p. 58. In New Zealand, Olssen maintains that men in skilled trades which were 'undergoing a shift from workshop to factory ... were especially anxious to prevent women from expanding their traditional positions in the industry as mechanisation diluted male skill', see Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendered Work', pp. 68-69.

¹⁷⁴ Thom, p. 31.

¹⁷⁵ Pollard, p. 42. DeGroot maintains that office and shop work had traditionally been designated low status jobs for men, and thus women's advancement in these occupations did not really indicate a significant change, see Gerard A. DeGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War*, Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd., 1996, p. 265.

¹⁷⁶ Briar, p. 30.

¹⁷⁷ Briar, p. 46.

¹⁷⁸ DeGroot, p. 139.

¹⁷⁹ Dilution does not seem to have been a common practice in New Zealand – Olssen notes that unions 'borrowed the tactics used in Britain to contain the threat that dilution would allow less skilled women (or men) to supplant them.' See Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendered Work', p. 69.

¹⁸⁰ Briar, p. 33. See also A. Susan Williams, *Women and War*, Hove: Wayland (Publishers) Ltd., 1989, p. 16. Clarsen notes that dilution 'signalled post-war changes to work practices, by permanently

remained in the industry as it 'upgraded their skills and turned them into supervisors.'¹⁸¹ Mary Macarthur, member of the Independent Labour Party, declared that although dilution was officially introduced to increase production, she believed that the process had been 'used to regiment the workers and cheapen labour.'¹⁸² Vertical sex segregation was practiced, through the promotion of semi-skilled men for skilled jobs. Pollard notes that by early 1915, the only 'substantial reserve of labour' which had not yet been utilised was women.¹⁸³ The replacement workers tended to be drawn from the working classes - particularly those who had previously been domestic servants, those who had been employed in industries that had suffered an economic downturn due to the war, and married women - who either returned to work or stayed on after their marriage, which had not been a regular occurrence prior to the war.¹⁸⁴ Married women were often forced to work for economic reasons, in order to support their families.¹⁸⁵ However, it does not appear that married women were encouraged to work - in 1916 *The Times* published an article declaring that 'it would be deplorable if ... married women ... abandon[ed] their homes for industrial work. If their incursion into skilled labour is to be permanent, then we have paid infinitely too high for any [resulting] advantage'.¹⁸⁶ In Britain, women were used as replacement workers in the industrial sector, which is in contrast to the pattern in New Zealand, where women entered the professional and commercial sectors during the war. In both countries there seems to have been an ambivalent attitude towards women working - whilst it was not totally acceptable for women to permanently replace men in positions, women were exploited as a cheaper form of labour than men.

In order to best utilise the female workforce, in 1915 the British Government set up a Central Committee on Women's Employment, whose function was to develop schemes for the

reducing the number of men who would be classified as skilled, and by increasing work intensification', see Georgine Clarsen, "'A Fine University for Women Engineers': A Scottish munitions factory in World War I", in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2003, p. 338.

¹⁸¹ Clarsen, p. 338. Clarsen notes that dilution was not seen as a positive solution to the labour shortage, and maintains that 'both sides - labour and management - firmly believed that the other had gained the best of the bargain', see Clarsen, p. 338.

¹⁸² Quoted in Thom, p. 66. Macarthur has been described as being responsible for 'stir[ing] Britain's conscience to the point where the first glimmerings of a state welfare system became ...inevitable', see Mitchell, p. 255.

¹⁸³ Pollard, p. 41.

¹⁸⁴ Braybon asserts that in Britain, married women comprised up to 40% of working women during the war years, cited in Owen, pp. 21-2. Before the outbreak of war, women had traditionally been "meantime" workers, working for the period between leaving school and marriage. The term was later used by Mary Macarthur to describe women war workers - women who were working in the "meantime" until the war was over, see Thom, p. 57. The term seems to indicate an awareness of the temporary nature of much war work. Pugh contends that the war did not change the "meantime" nature of women's employment, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 22.

¹⁸⁵ This seems to be in contrast to New Zealand, where the proportion of married women in the workforce did not greatly increase during the war, see Simich, p. 13. Simich also states that 50% of married women were self employed, perhaps demonstrating that married women tended to work at home, where they could combine earning an income with caring for children, see Simich, p. 13.

¹⁸⁶ *The Times*, June 24, 1916, quoted in DeGroot, p. 222.

employment of women.¹⁸⁷ Pugh notes that this was recognition that women could 'render effective aid to their country in wartime.'¹⁸⁸ In particular, the schemes were for the women who had previously been employed, and who had become unemployed as a result of the war. No such scheme dedicated to women's employment was established in New Zealand, however the NEB addressed the issue of women's employment under a generic programme in 1917.

In Britain, trades such as luxury goods had declined dramatically once the war began.¹⁸⁹ Consumables such as jewellery and shoes were traditionally manufactured using female labour, and as the desire for these products declined once the war began, women found themselves unemployed as these trades downsized their labour forces.¹⁹⁰ Women's employment levels consequently declined during the early months of the war, and Briar states that employment levels for women did not generally reach pre-war levels until April 1915, when the textile trades began to pick up custom due to their diversification into the outfitting of the military, namely uniforms.¹⁹¹ The Central Committee on Women's Employment was a promising step towards the acceptance of women in the workplace on a wider scale, however Marwick contends that the 'heavily patronizing attitudes of the time towards working women were [still] all too apparent.'¹⁹² Briar declares that it was only as the labour shortage became more severe that the 'lines of demarcation between men's work and women's work were progressively redrawn ... [although these were] never significantly eroded.'¹⁹³ The majority of employers used 'an hierarchical sexual division of labour: men ... occupied the most skilled, best-paid and most powerful positions [which] enabled employers to maintain a peaceful working relationship with skilled men.'¹⁹⁴ Briar states that this also seemed to be the case in occupations which had had a female labour component

¹⁸⁷ Thom contends that this state intervention was partly a result of the 'interests and representations of organisations of working women [which] reflect[ed] their growing political consciousness', see Thom, p. 5. In March 1915 the Women's War Register was set up to enrol women for war work, see Thom p. 56. 50 000 women had registered by the end of April, suggesting that women were enthusiastic about participating in war work, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 8.

¹⁸⁸ Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 8.

¹⁸⁹ Woollacott notes that the outbreak of war led to international trade being disrupted, and those who could normally afford consumer and luxury goods 'curbed their purchasing in order to ensure financial security', see Woollacott, p. 23.

¹⁹⁰ Briar, p. 30. In New Zealand, as an economic measure, the National Efficiency Board suggested following Britain's lead and banning the manufacture of ladies' boots more than 7 inches high – those which were solely for fashionable purposes, see National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Minister of Defence James Allen, July 21, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917, Vol. 1, qMS-1525, Turnbull Library, p. 296.

¹⁹¹ Briar, p. 31. See also Thom, p. 34. There were 50 000 women out of work by March 1915, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 18.

¹⁹² Marwick, p. 37.

¹⁹³ Briar, p. 33. Smith notes that the shortage of munitions in 1915 'led many people to believe that the Government should allow women to work in all areas of ... industry', see Angela K. Smith, 'The Pankhursts and the War: suffrage magazines and First World War propaganda', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2003, p. 112.

¹⁹⁴ Briar, p. 34.

before the war.¹⁹⁵ In offices and shops, employers tended not to promote the women, and instead replaced enlisted men with younger men, and then filled the positions the young men had previously held with women. By ensuring that women occupied the lowest positions in jobs, the practice of paying women lower wages than men seemed less unjust.¹⁹⁶ Jobs which were specifically designated as war work tended to involve a lack of training, or indeed any 'permanent alterations in the ... relationships of power within the workforce or in relation to the employers'.¹⁹⁷ This lack of change helped to ensure that women only entered these jobs for the duration of the war. British women did try to ensure that they received fair treatment from the Government, by joining trade unions in large numbers. Before the war, 350 000 British women were members of trade unions, this peaked at nearly 660 000 during the war.¹⁹⁸

An examination of the British census figures reveals that, like New Zealand, the most significant increase for middle class women was in clerical work – a result of the effect that war had on both industry and government administration.¹⁹⁹ Thom maintains that the war proved to be most beneficial for middle class women, who experienced more progress than women working in manual employment such as factory work.²⁰⁰ Williams agrees, stating that it was primarily middle and upper class women who gained some "liberation" from the home, due to their independence – they could spend their income however they liked.²⁰¹

Women proved adept at factory work, much of which was based upon a production line. Thom notes that women's rates of work and the volume they produced were 'the subject of

¹⁹⁵ Briar, p. 34.

¹⁹⁶ Pollard notes that women were usually paid 50-60% of the male rate for the same job, see Pollard, p. 43. This policy has already been noted as being prevalent in New Zealand.

¹⁹⁷ Thom, p. 44. Glucksmann notes that the lack of training was validated by employers in the belief that women were primarily concerned with 'their future place in the home', and hence they were perceived to have a 'lack of interest in gaining skills and [were] content[ed] with their lowly position', see Glucksmann, p. 222.

¹⁹⁸ Davies, p. 90. In New Zealand, the Domestic Workers' Union had been formed in 1907, and had been affiliated with the Trades and Labour Council soon after. The Union wanted better working conditions such as shorter working hours, 'more humane treatment from mistresses who "go out of their way to make them feel their position"' and wished to dispense with the term 'servant'. See *The New Zealand Times*, January 8, 1907, Bert Roth Notes and Clippings on Domestic Workers, Turnbull Library, Reference 94-106-45/05.

¹⁹⁹ Janet McCalman, 'The Impact of the First World War on Female Employment in England', in *Labour History*, Vol. 21, November 1971, p. 40. It seems that the Government was much more willing to use females as a labour source - Sheila Rowbotham notes that by October 1916, the number of women working in government-controlled workplaces had increased by nearly 300%, whilst the corresponding figure for uncontrolled workplaces was only 36%, see Rowbotham, *A Century of Women: The History of Women in Britain and the United States*, Viking: London, 1997, p. 76.

²⁰⁰ Thom, p. 3. However, Woollacott claims that working class women benefited from the war as well, and gained increased employment opportunities, improved wages – up to three times the pre-war rate of pay – and the chance to learn new skills, see Woollacott, p. 5. DeGroot notes that the improvements that working class women experienced during the war disappeared in the post-war period for all but a few working class women, see DeGroot, pp. 304-305.

²⁰¹ Williams, p. 16.

marvelling comments'.²⁰² Women workers may have produced a higher output than male employees due to their positive work practices. Briar states that women 'did not engage in restrictive practices to reduce output', which had been a 'rife' practice amongst males.²⁰³

A significant number of British women worked in munitions factories during the war years.²⁰⁴ Much of the work undertaken in munition factories was based on a production-line method. Glucksmann notes that assembly-line work was 'sex-typed as "women's work" and was generally accepted as such by employers, unions, men and women.'²⁰⁵ She notes that one reason why women were automatically considered as workers for assembly-line work was that the wage paid for assembly-line work was 'widely recognised' as being less than the basic male wage, and thus men did not apply for the work.²⁰⁶ In contrast to this, Woollacott asserts that women munition workers improved their circumstances during the war because they 'became a power symbol of modernity', as they 'challenged the gender order through [their] patriotic skilled work and control of machinery'.²⁰⁷

The major sector in which female employment declined was the clothing industry, which can be attributed to the drop in business that was experienced by the clothing trade, and also the 'siphon[ing] off' of women engaged in this trade by other industries experiencing growth due to the war.²⁰⁸ The domestic service industry also suffered decline, with 400 000 domestic servants leaving their positions to work in occupations related to the war effort.²⁰⁹

Government responses

The role of women in the workplace was also a matter of concern for Government organisations. The NEB was set up by the Government in order to best utilise New Zealand's workforce to cope with any labour shortages which might occur as a result of the war. The Board had the job of 'co-ordinating the producing, manufacturing, labour, commercial and distributing interests of the Dominion.'²¹⁰ The Board sought to investigate 'how far men's

²⁰² Thom, p. 14.

²⁰³ Briar, p. 44.

²⁰⁴ Williams maintains that munition work provided independence and the company of other women, factors that did not exist in domestic service, see Williams, pp. 16-17. Woollacott estimates that 1 000 000 of the extra 1 345 000 females in the British workforce in the 1914-1918 period were employed in munitions work, see Woollacott, pp. 17-18. This is in great contrast to New Zealand, where the majority of women were still employed in domestic work, see Table Three, p. 17.

²⁰⁵ Glucksmann, p. 212.

²⁰⁶ Glucksmann, p. 212.

²⁰⁷ Woollacott, p. 3. Clarsen notes that the war period was a 'time of controversy' with regard to women's place in industrial production, see Clarsen, p. 333.

²⁰⁸ McCalman, p. 41.

²⁰⁹ Williams, pp. 16-17.

²¹⁰ Letter re. formation of the National Efficiency Board, February 5, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 5.

labour can be, or ought to be, replaced or diluted by the employment of women.²¹¹ The *Maoriland Worker* noted that where the welfare and interests of women were concerned, women should have a voice in the matter, and women's societies should pass 'resolutions to that effect and [forward] ... them to the Commissioner [of the NEB]'.²¹²

Initially there was some debate regarding whether the NEB would aid the war effort. In Parliament, Mr Payne stated in the House of Representatives that he believed that the 'swelled-headed egotistical asses' from the NEB were 'upsetting business and doing no practical good'.²¹³ In March 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the NEB had been 'perambulating the country' recently, and at Ashburton, the NEB representative had declared that the labour force would be better utilised if 'taxicab drivers were ... sent to the front or forced to do "more useful work", everybody [carried] ... home their own parcels, and ... the Government ... national[ised] the services of all men of the ages from 18 to 65 years'.²¹⁴ The *Maoriland Worker's* cynical view of the Board was clear, and "Wahine" stated that 'if one could take this Board seriously, it might be necessary to warn women against a too-ready acquiescence[sic] in adding to their share of the work of the world.' The article ended with the declaration that the:

enslavement of women and children will not lead to national efficiency, but to [the physical] ... degeneration [of the race], and it behoves every woman worker to watch the doing of this Board very carefully, lest, under cover of patriotism, a few scheming capitalistic organisers successfully harness and exploit the women and children in this country.²¹⁵

The mention of degeneration also indicates that women's labour was still being linked with historical concerns that women entering spheres deemed to be "male" could compromise their reproductive abilities.

In June 1917 the NEB surveyed all trades, industries and occupations, and classified them into four divisions – Most Essential, Essential, Partially Essential and Non-essential.²¹⁶ These divisions were used by the Military Service Boards to decide which men were essential for labour, and thus would be exempted from military service, and which men worked in less essential industries, and could thus be replaced or substituted by women whilst the men

²¹¹ Letter re. formation of the National Efficiency Board, February 5, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 7.

²¹² *MW*, June 27, 1917, p. 7. The activities of the National Efficiency Board appear to have been deliberately made public, to prevent accusations being made concerning their actions. The matter was debated in Parliament in August 1917, when it was decided that the reports were not confidential, see *NZPD*, Vol. 179, August 14, 1917, p. 211.

²¹³ *NZPD*, Vol. 178, July 11, 1917, p. 312.

²¹⁴ *MW*, March 14, 1917, p.7.

²¹⁵ *MW*, March 14, 1917, p.7. "Wahine" was the pseudonym of Margaret Macpherson, who published a women's column which featured in the *MW* from 1916 until 1920, see Roberts, p. 15.

²¹⁶ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 4.

undertook their military duties.²¹⁷ The NEB strongly believed that exemptions from military service were to be restricted wherever possible, and in a memoranda to the Prime Minister in February 1918, declared that 'the Board trusts that the Government will adhere to the system which is now in force, and will not in any way give exemption to numbers of men because they are engaged in special trades or in special portions thereof.'²¹⁸

The NEB was concerned with using the labour force to its fullest potential to minimise any disruption to trade. One way of achieving this was to use women as substitution or dilution of the workforce. The NEB suggested this, noting that wages should stay fixed, no matter what sex or skill level the replacement labour had.²¹⁹ The NEB also noted that legislation was needed so that the NEB had the power to suspend 'all clauses in awards which prevent the employment of women in any capacity.'²²⁰ This was an important step, as it indicates a government body was prepared to overrule previous assumptions and legislation regarding women's capabilities in the workforce. The NEB envisioned women working 'in any capacity' which was an ideal not always upheld by employers, however it is significant that the NEB held such a belief.²²¹ Olssen maintains that despite the 'strong recommendations' of the NEB, nobody 'willingly challenged [the] existing patterns of gendered segmentation.'²²² He explains that this was a consequence of the 'deep customary beliefs and values' held by society.²²³

The NEB was also concerned with the education system and believed that it could be reformed to increase 'industrial and civic efficiency.'²²⁴ The Board believed that 'such problems [could be solved with] ... the institution of continuation classes for the training of the youth of the Dominion between school and manhood years'.²²⁵ The specific term 'manhood' indicates that the Board was primarily thinking of males when it advocated tertiary education, and reflects the broader views that further training beyond secondary school was best suited to men who would be employed for a lifetime, in contrast to females whose period of employment tended to be limited.

²¹⁷ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 4.

²¹⁸ National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Acting Prime Minister James Allen, June 5, 1918, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917-1918, Vol. 2, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526.

²¹⁹ National Efficiency Board Memorandum to James Allen, July 9, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917-1918, Vol. 2, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526, p. 3

²²⁰ National Efficiency Board Memorandum to James Allen, July 9, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 2, p. 4, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526, p. 4.

²²¹ Olssen notes that this included the substitution of women in skilled trades, see Olssen, *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham 1880s-1920s*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995, p. 81. The belief of the National Efficiency Board that women could replace men in the majority of jobs is an indirect acknowledgement from the Government of women's capabilities.

²²² Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 80.

²²³ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 80.

²²⁴ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 71.

²²⁵ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 71.

However, the recommendations of the NEB were not always agreeable to those it affected in the labour force. Farmers who were required to attend Military Service Board hearings often declared that they, or members of their staff, could not leave their farm to join the military, as they did not have sufficient labour to manage their farms. In 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that at a 'large and representative meeting of the Dairy Farmers wives' the resolution was passed 'condemn[ing] the action of the present Government in calling up the farmers, especially when there is only one man on the farm, as it is against the interests of the country to do so.'²²⁶

In 1918 a memorandum from the NEB to the government noted that in the United States of America and Canada, a survey had been undertaken to ensure that the 'utilisation of every person in a satisfactory manner' occurred.²²⁷ The NEB suggested that the New Zealand government should follow this lead and undertake its own national survey. This was an extension of the 1917 NEB suggestion that a national register of people and their occupations should be created.²²⁸

Another recommendation from the NEB was that if the labour force was to be utilised to its full potential, it was the 'duty of the State to provide ... facilities for the placing of men and women in employments and occupations for which they [we]re best fitted.'²²⁹ The NEB provided the Government with several solutions that would help to offset the effects of the labour shortage. Amongst the ideas were the suggestions that retired people should be able to work without 'their pensions [being] docked', and the re-employment of retired civil servants.²³⁰ Using people that had previously worked in a particular job meant that less time had to be spent training them, and also reduced the number of women being employed that had not worked outside the home before. Another suggestion from the NEB involved 'the utilisation of schoolboy and girl labour' for farmwork during the summer holidays.²³¹ The summer was a busy time for farmers, with crops being harvested and hay being made. Although farmers had always helped each other out with these activities, the suggestion from the NEB indicates that the labour shortage was affecting the farming sector, even though this was considered a Most Essential industry, and some men had been exempted from military

²²⁶ *MW*, April 4, 1917, p. 3.

²²⁷ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 85.

²²⁸ See National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Minister of Defence James Allen, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917-1918, Vol. 2, Turnbull Library, qMS-1526, p. 2.

²²⁹ Letter re. formation of the National Efficiency Board, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 9.

²³⁰ Note from National Efficiency Board to acting Prime Minister James Allen, March 2, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 29; National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Minister of Defence James Allen, July 12, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 288.

²³¹ Memorandum from National Efficiency Board to acting Prime Minister James Allen, April 30 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 83.

service. Concern was also shown by the Member of Parliament for the Hawke's Bay, Sir J.G. Findlay, who asked the Government to take 'immediate and energetic steps to train all women (fit for the industry and willing to be engaged in it) for farmwork'.²³² He stated that these steps were necessary if the 'most essential industry [was not to] ... be paralysed by the depletion of the ranks of farm workers' who were enlisting in great numbers.²³³ The issue was referred on to the Board of Agriculture, whose 'general feeling ... was that it was not necessary to take any steps to train women for agricultural work'.²³⁴ The Board noted that there were 'plenty of country women' who were 'qualified ... to assist ... with farmwork, [and the Board commented that the women were] ... already doing it very extensively, much more so than is usual'.²³⁵ This comment supports my argument in Chapter One that although the percentage of the female workforce working in the Agricultural sector appears to have risen only slightly during the war years, it is in fact likely that women did play a greater role in agricultural work, however this did not tend to be paid work and was therefore not recorded in the census information.

The agricultural sector was aware of the possible problems of labour shortage and the effect that this could potentially have on production. The *New Zealand Farmer* published a letter in April 1917 from an Auckland man advocating female participation in agricultural work. Laurette Cambridge maintained that women were 'keen on learning' agricultural skills, and that farmers had given him 'great encouragement ... and hearty approval' with regard to his idea of female agricultural workers.²³⁶ An article in the *New Zealand Farmer* in October 1917 declared that 'it [now] falls to New Zealand wives and mothers ... to follow in the footsteps of the founders of the Empire. They are, with all the farming folk of the Dominion overseas, the most important citizens of the realm'.²³⁷ This acknowledgement of women's greater participation in agricultural work again contradicts the official statistics, which showed that women's participation in the agricultural sector rose by just 1% between 1911 and 1916.²³⁸

Labour shortages seem to have become apparent within the agricultural sector at different times depending upon the individual industries. The Dairy Division of the Department of

²³² *NZPD*, Vol. 178, August 1, 1917, p. 869.

²³³ *NZPD*, Vol. 178, August 1, 1917, p. 869.

²³⁴ 1917-18 Annual Report for the Board of Agriculture, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 10.

²³⁵ 1917-18 Annual Report for the Board of Agriculture, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 10. This suggests that women were undertaking agricultural work as unpaid labour, which would explain why the proportion of women working in the Agricultural sector did not rise significantly during the war, see Table Three, p. 17.

²³⁶ *New Zealand Farmer*, April 1917, p. 463. The *New Zealand Farmer* also advocated using women for herd testing work, stating that women would 'probably [be] able to do the work more accurately than many men', and believed that herd testing 'call[ed] for just those qualifications a woman possesses', see *New Zealand Farmer*, December 1917, p. 1424.

²³⁷ *New Zealand Farmer*, October 1917, p. 1212. A similar article appeared earlier in 1915, see *New Zealand Farmer*, September 1915, p. 1230.

²³⁸ See Table Two, p. 17.

Agriculture noted in its 1915-1916 annual report that the industry had encountered 'extreme difficulty [in] ... obtaining sufficient help on ... farm[s], and also in many of the dairy factories'. The report attributed these problems to 'such large numbers of experienced men joining the Expeditionary Forces.'²³⁹ However, it is not until the following year that the Department of Agriculture mentions the problem specifically. The 1916-1917 Annual Report noted that during the previous year, farmers had 'experienced great difficulty in obtaining any extra help'.²⁴⁰ Incentives such as higher wages 'were of little avail', and it was noted that 'the position has become so acute that a number of ... farmers ha[d] already decided to milk fewer cows next year.'²⁴¹ The 1917 Annual Report for the Minister of Agriculture noted that 'the time appears to be approaching when the women of the country must be called into the agricultural ranks in no inconsiderable numbers.'²⁴² The report noted that New Zealand could follow the British precedent with regards to the employment of women in the agricultural sector.²⁴³

By 1918 the labour shortage appears to have worsened further. A report from the Minister of Agriculture noted that despite the 'increasing shortage of rural man-power (both young farmers and employees)', the 'remarkable ability' of the agricultural industry to cope had meant that the level of production for the year was only a 'little below normal.' The report noted that although some help had been used at harvest-time, there had been:

practically no general call for organised assistance from [communities], ... nor were women volunteer workers from outside forthcoming, as in Britain. Practically all credit is thus due to the farmers and their wives and families, together with the regular rural labour remaining.²⁴⁴

The above report supports my findings in Chapter One, where it was shown that the proportion of the New Zealand female workforce employed in the Agricultural sector

²³⁹ Dairy Division Report, 1915-1916 Annual Report for the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1916, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 21.

²⁴⁰ Dairy Division Report, 1916-1917 Annual Report for the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1917, H-29, p. 30.

²⁴¹ Dairy Division Report, 1916-1917 Annual Report for the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1917, H-29, p. 30. Anecdotal evidence also supports this – an article in the *New Zealand Farmer* in September 1917 declared that by not addressing the labour shortage, the industry was 'making shift in dairy matters, until very soon it will be found that the [milk] supply is perceptibly falling off.' See *New Zealand Farmer*, September 1917, p. 1081.

²⁴² Quoted in *New Zealand Farmer*, October 1917, p. 1213.

²⁴³ The agricultural sector in Britain also suffered a labour shortage during the war. In 1915, MP Mr Rowland Prothero declared that the labour shortage in the agriculture sector was 'woman's opportunity', and their duty to enter the industry because it was a 'national need' for the agricultural sector to maintain current levels of production, see *New Zealand Farmer*, October 1915, p. 1335. In 1915, the *New Zealand Farmer* published an article from the British newspaper *The Queen*, describing a training farm for British women. The article declared that 'there should be a great future before the woman farmers', see *New Zealand Farmer*, December 1915, p. 1702.

²⁴⁴ Report of the Minister of Agriculture, 1917-1918 Annual Report for the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29, p. 1. For a report of an elderly widow sharemilking 120 cows near Manutahi, who worked 16 hours a day and was 'assisted by one son and two daughters', see *New Zealand Farmer*, October 1917, p. 1116.

remained relatively static at 9% in 1911, rising to 10% in 1916 before returning to 9% in 1921. However, the labour shortage that is mentioned is not apparent in the census findings – throughout the 1911-1921 period, approximately 30% of the New Zealand workforce was employed in the Agricultural sector.²⁴⁵ The report is optimistic however, and maintains that the shortage of labour would 'largely right itself when our land-workers return in force after the war.'²⁴⁶

However, the subject of women working in agriculture was considered important enough in 1918 for the Board of Agriculture to provide a paragraph on the issue – which had not appeared in the reports from previous years. The Board noted that Mr Findlay's question had been referred on to them, however the Board believed that there 'did not appear to be any necessity for dealing with the matter at the present time', as the Board did not believe that there was a need for more women to work in the agricultural sector.²⁴⁷ However, the Board was positive towards the education of women in agricultural matters, and declared in 1918 that they were 'very glad' that the Government was considering the establishment of a 'Central Horticultural Station where women [would] ... be able to receive education in this science'. The Board maintained that horticultural work was an area 'that women c[ould] undertake satisfactorily.'²⁴⁸

In 1916, the British Government had issued a pamphlet detailing the work which women were capable of undertaking. The pamphlet maintained that:

a more widespread knowledge of the success which has been attained by women in nearly all branches of men's work will lead to the release of large numbers of men to the colours who have hitherto been considered indispensable.²⁴⁹

In July 1917, the NEB issued the same booklet, with modifications so that the book detailed the work which New Zealand women could carry out. The Board had determined that in New Zealand, the 'immediate want [was] ... for women to undertake milking and other work on dairy farms, and ... other open-air and country occupations', in order to 'replace men who have been or are to be called up' for military service.²⁵⁰ The Board made 'an appeal ... to

²⁴⁵ See Table Two for figures, p. 17.

²⁴⁶ Report of the Minister of Agriculture, 1917-1918 Annual Report for the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29, pp. 1-2.

²⁴⁷ 1917-1918 Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 10.

²⁴⁸ 1917-1918 Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture, *AJHR*, 1918, Vol. II, H-29A, p. 10. The NCW also advocated agricultural training for women. At the 1921 annual NCW conference, it was declared that 'facilities [should] be afforded [for] women to obtain practical scientific training in farm and outdoor work', and suggested summer school as a suitable forum for this, see Second Conference of the NCW, 1921, in Minutes of Annual Meetings and Conferences of the NCW 1919-1944, Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-1371-126, p. 10.

²⁴⁹ National Efficiency Board Report, July 12, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 1.

²⁵⁰ National Efficiency Board Report, July 12, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 3. The National Efficiency Board used the proposals of the British

those not now engaged in useful trades and occupations, whether living in town or country, to register themselves as willing to undertake such work.²⁵¹

The *Maoriland Worker* showed some scepticism towards the Women's War Work booklet, and declared that the publication of such a booklet should 'cause the workers of the Dominion ... to think seriously whether these new occupations for women are not being engineered in order that the greatest possible number of workers may be procured to help earn interest on the huge war debt after the war is over.'²⁵²

However, the NEB seems to have shown a genuine belief that women could be used as an efficient form of substitute labour. The NEB published a circular in the *New Zealand Times* declaring that the Board 'believed that in many cases (in addition to office work) the labour of women can be successfully utilised to replace or partially replace the labour of men.'²⁵³ The circular went on to give examples of the agricultural work that British women were engaged in, before asserting that New Zealand women were more capable than their British counterparts, and could thus undertake a greater role in substituting male labour. The article proclaimed that '[t]he women of New Zealand are, as a whole, physically fitter and far more suited by country experience for [agricultural] ... work than their sisters in the Old Country.'²⁵⁴ The Board 'anticipated that in many cases[,] the wives or other female relatives of men in the Second Division would be willing and anxious to undertake the work of the men when [the men were] called up, so as to keep the billets open for them on their return'.²⁵⁵ The Board neatly avoided the problem of dismissing the women after the war, by suggesting the substitution of family members who would be less likely to challenge for their position, and by also emphasising the temporary nature of the work. Whilst Olssen notes that the Government took no notice of the NEB's recommendations, it is significant that a government organisation called for women to be employed and affirmed the ability of women to undertake greater participation in the workforce.²⁵⁶

In 1917 the *Maoriland Worker* alluded to a current 'so-called political truce' – presumably a result of the war - in an article detailing the involvement of the Women's National Reserve

Government, which links the policies each Government followed in their use of women as substitute labour during the war.

²⁵¹ National Efficiency Board Report, July 12, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 3.

²⁵² *MW*, May 30, 1917, p. 7.

²⁵³ National Efficiency Board Circular, March [1917?], *New Zealand Times* clipping, William Hughes Field – Papers relating to national matters, Turnbull Library, 73-128-084.

²⁵⁴ National Efficiency Board Circular, March [1917?], *New Zealand Times* Clipping, William Hughes Field – Papers relating to national matters, Turnbull Library, 73-128-084.

²⁵⁵ National Efficiency Board Circular, March [1917?], *New Zealand Times* Clipping, William Hughes Field – Papers relating to national matters, Turnbull Library, 73-128-084.

²⁵⁶ Olssen, 'Towards A New Society', p. 278.

being involved in a wharf labour dispute.²⁵⁷ The *Maoriland Worker* declared that it was 'rather surprising to see a body of women [who were] supposed to be organised for National purposes being used to further the ends of the capitalist in an industrial dispute.'²⁵⁸ The Women's National Reserve was a sector of the Men's National Reserve which had been formed in August 1915, and was described as being a 'strong' organisation.²⁵⁹ The group declared that its purpose was 'to compile an accurate register of women prepared to undertake some branch of work whereby they may set free for active service the men at present employed.'²⁶⁰ The Reserve was formed in Wellington, where it was claimed that a 'very large number of members' resided, and the Reserve 'proposed to add to that number by getting one organisation right throughout the country.'²⁶¹ The aim of the Reserve was to 'perform "any available work for King and Country"' and it was noted that the women had the 'idea of becoming useful to the Government in the future [by undertaking] ... any work in connection with the war which might fall to their lot.'²⁶²

The Women's National Reserve undertook a voluntary registration of women who were prepared to replace male labour in 1916.²⁶³ The survey asked women whether they were ready to undertake immediate employment, whether they needed some coaching or whether they required general tuition. McLeod asserts that women showed 'keen interest' in the Reserve, although the lack of archival material relating to this group limits the extent to which this claim can be validated.²⁶⁴ However, the 1918 Annual Report of the NEB noted that the Women's National Reserve 'had endeavour[ed] to find soldiers' wives and others ... to undertake mill work [at Kaiapoi], and thus replace to some extent the shortage of mill-hands caused by military operations.'²⁶⁵

The Government was aware of the activities of the Women's National Reserve and it was noted in Parliament in 1915 that the Reserve wished to place their recruiting posters in the windows of post offices. The Postmaster-General noted that posters of that nature were usually refused, however 'in these times [there might] ... be exceptions, especially when the

²⁵⁷ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7. Wharf work had previously been a site of conflict with regard to New Zealand industrial relations, with the 1890 Maritime Strike and the 1913 strike. The wharf would also later be the site of the 1951 lockouts.

²⁵⁸ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7.

²⁵⁹ McLeod, p. 85; *NZPD*, Vol. 173, August 24, 1915, p. 48.

²⁶⁰ Women's National Reserve Memorandum of Constitution, quoted in *White Ribbon*, Vol. 22 no. 253, July 1916, p. 10.

²⁶¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 173, August 24, 1915, p. 48.

²⁶² McLeod, p. 85; *NZPD*, Vol. 173, August 24, 1915, p. 48. It was noted that a priority of the Reserve would be nursing work, particularly the care of wounded soldiers, see *NZPD*, Vol. 173, August 24, 1915, p. 48.

²⁶³ McLeod, p. 86.

²⁶⁴ McLeod, p. 86. McLeod notes that by June 1916 the Reserve 'had the names of 850 Wellington women who were ready to take up clerical employment', however she does not cite the source of this information, see McLeod, p. 87.

²⁶⁵ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 50.

work being done was of such a laudable character'.²⁶⁶ However, it must be noted that these compliments were received when the Reserve had been in operation less than a month, and it is possible that these initial perceptions changed over time. McLeod claims that the work of this group was tolerated and gained legitimacy due to its temporary nature – the group was formed only for the purpose of undertaking work during the war.²⁶⁷

Conclusion

The Great War led to an increased number of women in New Zealand and Britain entering employment. In New Zealand the sectors of industry which had the greatest increase in the number of female employees were the Professional and Commercial sectors. A large number of women replaced men working in the Public Service, and women appear to have also undertaken agricultural work on a larger scale, however this has not been reflected in the census statistics. The New Zealand government was forced to consider the needs of female employees and develop legislation and political bodies such as the Women's National Reserve to better deal with the issue. The NEB, a government agency, acknowledged that women were capable of physical work. In Britain, the Commercial and Industrial sectors experienced the greatest increase in the number of female workers, and women entered jobs held by working class men. The different employment patterns would have implications for the post-war policies of both New Zealand and Britain.

²⁶⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 173, August 24, 1915, p. 48.

²⁶⁷ McLeod, p. 116. The Women's National Reserve was later appointed to oversee the care of soldiers' graves, see Megan C. Woods, 'Re/producing the Nation: Women Making Identity in NZ: 1906-1925', MA Thesis in History, University of Canterbury, 1997, pp. 96-7. The organisation also provided aid in communities during the influenza epidemic of 1918 – see Geoffrey Rice, *Black November: The 1918 Influenza Epidemic in New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin New Zealand Ltd./Historical Branch, 1988, p. 40.



Plate One: Cupid's Way Out - Thomas Ellis Glover, *The Free Lance*, May 7, 1919

Private Tommy Anzac: "I've come back for my job, sir."

Senior Partner: "Ha - hum - yes - just so. Glad to see you, my boy; you've done well. But - ha - hum - she's been a good girl, you know - an excellent girl. See here, my boy - ha! Ha! - why not agree to run in double harness, eh? That will solve the difficulty and keep the job in the family, too."

Cupid (in the background): "Hear! Hear!"

CHAPTER THREE

EXTENDING BOUNDARIES: WOMEN'S DEMANDS AND CONTEMPORARY OPINIONS

Chapter Two investigated the expansion of women into the New Zealand and British workforces during the Great War. Whilst in New Zealand the largest proportion of working women were employed in professional and commercial work, the largest proportion of British women worked in industrial occupations. The role of the respective governments in directing the women was also examined. In New Zealand, the Public Service Department employed women on a temporary basis – for the duration of the war – a precedent followed by private employers. The New Zealand government ignored the recommendation of the NEB that women be used more extensively in the New Zealand workforce. In Britain women were used as substitutes for male workers, primarily on a temporary basis. Chapter Three investigates social responses to the increased presence of women in the workforce in both New Zealand and Britain. Newspapers have been used to determine public perceptions towards women workers, and evaluate the struggle for equal pay that women in both countries strove towards. I have also examined women's claims for greater social and political equality that arose from the contribution of employed women to the war effort – namely their desire for equal pay, and equal political and civil rights. Trade unions were the main advocates for equal pay, however they were ambivalent about the need to grant women equal pay for equal work due to the priority they gave to the perceived greater needs of male workers. Women also made demands for political representation, and greater representation in public offices of a judicial and municipal nature – women wanted female Justices of the Peace and police officers.²⁶⁸ These demands arose from their increased awareness of their limitations within the workforce, and a desire to change these and address wider concerns.

Reactions to women entering the workforce

Women's participation in the workforce increased in both New Zealand and Great Britain during the Great War, however the wider employment opportunities were sometimes tempered with poor working conditions. In 1918 the *Maoriland Worker* published an article condemning the working conditions of female agricultural labourers in New Zealand and Australia. The article noted that in Britain, Government regulations 'control[ed] the employers' of the 200 000 female agricultural workers whilst in New Zealand, 'until some saner social organisation prevail[ed]', there was no regulation of the 'heavy labour [and] ...

²⁶⁸ For WCTU resolutions see *White Ribbon*, Vol. 21 no. 248, September 1915, pp. 9-10; for NCW resolutions see The National Council of Women, *100 Years of Resolution: 1896-1996*, Wellington: The National Council of Women Inc., 1996, pp. 124, 172, 179.

heart-breaking conditions' which women working in the agricultural sector experienced.²⁶⁹ McLeod notes that rural women had participated in agricultural work before the war – indeed it was common practice in farming communities – and believes that it was only due to the war and the belief that everyone needed to contribute to the war effort that the agricultural pursuits of women were 'held in much acclaim ... [and] glamourised.'²⁷⁰

New Zealand's employment situation did not escape censure. Criticism was levelled at the lack of employment opportunities for women in New Zealand in 1917 by the *Maoriland Worker*. The newspaper reported that in Britain, 'war necessities [were] forcing open scores of channels of employment that were hitherto closed to women' whilst in New Zealand, it was noted that although the same opportunities were open to women, in a practical sense, New Zealand had 'not advanced as far in this direction' as Britain had.²⁷¹

An extension of the debate regarding women's employment during the Great War was the deliberation as to whether employed women should earn the same pay as working men. Although this issue had been raised in the decades before the Great War, the increasing number of women entering the workforce in the 1914-1918 period meant that there was greater discussion of this topic in newspapers.²⁷² In 1914 the Education Bill was being amended, and there was controversy over some of the new additions to the Bill. In August 1914, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the Wellington Association of Women Teachers had passed a resolution 'protesting against the principle of "unequal pay for equal work", [that] [w]as embodied in the Bill.'²⁷³ The Association also noted that at the present time, women 'still [had] to fight against the law of prejudice Absolute freedom would not be brought about until there was equal pay for equal work.'²⁷⁴ Despite the commencement of the war, women still considered their issues to have significance. The WCTU claimed that the new additions to the Bill would 'perpetuate the injustice inflicted upon women teachers.'²⁷⁵ The passing of the Education Act in late 1914 resulted in more attention being given to the claim by women for equal pay. The *Evening Post* noted that there were three main benefits to women teachers under the new Education Act. Firstly, women were now granted a place on the Council of Education.²⁷⁶ Secondly, women inspectors were to be appointed to schools.

²⁶⁹ *MW*, January 9, 1918, p. 7.

²⁷⁰ McLeod, p. 91.

²⁷¹ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7.

²⁷² For example, see *White Ribbon*, Vol. 9 no. 106, March 1904, pp. 7-8. Whilst there seems to have been discussion regarding equal pay in newspapers, Corner maintains that the question of equal pay 'received little public attention', see Corner, *No Easy Victory*, p. 14.

²⁷³ *MW*, August 5, 1914, p. 5.

²⁷⁴ *MW*, August 5, 1914, p. 2.

²⁷⁵ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 15.

²⁷⁶ The WCTU proposed at their 1914 annual convention that the Council should 'ensure that a certain proportion of the members be women', WCTU Convention Minutes, March 1914, in WCTU Record of Convention Minutes 1913-1918, Turnbull Library, 79-057-09/11.

Thirdly, 'one of the first two assistants' in schools must be a female.²⁷⁷ The Women Teachers' Association noted that the 'women elected to the [education] council must strike a new note in education, and must stand for the highest development of the woman's share in life generally.'²⁷⁸ However, in 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the 'women of New Zealand [were still] weakly submit[ting] to the payment of women teachers at a lower rate than the payment made to men for precisely the same work'.²⁷⁹ In 1919, the *White Ribbon* noted that mistresses in charge of infant schools were paid the same amount as the third male assistants, and questioned the logic behind this. The magazine declared that when women 'compete in the open labour market, the only just law is "equal pay for equal work."²⁸⁰ Female teachers were still receiving a lesser wage in 1920, when the Minister of Education maintained that the new Education Bill would provide 'substantial increases of salaries for women teachers', and that the salaries for women teachers would 'approximate to those of male teachers more closely than in any other known scale of salaries ... in other parts of the world.'²⁸¹ It is implied that although female teachers in New Zealand were still not on an equal footing with male teachers, their circumstances were more favourable than those of women elsewhere.

The Ministry of Education also had a policy of reserving the positions of men who had left for the war, which resulted in many women who were employed as teaching assistants during the war years being offered employment on a temporary basis.²⁸² The Education Department was not alone in taking such a position. The Public Service Department considered 'officers serving overseas' for vacancies in the 'permanent Service' and stated in 1918 that if 'an absent officer is found to be the best qualified for a vacancy ... he is appointed and the vacancy temporarily filled.'²⁸³ It was also noted that '[e]very effort is being made to conserve the rights of officers who are serving in the Army.'²⁸⁴ The Minister of Internal Affairs declared

²⁷⁷ *EP*, November 7, 1914, p. 7.

²⁷⁸ Miss P. Myers, president of the Wellington branch of the Women Teachers' Association, quoted in the *EP*, November 7, 1914, p. 7. However, in 1921, the NCW was still advocating the placement of women on Education Department administrative bodies, indicating that women did not feature regularly on these bodies, see Second Conference of the NCW, 1921, Minutes of Annual Meetings and Conferences of the NCW 1919-1944, Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-1371-126, p. 10.

²⁷⁹ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7. Simich maintains that because female teachers were paid less money than male teachers, the ratio of female teachers to male teachers was very high, see Simich, p. 5. The WCTU also campaigned for women to teachers to receive equal pay, stating that 'payment and promotion [should] ... depend solely on efficiency and merit regardless of sex', see WCTU Convention Minutes, March 1915, in WCTU Record of Convention Minutes 1913-1918, Turnbull Library, 79-057-09/11.

²⁸⁰ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 24 no. 288, June 1919, p. 9.

²⁸¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 189, Addendum, n.d., 1920, p. 1020.

²⁸² McLeod, p. 94.

²⁸³ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 12.

²⁸⁴ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 12.

in 1916 that if women chose to take a position left vacant by male clerks who were serving overseas they could not expect to be paid the same wages.²⁸⁵

Equal pay was an issue that had concerned women's organisations since women had been granted the vote in 1893. The WCTU declared in 1914 that:

whatever advance women have made in other ways, in the ranks of the wage-earners they are still regarded somewhat as interlopers. Their work is undervalued and underpaid, and they are shut out from the highest and best paid positions.²⁸⁶

The commentator for women's issues in the *Maoriland Worker* was a strong advocate for equal pay.²⁸⁷ In 1916, the *Maoriland Worker* boldly declared that 'one of the great reforms that can confidently be expected to arise out of conditions created by the war is the establishment of the principal[sic] of equal pay for equal work.'²⁸⁸ The *Maoriland Worker* noted that the equal pay for equal work claim had previously made slow progress as the claim was 'dependent ... upon the whole status of women in society and the further recognition of the rights of women to sit upon boards governing public institutions.'²⁸⁹ This link between working conditions and public representation aided in the consolidation of women's issues, strengthening the overall claim.

In 1916, the Arbitration Court began permitting the employment of women in men's work, and specifically stated that women were to receive equal pay.²⁹⁰ The ruling from the Arbitration Court indicates that the Government was aware of concerns regarding women's wages. However, Olssen contends that equal pay 'effectively excluded women', and by insisting that women be paid the same as men, the Arbitration Court was shutting women out of jobs.²⁹¹ In industries where women had "traditionally" worked, the Arbitration Court usually imposed a ratio of females to males, and specified the jobs that could be undertaken by the "weaker" sex. Olssen maintains that the Court's decisions never attracted criticism, due to a 'powerful social consensus "that certain classes of work [we]re eminently suited to

²⁸⁵ Mary C. Rodden, 'Women in the Labour Movement 1910-1918', BA (Hons), University of Otago, 1976, p. 18.

²⁸⁶ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 14.

²⁸⁷ Ettie Rout was the founding editor of the *Maoriland Worker*, and editor of the *MW* Country Workers Page in 1915-1916, see Jane Tolerton, *Ettie: A Life of Ettie Rout*, Auckland: Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd., 1992, pp. 113-14, 134. Nolan notes that the editor of the women's page of the *MW* from 1916-1922, Margaret Macpherson, was 'the public mouthpiece for the housewives' union and Labour women', see Nolan, p. 148. She 'drew "attention to the dramatically rising cost of living and the effects of this upon women trying to manage their households" on male wages', see Anna Green, 'Margaret Macpherson' in Charlotte McDonald, Merimeri Penfold & Bridget Williams (eds), *The Book of New Zealand Women: Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa*, quoted in Nolan, p. 148.

²⁸⁸ *MW*, May 24, 1916, p. 3.

²⁸⁹ *MW*, May 24, 1916, p. 3.

²⁹⁰ Olssen, *Building the New World*, p. 81.

²⁹¹ Olssen, *Building the New World*, p. 81.

females".²⁹² In 1918 the Arbitration Court determined a basic wage according to three proficiency levels – skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled – however, these levels were not applicable to females. The lack of acknowledgement by the Court towards female employees may indicate the perceived temporary nature of women's increased employment opportunities during wartime.

The Arbitration Court had jurisdiction over wages for only a small proportion of women workers in New Zealand, primarily women employed in factories, hotels and restaurants.²⁹³ Robertson notes that the majority of women employed in domestic service were excluded from the arbitration system due to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1908, which also excluded teachers, nurses, public servants, clerks and 'large numbers of shop assistants'.²⁹⁴ Osbourne contends that the Arbitration Act had a 'constraining effect on women workers ... [which] was more intense than that experienced by the majority of the workforce'.²⁹⁵ The Court generally set women's wages at between two thirds and three quarters of the male rate, reflecting the dominant concept of the family wage.²⁹⁶ Olssen states that this may have been an improvement on the rates set by the unregulated market.²⁹⁷

The call for equal pay was also promoted through emphasis being placed on the link between equal pay and political representation. The gaining of the franchise was used to demonstrate that if women could be seen as equals that deserved to participate in political matters, then there was no reason why women did not receive the same wage for the same work as men did. The *Maoriland Worker* described New Zealand women as having 'weakly submitted' to the unequal pay rates.²⁹⁸ The *Maoriland Worker* also noted that if women were to accept lower wages during the war – a 'time of business prosperity' – there would be 'less hope of securing a recognition of the principles of equal pay for equal work in the harder times which inevitably follow a war period'.²⁹⁹ Often pay disparities were very obvious, with men and women with identical job titles earning vastly different sums of money. In the Public Service Department, the average salary for an adult male officer in 1919 was £149.75, whilst the

²⁹² 1918 Arbitration Awards, quoted in Olssen, *Building the New World*, p. 81. Harrison and Nolan maintain that the Arbitration Court 'sanctioned forms of segregation' by showing preference to male unionists and using gender to classify skill levels and differentiate wages, see Harrison and Nolan, p. 268.

²⁹³ Robertson, p. 32.

²⁹⁴ Robertson, p. 32.

²⁹⁵ Sue Osbourne, "'Miss Representations': The Voice of Early Women Trade Unionists in New Zealand", PG Diploma in Arts in History, Massey University, 2001, p. 14.

²⁹⁶ Robertson, p. 40.

²⁹⁷ Olssen, p. 80.

²⁹⁸ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7. This comment and the following one indicates the ambivalence of the *MW* when it came to women's employment.

²⁹⁹ *MW*, June 20, 1917, p. 7. In December 1918, a claim was made in Parliament that female clerks employed in the Defence Department were receiving 'very low rates of pay', however the Treasury issued a statement denying this. See *NZPD*, Vol. 183, December 9, 1918, p. 1020.

comparative salary for an adult female officer was just £108.60 – 73% of the salary for a male officer.³⁰⁰

The *Maoriland Worker* also warned that men should be concerned about equal pay, otherwise women would be employed in the same job as men but earn less, and employers would thus employ the cheaper labour. In 1917 “Wahine” had ‘not the slightest doubt that [the Labour party] representatives [were] ... fully alive to the necessity of insisting that where women replace men in any business or industry they should be paid the same remuneration as the men whom they displace.’³⁰¹ In 1918, the *Maoriland Worker* declared that ‘no forward movement for women can fail to be associated with the economic question, and the tremendous inrush of women into industrial occupations has naturally brought into prominence the question of equal pay for equal work.’³⁰² This is an example of perceptions overriding reality – although it may have seemed as though there was a ‘tremendous inrush’ of women into the industrial sector, as noted in Chapter One this was not the case.³⁰³ Once again the fear was voiced that once the war was over and ‘much of the fiery patriotism of the present day’ had disappeared, the tendency would continue ‘then, as now, to seek labour in the cheapest market’, resulting in the continued employment of women at the expense of men returning from overseas.³⁰⁴

The issue of equal pay did not only concern women who were wanting the same wage as men. In 1917, the Member of Parliament for Wallace brought the issue of wage equality for women before Parliament. Mr Thomson wanted the Public Service Commissioner to ‘establish a proper scale of salaries for women clerks’ employed by the Government.³⁰⁵ He stated that the ‘inequality in the rates of pay of women who are doing essentially the same work and who possess essentially the same qualifications is a grievance that should be remedied.’³⁰⁶ The Minister of Internal Affairs replied that ‘suitable scales and increments’ already existed.³⁰⁷ However, the matter was raised again in 1919, when it was asserted that charwomen employed in the Railway Office were ‘paid on a lower scale’ than women working in similar positions in the Government Buildings, Public Trust Office and the Post Office.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁰ Average salary given for the year ending 31 March 1918, see the 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 14.

³⁰¹ *MW*, June 27, 1917, p. 7. It is possible that men wished women to be paid the same wage as them in order that their wage did not drop.

³⁰² *MW*, January 9, 1918, p. 7.

³⁰³ In 1911, 23% of women in employment worked within the Industrial sector. By 1916 this proportion had declined to 20%, and by 1921 the figure had fallen further to 19%. See Table Three, p. 17.

³⁰⁴ *MW*, January 9, 1918, p. 7.

³⁰⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 180, October 1, 1917, p. 552.

³⁰⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 180, October 1, 1917, p. 552. Olssen notes that before World War One, women’s wages were approximately half of men’s wages, see Olssen, ‘Working Gender, Gendering Work’, p. 65.

³⁰⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 180, October 1, 1917, p. 552.

³⁰⁸ Mr Brown to Mr Massey. Mr Massey stated that he was not aware of the discrepancy in wages, and would investigate the matter, see *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 31, 1919, p. 1110.

The coverage of equal pay was not confined to New Zealand – the *Maoriland Worker* also published British articles detailing the situation of women working in Britain. In April 1918 the *Maoriland Worker* published an article from the *British Exchange* which noted the poor pay of women munitions workers.³⁰⁹ The article declared that ‘as the war goes on the discrepancy between men’s and women’s earnings grows more and more glaring.’ The article stated that there had never been ‘equal pay for equal work’ and concluded that ‘[i]t is time the men’s Unions took the matter seriously in hand.’³¹⁰ The *Maoriland Worker* also reported in September 1918 that in Britain, the British Committee on Production had been set up to investigate the ‘question of the competition between the sexes in the industrial world.’³¹¹ The article noted that ‘as a principle ... the scale of pay must be determined by the value of the work done without reference to the sex of the worker.’³¹² The article also asserted that previously, female labour had been assessed at a lower rate of pay simply because it was not male labour. This principle was declared ‘wholly pernicious and is not only unjust to women workers, but is bound to re-act upon the wages of men who have to offer their services in competition with women workers.’³¹³ This statement is somewhat ambivalent, both claiming that women workers should be treated the same as male workers, whilst also insinuating that women workers provided unnecessary competition for men seeking employment. The article concluded that due to the:

enormous extension of the field of labour for women workers in almost every industry, including industries which in pre-war days were considered wholly unsuitable for women[,] ... the acceptance of the principle of equal pay for equal work [was] imperatively urgent.³¹⁴

The desire of women for recognition that their work deserved to be paid the same wage as men mirrored their claim for equality in the political arena, with women in New Zealand and Britain also campaigning to gain the right to hold a seat in Parliament. Sometimes this link was made explicitly – Sylvia Pankhurst declared that the ‘sweated rates’ which women munition workers were receiving ‘should spur women on to renewed efforts towards

³⁰⁹ *MW*, April 17, 1918, p. 7. Sylvia Pankhurst declared in 1916 that ‘women have come into munition work in tremendous numbers and in the overwhelming majority of cases they are employed at sweated rates in what has been a hitherto well-paid trade’, see Smith, p. 114. The poor pay of British munition workers is disputed by Woollacott, who contends that munition workers ‘undermined class differences through [their] ... increased spending power’, see Woollacott, p. 3.

³¹⁰ *MW*, April 17, 1918, p. 7. Smith notes that it was believed that unions were vital in the case for adequate pay for munition workers – it was believed that ‘without [the] ... involvement [of trade unions] the women would be exploited beyond reason’, see Smith, p. 114.

³¹¹ *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7.

³¹² *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7.

³¹³ *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7.

³¹⁴ *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7. Glucksmann notes that if women had received an equal wage, the ‘domestic economy would have been disrupted, the structural connection between the waged and unwaged sectors of work would ... have changed, as [would have] ... the established relations between the sexes to both spheres’, see Glucksmann, p. 211.

emancipation. We shall always be but feeble tools in the hands of the exploiter till we are organised industrially and have won THE VOTE'.³¹⁵

In Britain, the great extent to which women had entered the workplace during the war led to speculation during the war as to whether such change was likely to be permanent. Some women, including Mrs Fawcett – leader of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies - declared that the war had 'revolutionised men's minds and their conception of the sort of work of which the ordinary everyday woman was capable'.³¹⁶ Eleanor Rathbone predicted in 1916 that since women had proved competent at doing men's work, employers 'would be prepared to fight to retain women when the war was ended'.³¹⁷ The Government was also aware of women's contribution to the war effort, even in the early years. In 1915, the British Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, admitted that the female war worker had played a valuable role in the war so far. He stated that there 'are thousands of such women, but a year ago we did not know it'.³¹⁸ This statement reveals that the capabilities of women were being recognised as they pursued work outside the traditional female sphere. In Scotland, women working in a factory were described as being 'born mechanics, who work with their brains as well as their hands'.³¹⁹ In fact, these women were hailed as learning with 'astonishing rapidity', and the period of training was reduced from the customary five to seven years down to three years as a result. The supervisor declared that he was 'convinced that there is an immense future in engineering for women who really love their work and are keen on it'.³²⁰ The booklet which the British Government published in 1916 detailing the work of British women declared that 'employers ... readily admit that the results achieved by the temporary employment of women [have] far exceed[ed] their original estimates, and ... are capable of much further extension'.³²¹ However, women's increased role in the British workforce did not receive wholly positive comments. In 1917 J.T. Murphy declared that in:

many workshops it can safely be said that the women are not a success. As a matter of fact, in some places there has been no attempt to make them a success. They are consequently treated with amused contempt as passengers for the war.³²²

The temporary nature of women's wartime work in this passage has been emphasised in order to minimise the extent to which some anticipated permanent change would occur.

³¹⁵ Original emphasis, quoted in Smith, p. 114.

³¹⁶ Gail Braybon, *Women Workers in the First World War: The British Experience*, London: Croom Helm, 1981, p. 157.

³¹⁷ Briar, p. 44.

³¹⁸ Quoted in Mitchell, p. xvi.

³¹⁹ Clarsen, p. 341.

³²⁰ Quoted in Clarsen, p. 341. Women were also valued in the aeroplane manufacturing industry, where their 'manual dexterity enabled them to fabricate the frail machines better and faster than many men', see Davies, p. 89.

³²¹ National Efficiency Board Report, July 12, 1917, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1917, Vol. 1, Turnbull Library, qMS-1525, p. 1.

³²² Quoted in Thom, p. 67.

It was not only examples of women in employment that were discussed in the newspapers, but also reports on women's political views, particularly those of British women. In December 1916, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that Sylvia Pankhurst had declared that women must 'emancipate themselves ... by seizing in every trade and profession the [jobs] ... that men have been forced to leave.'³²³ In 1917 the *Maoriland Worker* reported on the British Labour Conference. The Women's Labour League had presented several resolutions relating to the position of women after the war. One of the resolutions was that 'work or maintenance at fair rates should be provided for all women displaced from their employment to make way for men returning from service with the forces or other national work.'³²⁴ Another resolution was that 'all women employed in trades formerly closed to them should only continue to be so employed a[t] such rates as will place them, from the employer's point of view, on the same economic footing as men.'³²⁵ The League also wanted boards consisting of both employers and workers to be set up to establish wage rates. The League moved these resolutions 'in view of the great national services rendered by women during this time of war, and ... the importance of maintaining a high level of wages for both men and women workers.'³²⁶ This League had no equivalent in New Zealand during the war, and perhaps the women's labour group advocated by the *Maoriland Worker* after the war was based upon this British model.³²⁷

Women's Employment and Industrial Relations

An extension of the employment issue was the involvement of trade unions in the fight for equal pay, and women's participation within trade unions.³²⁸ Olssen notes that in New Zealand, unions were determined not to let the increased participation of women in the workforce impact negatively on male employment conditions.³²⁹ The unions' demands included a male-breadwinner wage – the reference to "breadwinner" would ensure that the wage was calculated to be sufficient to support a family. However, there were some exceptions. Bert Roth asserts that the Tramways Union 'gained equal pay for women trammies' during the war.³³⁰ Although there were isolated instances of union support for equal pay, many trade unions, mindful of their male constituency, supported restrictions of female workforce participation. Amongst these constraints were the marriage bar, equal pay,

³²³ *MW*, December 20, 1916, p. 7.

³²⁴ *MW*, May 9, 1917, p. 7. There seems to have been a realization even in 1917 that the majority of women would not retain their jobs after the war.

³²⁵ *MW*, May 9, 1917, p. 7.

³²⁶ *MW*, May 9, 1917, p. 7.

³²⁷ See *MW*, December 3, 1919, p. 7.

³²⁸ Rodden asserts that women within the Labour movement realized that if they were to get equal pay, they would have to join male unions, see Rodden, p. 18.

³²⁹ Olssen, 'Working Gender: Gendering Work', p. 69. This was also the case in Britain – trade unions did not want women to undercut them in terms of wages, but at the same time the unions were reluctant to see women being paid the same wage as men, see DeGroot, p. 132.

³³⁰ Letter from Bert Roth to Margaret Corner, Notes on Script 'How Equal Pay came to the New Zealand Public Service' 1890-1960 by M Corner, Turnbull Library, 94-106-16/10.

protective laws which limited the hours that women could work, and limits on the sort of tasks which women could undertake.³³¹

Whilst working women were not encouraged to form unions, there was an awareness that women needed to join together for change to occur. The WCTU declared in their magazine in 1915 that 'if women in their thousands band together and demand justice, they will get it. They have a vote, and politicians want that vote.'³³² The 1916 Labour Conference was attended by three women delegates representing the Christchurch Tailoresses and Pressers' Union, the Riccarton branch of the Social Democratic Party and the Wellington Housewives Union. The women declared that they 'represented the endeavours of the employers to exploit female labour as a result of war conditions and ... protested against female labour being called [upon] ... to displace the higher paid male worker.'³³³ A year later, the female delegate representing the Dunedin Tailoresses' Union at the 1917 United Federation of Labour Conference expressed similar sentiments. She moved a remit that:

the Conference affirms that in view of the great extensions in the employment of female labour in the Dominion, it is imperative for the protection of all workers that immediate consideration be given to the question of protecting their industrial interests by collective organisation.³³⁴

The desire for a union protecting women's concerns may have been due to an awareness that similar unions existed in Britain.

In New Zealand, the increased employment of women led to calls for women to join the trade union movement, thereby strengthening the bargaining power of workers.³³⁵ In July 1918, the Arbitration Court heard a claim from the Canterbury Women Printers and Bookbinders' Union. The union had asked for a 44-hour week and an increase in minimum wages. The *Maoriland Worker* covered the hearing and noted that the women were awarded some of their claims. The article maintained that the women:

now crowding into the labour market ... will yet realise that if they are to expect any kind of justice so far as working conditions and pay are concerned[,] they will have to put their pride in their pockets, get into the trade union movement, and stand by each other.³³⁶

The *Maoriland Worker* also reported on the involvement of British women in trade unions. In 1918 the *Maoriland Worker* printed an article from the British newspaper *The Herald*, which reported that 'many thousands [of women] have already enrolled themselves as members of

³³¹ Olssen, 'Working Gender: Gendering Work', p. 69.

³³² *White Ribbon*, Vol. 21 no. 248, September 1915, p. 9.

³³³ *MW*, February 2, 1916, cited in Rodden, p. 18.

³³⁴ Jane Runciman, representative of the Dunedin Tailoresses' Union, quoted in Rodden, p. 39.

³³⁵ Brown notes that New Zealand women's limited participation in trade unions during this period contributed to their low pay and low status within the workforce, see Brown, p. 9.

³³⁶ *MW*, July 3, 1918, p. 3.

Trade Unions.³³⁷ The article reported that the women joining trade unions had resulted in 'wages [being] ... considerably increased, and conditions [had] ... also enormously improved.' The article also stated that the inclusion of women in trade unions had led to solidarity – the male and female union members had begun to 'stick together, work together, and, when necessary, come out together in defence of each other and, consequently, the [union] goes from one victory to another.'³³⁸ In 1919, the *Maoriland Worker* published an article detailing the achievements of the women's section of the Australian Labour Party. Some of their resolutions included a maximum 30 hours per week to be worked by women in factories, the appointment of a female factory inspector, chosen by women workers and paid by the Government, and the age minimum for a female working in a factory being set at 16 years.³³⁹ More general resolutions included the wish for a 'democratic control of industry' and the provision of a 'national minimum of welfare for every citizen'. The article described how Australian women had formed a collective 'for the purpose of organising them[selves] industrially and politically.' The *Maoriland Worker* suggested that 'women in New Zealand could proceed with advantage along the same lines[,] as the same grievances undoubtedly exist in this country.'³⁴⁰ Given that the NCW, the WCTU and other women's institutions already existed in New Zealand, it seems that the *Maoriland Worker* believed that the needs of New Zealand women had not yet been fully dealt with, and were not likely to be addressed within the existing forums. The *Maoriland Worker* also seemed to be advocating a more vigorous advocacy of issues.

British trade unions were also concerned that increased women's employment would lead to the lowering of wage rates. The British Prime Minister negotiated a voluntary agreement with trade unions with the Defence of the Realm Act in 1915. This Act allowed for the entry of unskilled workers, including women, into jobs traditionally held by skilled men in the form of dilution.³⁴¹ The Act also allowed for "'traditional", i.e. restrictive' practices to be restored after the war.³⁴² British trade unions agreed, however throughout the war they were concerned with women's wages. It was predicted that:

the temptation of employers to dismiss skilled men and take on women to do the work at lower rates of wage will become more and more ... the matter affects

³³⁷ *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7.

³³⁸ *MW*, September 11, 1918, p. 7. After the war, British women trade unionists 'voiced considerable anxiety' about female unemployment that resulted as women were released from wartime employment, see Glucksmann, p. 8.

³³⁹ *MW*, August 20, 1919, p. 7. Rowbotham maintains that British women who campaigned for better conditions at work 'became more confident and developed new demands for social provision', a comment which can equally be applied to New Zealand and Australian women, see Rowbotham, p. 71.

³⁴⁰ *MW*, August 20, 1919, p. 7. The *MW* also mentioned the political gains of Australian women during the war, see *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7.

³⁴¹ Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 19.

³⁴² Davies, p. 86. The clause allowing for restrictive practices to be reinstated after the war meant that women workers were already being classified as temporary, and only for the duration of the war.

women, but it affects skilled men even more, because the men's conditions may easily be damaged by unfair forms of competition.³⁴³

In 1917, the leader of the Sheffield shop stewards' union noted that 'the price of man's economic dominance over women as subjects instead of equals, [is that] men are now faced with problems not to their liking.'³⁴⁴ However, antagonism between trade unions and the Government continued throughout the war. In 1918, the men and women working on London buses went on strike to protest against the bus companies' proposal to give the wartime cost-of-living bonus only to men.³⁴⁵ The bus workers were members of the National Transport Workers' Federation and also wanted the government's Committee on Production to 'consider "the question of the relation of the wages of men and women" [i.e.] ... equal pay.'³⁴⁶ The strike resulted in an inquiry into the equal pay issue and the bonus that was being denied to women. The inquiry result was favourable to the women, and advocated equal pay, however this did not eventuate, which demonstrates that the Government's intentions and actions were often conflicting.

Women's Employment and the Quest for Women's Rights

Aside from the employment of females, issues also covered in these two newspapers included the more prominent feature of women in public life – in November 1914, the *Evening Post* editorial debated whether women should be made eligible for election to the Legislative Council.³⁴⁷ The issue of parliamentary representation was brought up several times during the 1914-1918 period, not only by newspapers, but also by women's groups.³⁴⁸ In 1916 the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the Wellington provincial WCTU had passed resolutions that although parliamentary representation had not yet been gained, the 'opinion of representative women' must be obtained.³⁴⁹ The NCW also believed that women were needed in Parliament. The *Maoriland Worker* reported in 1916 that at a meeting on the Wellington Branch of the NCW, Lady Stout stated that gaining parliamentary representation was not the only consideration – the women chosen to represent New Zealand women must be carefully chosen.³⁵⁰ Lady Stout declared that 'salary and power were not to be considered' and that the most important quality in a woman holding a position in Parliament was

³⁴³ Unnamed 'trade unionist MP', quoted in Briar, p. 37.

³⁴⁴ J.T. Murphy, quoted in Rowbotham, p. 77.

³⁴⁵ Davies notes that it is significant that men went on strike in support of the women, who had a short time before been considered a threat to working men, see Davies, p. 83.

³⁴⁶ Unnamed source, quoted in Davies, p. 83.

³⁴⁷ *EP*, November 3, 1914, p. 6.

³⁴⁸ Clarke asserts that due to women's horizons being extended beyond the traditional female sphere, women 'increasingly demanded a voice and role in the public life of society', see Mathilda G. Clarke, 'An Analysis of the History of the Wellington Young Women's Christian Association Since It Was Established in 1906', MA Research Exercise in History, Massey University, 2003, p. 14.

³⁴⁹ *MW*, November 8, 1916, p. 7.

³⁵⁰ *MW*, November 14, 1917, p. 7.

'absolute loyalty to other women' and the wish to work for 'the good of their own sex.'³⁵¹ In 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that although the women of New Zealand had been enfranchised for 24 years, women still:

labour[ed] under several legal disabilities, which it seems very hard to convince our male legislators should, in common justice, be abolished... there is not a shred of reason why, because of our sex, we should be subjected to civil and political disabilities which do not apply to men. But so it is, and so it will remain until we women make our united voices heard in unmistakeable tones demanding the removal of all our injustices.³⁵²

Aitken maintains that despite women's contribution to the economy during wartime, they were 'politically invisible'.³⁵³ She declares that although women were 'far from inactive, economically or socially, New Zealand women had virtually no public face other than that of wives and mothers.'³⁵⁴ In the latter part of the war, the women's page in the *Maoriland Worker* focused on the upcoming municipal elections as an opportunity for women to gain a measure of control over society. In January 1917 – four months before the elections - the *Maoriland Worker* expressed 'the hope that a number of women will see their way to taking nomination for the town councils this year'.³⁵⁵ The *Maoriland Worker* went so far as to declare that:

[w]omen are themselves to blame [for the lack of attention given to civic matters involving the welfare of mothers and children] in that they have not bestirred themselves earlier in these matters. And it is greatly to be hoped that there will be a strong representation of the women's view on all local Boards after April.³⁵⁶

The progress of women's rights overseas also received attention in New Zealand. In 1917 the *Maoriland Worker* detailed the advances women had made in France, Russia, Canada, Japan and the United States of America. The article declared that:

woman's progress seems to be making the old world dizzy these days Most of the warring countries have frankly made the concession that the war behind the trenches has been carried on by women ... and justice demands that they shall have a voice in future legislation.³⁵⁷

There is a strong link between women's wartime employment and political gains. Women were not seen to be passive recipients of these gains - British women were described as having 'at last won their hard-fought struggle', with the language mimicking the language

³⁵¹ *MW*, November 14, 1917, p. 7.

³⁵² *MW*, April 25, 1917, p 7.

³⁵³ Judith Aitken, 'Women in the Political Life of New Zealand', in Bunkle and Hughes (eds), *Women in New Zealand Society*, p. 12.

³⁵⁴ Aitken, p. 12.

³⁵⁵ *MW*, January 31, 1917, p. 7. The WCTU also encouraged women to participate in the electoral process, with the *White Ribbon* maintaining in 1916 that women should nominate female candidates and vote women onto school committees, see *White Ribbon*, Vol. 21 no. 249, March 1916, p. 9.

³⁵⁶ *MW*, January 31, 1917, p. 7.

³⁵⁷ *MW*, July 11, 1917, p. 7.

used to describe their menfolk fighting.³⁵⁸ The *Maoriland Worker* declared in 1918 that the increased role women had played during the war years had led to women:

realising the meaning of the subordinate position always assigned to them, and were [now] demanding that they should be allowed equal opportunities with men to develop their natural powers and play their natural part in the great struggle for the saving of humanity.³⁵⁹

Grayzel notes that the movement of British women into new occupations during the war, and the perception that they were 'acting in a less "restricted" manner, suggested to many, throughout the war, that drastic changes in the relationships between men and women were under way.³⁶⁰

In December 1918, Parliament debated whether women should be admitted to the Legislative Council. Mr Wright, the Member of Parliament for the Wellington Suburbs and Country District, declared that 'in view of the splendid war work which is to the credit of the women of New Zealand', legislation should be introduced giving women the right to become candidates for parliamentary representation.³⁶¹ He also noted that 'great progress' had been made in Britain on this matter, and the 'principle of equal rights to become candidates for Parliament ha[d] been conceded by the House of Commons.'³⁶² In New Zealand, whilst a majority of the members of the House of Representatives was in favour of admitting women into Parliament, the Legislative Council rejected the proposal and it was not until 1919 that legislation was passed allowing women to sit in the House of Representatives.³⁶³ The post-war debate surrounding the right of women to stand for Parliament will be discussed more fully in Chapter Four.

Political representation was not just sought at the national level – in 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that in Great Britain, the opinion was that women should be represented on Education Boards so that 'women's knowledge [would] ... no longer be thwarted by man's

³⁵⁸ *MW*, July 11, 1917, p. 7. See also *MW*, July 18, 1917, p. 7 for additional information on the political rights of women in Norway and Australia. The international perspectives on political rights may have been used to situate the struggles of New Zealand women within a wider global context, and emphasise that women in many countries were advocating the same rights.

³⁵⁹ *MW*, January 9, 1918, p. 7. See also *MW*, February 14, 1917, p. 7.

³⁶⁰ Susan R. Grayzel, 'The Enemy Within: The Problem of British Women's Sexuality During the First World War', in Dombrowski (ed.) *Women and War in the Twentieth Century*, p. 83.

³⁶¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 183, Addendum, n.d., 1918, p. 1072.

³⁶² *NZPD*, Vol. 183, Addendum, n.d., 1918, p. 1072.

³⁶³ McLeod, p. 104. The issue of parliamentary representation was raised in November 1918, when the Prime Minister was asked whether the Government would introduce legislation to 'confer full political rights on women electors', since the British Government had 'recently made women electors eligible to sit in the House of Commons.' The Prime Minister replied that the matter would be referred to Cabinet 'in due course', and that the House would then be informed of the Cabinet's decision, see *NZPD*, Vol. 183, November 26, 1918, p. 396. The Prime Minister's unspecific reply indicates that he does not seem to have been in any haste to discuss the matter.

ignorance.³⁶⁴ In New Zealand, the *Maoriland Worker* covered Ada Wells' campaign to become elected onto the Christchurch City Council. She stood for 'proper working conditions for all employees', and declared in one of her election campaign speeches that 'We are told that men are the lords of creation. Well, women, the ladies of creation have not yet fully awakened, but they are coming.'³⁶⁵ Ada Wells also maintained that 'if we are to get out of this holocaust of madness [the Great War], the women must arouse themselves and take hold as the women did before the slaves were emancipated.'³⁶⁶ She was duly elected onto the Council, and was one of the first New Zealand women to hold such a public position.

During the war years, there was also a continuation of the pre-war campaign to allow women to work as police officers.³⁶⁷ Pressure was first applied to the Government in 1916 when two deputations in July and October forced the Government to consider the issue.³⁶⁸ However, the Government considered the idea of women police officers to be a "folly", however it was more amenable to the idea of police matrons to be involved with court cases.³⁶⁹ In 1917 the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the Napier branch of the Women's Progressive League demanded that the Government appoint women police.³⁷⁰ The matter was discussed in Parliament in 1917, when it was suggested that women police should be appointed in the four main centres to 'see whether they [were] ... able to do similar good work' to that of women police in Britain.³⁷¹ The Attorney-General replied that assistant police matrons had 'recently' been appointed in the four main centres. It was stated that part of their duties was to 'assist the police in regard to the protection of young women and children and the detection of offences committed against them.'³⁷² This was reiterated in the *Maoriland Worker* in 1917, when a comprehensive report was published that outlined the reasons why

³⁶⁴ *MW*, February 28, 1917, p. 7.

³⁶⁵ *MW*, April 25, 1917, p. 7.

³⁶⁶ *MW*, April 25, 1917, p. 7.

³⁶⁷ The Wellington Branch of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children had advocated allowing women as police officers in the 1913-1914 Annual Report, see New Zealand Society for the Protection of Home and Family Annual Reports, 1897-1919, MSX 3292, Turnbull Library, p. 6. The NCW also maintained that women police should be appointed 'in the interests of women and children' although this was not officially documented until 1919, see Resolution 12.8.2, 1919. The lack of progress on the matter led to similar resolutions being passed in 1921 and 1923, see The National Council of Women, *100 Years of Resolution*, pp. 128, 179. Although there were no women police officers during the early decades of the twentieth century, it was noted in Parliament in October 1914 that 'at the present time [several women held] ... appointments in the Police Force as matrons and searchers.' See Mr Herdman, *NZPD*, Vol. 170, October 7, 1914, p. 458.

³⁶⁸ McLeod, p. 101. Further delegations concerned with the appointment of women police patrols were presented to the Government in June, July and August 1917, and in June 1918, see McLeod, p. 102; *White Ribbon*, Vol. 23 no. 266, August 1917, p. 5. The Member of Parliament for Auckland Central, Mr Herdman, described a 'mass meeting of women' who had gathered in the Auckland Town Hall in July 1917 to agitate for women police, see *NZPD*, Vol. 178, Aug 1, 1917, p. 864. Women police were finally appointed in 1938, see McLeod, p. 103.

³⁶⁹ McLeod, p. 101.

³⁷⁰ *MW*, July 18, 1917, p. 7.

³⁷¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 178, July 18, 1917, p. 471.

³⁷² *NZPD*, Vol. 178, July 18, 1917, p. 471. Mr Wilford, the Member of Parliament for the Hutt, believed that the work of women police 'should be largely of a preventative nature.' See *NZPD*, Vol. 179, August 15, 1917, p. 275.

women police were needed, and examined how Britain had introduced women's patrols.³⁷³ Firstly, women police needed to be specifically appointed by women's societies to investigate women's cases. In Britain, it was quoted, women police had been found to provide 'moral force and tactful supervision'.³⁷⁴ There was concern over the concentrated presence of soldiers present at military camps throughout the country. A Church paper noted that:

the girlhood of the country [had been] ... thrown off its balance – the crowds of khaki-clad men ... excited its imagination [which] was expressed by foolish, giddy, irresponsible conduct.³⁷⁵

In Britain, women's patrols were initiated by the National Union of Women Workers, due to the 'special circumstances of the war' and their initial duty was to patrol areas surrounding military camps to protect women and girls, however they also patrolled parks and streets to 'guard children when returning from school'.³⁷⁶ The Union declared in an open letter to the *Times* that their aim was to be 'neither police nor rescue workers, but true friends of the girls, in the deepest and holiest sense of the word'.³⁷⁷ Whilst the voluntary patrols were concerned with the wellbeing of young women and girls, the Women's Police Service more closely emulated the police force.³⁷⁸ This group aimed to 'provide a full-time body of uniformed policewomen, ... and hoped that this would form the nucleus of a permanent service that would be an integral part of the nation's police force'.³⁷⁹ The efforts of the Women's Police Service would extend the existing boundaries of women's work, however the emphasis on caring for the moral welfare of women ensured that the work could still be considered within the sphere of women's work, and therefore be more likely to be considered acceptable. The majority of the women's patrols in Britain were voluntary workers 'under the control of private organizations'.³⁸⁰ By the end of the war there were nearly 1 000

³⁷³ *MW*, September 12, 1917, p. 4. See also *MW*, February 2, 1916, p. 3. Once again the *MW* used a British example to prove a purpose. The patrols were quickly set up - by February 1915, there were 900 patrols, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 32. Levine notes that the British example served as a model for its colonies, including New Zealand, see Phillippa Levine, "'Walking the Streets in a Way No Decent Woman Should": Women Police In World War One', in *Journal of Modern History*, 66, March 1994, p. 69.

³⁷⁴ *MW*, September 12, 1917, p. 4. Mitchell states that it was the war that gave British women 'the chance to infiltrate this [male] ... world', see Mitchell, p. 211.

³⁷⁵ *Church Family News*, May 26, 1915, quoted in Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 32.

³⁷⁶ *MW*, February 2, 1916, p. 3; Rowbotham asserts that fear of immorality and panic about women drinking led to the creation of the Women's Patrols, see Rowbotham, pp. 74, 83. In addition, Mitchell states that it was concern for the moral welfare of young girls, see Mitchell, p. 211. However Levine notes that in 1914 it was claimed that women police patrols were "the logical and natural corollary of the appointment of women Factory Inspectors and female Sanitary Inspectors." Quoted in Levine, p. 35.

³⁷⁷ Quoted in Mitchell, p. 211.

³⁷⁸ However, the WPS also had a Benevolent Department, and Mitchell maintains that 'moral-welfare patrolling' continued to constitute a large proportion of the duties of the group, see Mitchell, p. 218.

³⁷⁹ Mitchell, p. 213.

³⁸⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 178, July 18, 1917, p. 471. Pugh notes that the patrols were usually just for the 'duration of war', and they were disbanded after the war due to economic reasons, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, pp. 117-18.

policewomen stationed to areas where munitions factories were operating.³⁸¹ The establishment of the patrols was noticed by media in New Zealand, and the *Maoriland Worker* paid particular attention to the work of the patrols. In 1916 the *Maoriland Worker* noted that 'much good had been done by the women patrols' in Britain, and that there was no 'danger of overlapping or of the women's activities being resented by the regular police'.³⁸² At the 1918 conference of the British Dominions' Women's Suffrage Union, a resolution was adopted that trained police women should be established 'in every community', due to their belief that police women were 'essential for the efficient protection of society' and as a 'deterrent and preventative of crime'.³⁸³ The Union maintained that these police women should be paid by the State and given equal status with male police. The New Zealand Government declared that the women's patrols in Britain engaged in 'duties arising out of war conditions which did not exist in this country'. Thus the need for women's patrols in New Zealand was minimised, and the temporary nature of the patrols emphasised. In 1917, women's health patrols were set up in New Zealand, with two patrols being stationed in each of the main centres.³⁸⁴ The women did not wear uniforms, but were issued with a badge. The patrols were under the responsibility of the Public Health Department, which indicates that their primary purpose was to aid in the physical wellbeing of citizens, and not undertake work more closely associated with police work, as had been the case in Britain. The 'primary object [of the patrols] ... was to conserve the health and general welfare of young persons of both sexes.'³⁸⁵ However, it was noted by the Minister of Public Health that 'for special purposes [the women patrol officers] ... would be invested with the powers of the police', where it was necessary to make 'enquiries with regard to ... information as to houses and their occupants.'³⁸⁶ The

³⁸¹ Mitchell, p. 218.

³⁸² *MW*, February 2, 1916, p. 3. This may be due to the attitude of the British Government. In a contemporary British report, the Inspector of Constabulary – Sir Leonard Dunning – maintained that the 'employment of women on definite police work, like any other novelty, is the subject of much difference of opinion.' There seems to be an assumption that women police were simply a novelty and thus a whim which would only be temporary. See *NZPD*, Vol. 189, November 2, 1920, p. 452.

³⁸³ *MW*, September 18, 1918, p. 7. The term Dominion in the name of the union suggests an empire-wide concern for the cause.

³⁸⁴ *The Press*, July 16, 1919, p. 6. As early as 1914, the Attorney-General had stated in Parliament that the Government would consult with other countries where women had been employed as police officers and would then 'decide upon a course of action.' See *NZPD*, Vol. 170, October 7, 1914, p. 458. The matter did not seem to be a priority – in July 1916 it was noted that inquiries were being made in Britain and the United States 'as to the working of the system of women police', see Mr Herdman, Minister in Charge of the Police Department, *NZPD*, Vol. 176, July 5, 1916, p. 486.

³⁸⁵ Hon. G.W. Russell, Minister of Public Health, quoted in *The Press*, July 16, 1919, p. 6. Dalton notes that the WCTU, NCW and the Society for the Protection of Women and Children were concerned that the patrols were entitled 'Health' Patrols, and not 'Women's' Patrols, which had the connotation of 'diseases usually acquired by wrong-doing'. See Sarah Dalton, 'The pure in heart: The Women's Christian Temperance Union and Social Purity, 1885-1930', MA Thesis in History, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993, p. 90. The lack of specificity in the title was considered by women's organizations to be neglectful, since 'the duties indicated are such as should be carried out by women.' Amelia Belworthy and Christina Henderson, quoted in Dalton, pp. 90-91.

³⁸⁶ Hon. G.W. Russell, quoted in *The Press*, July 16, 1919, p. 6. Miss Melville, from the Auckland City Council, maintained that the patrols would be 'much more effective if they held an official position, with status similar to that of policemen rather than if they were voluntary workers.' See *White Ribbon*, Vol. 23 no. 266, August 1917, p. 5.

establishment of the patrols was undoubtedly aided by the wartime agitation undertaken by the women's groups. This is proof that the issues women raised during the war were sometimes addressed, even if the campaign for equal pay did not achieve the same degree of success.

Women's organisations were still campaigning for women police patrols to be instituted throughout New Zealand in 1920, when the matter was discussed in Parliament.³⁸⁷ It was noted that many resolutions had been received on the matter, and were typical of the one received from the Hawera branch of the WCTU. The branch's resolution 'earnestly urge[d] the Government to inaugurate, without further delay, a system of properly trained police women and women patrols, thus affording more efficient protection for the young people of this Dominion.'³⁸⁸

The appointment of women as Justices of the Peace was also sought during the war years. In March 1916 the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council passed a resolution that female Justices of the Peace should be appointed to 'deal with questions affecting women and children.'³⁸⁹ The *Maoriland Worker* noted that cases were 'continually coming before the courts where the services of women justices would be peculiarly helpful.'³⁹⁰ In particular, it was believed that cases involving offences against women and children, and cases in which paternal responsibilities and maintenance requirements were being investigated, would benefit from the supervision of a female Justice of the Peace. The agitation for female Justices of the Peace was not rewarded until 1926, when the first females in this role were appointed.³⁹¹ In 1918 the *Maoriland Worker* reported that in Britain, the Committee of the Penal Reform League had recommended to the Home Secretary that it was advisable for women to attend Juvenile Courts in the interests of child welfare.³⁹²

Women's employment and domestic issues

Women's increased participation in the workforce during the war also encouraged them to expect a more equal partnership in marriage, a demand which had also been advocated by women's organisations before the war. The WCTU declared in 1914 that the 'position of absolute economic dependence upon her husband is a most derogatory one for the wife' and believed that this 'lessen[ed] the authority and dignity of the mother in the home.'³⁹³ The

³⁸⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 189, November 2, 1920, pp. 446-59. The WCTU had advocated women police and women patrols at military camps since 1915, see WCTU Convention Minutes, March 1915, in WCTU Record of Convention Minutes 1913-1918, Turnbull Library, 79-057-09/11.

³⁸⁸ *NZPD*, Vol. 189, November 2, 1920, p. 447.

³⁸⁹ *MW*, March 1, 1916, p. 3.

³⁹⁰ *MW*, March 1, 1916, p. 3. See also *MW*, July 10, 1918, p. 7.

³⁹¹ McLeod, p. 103.

³⁹² *MW*, September 4, 1918, p. 7.

³⁹³ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 17.

WCTU believed that the 'law should secure to every wife a legal claim upon a certain amount of her husband's income or earnings.'³⁹⁴ The *Maoriland Worker* noted in 1915 that:

when [this] war is over some readjustment of our marriage system, based on woman's greater industrial stability, may be feasible; but all of the thinkers are busy over the problem of how best to minimise this end in the future.³⁹⁵

It is significant that even in the early years of the year, there was a consciousness of women's rights and some showed a desire to minimise the extent of the impact of women's increased participation in the workforce. In 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* published a poem entitled 'Woman's Place'. The poem began with the line 'I kept my wife, when first new-wed, On a quite inferior plane; I made of her a servant, And I scorned her heart and brain.' However, by the end of the poem the husband has realised that his wife deserves to be treated as a 'mate' because when given the opportunity she 'talks ... of business schemes, Of politics, ... of the news, Of books and men and [of] modern views'.³⁹⁶ This poem demonstrates the desire of women to be accepted as an equal in marriage, and how much more fulfilling the partnership could be when women were given the chance to share their thoughts and opinions.

Women's increased role in society during the war also encouraged aspirations for permanent change. McLeod asserts that the wartime agitation by New Zealand women for political and social equality demonstrates that their wartime experiences had 'accelerated their growing consciousness.'³⁹⁷ In 1915, the WCTU claimed that 'the law does not yet recognise complete equality of sexes, and until it does we must never cease to educate public opinion, to organise women voters, and to agitate for more advanced legislation.'³⁹⁸ In 1918, the Member of Parliament for Clutha suggested that a superannuation scheme should be instigated for nurses in public hospitals.³⁹⁹ The Minister of Public Health replied that such a scheme could not be introduced until after the war. It is significant that such permanent benefits for female workers, suggesting an equal status with male workers, were advocated towards the end of the war.

Discontent at the rising cost of living and the need for a minimum wage to be established led the *Maoriland Worker* to state that it was:

time that we had a women's labour conference to urge on the Government that something effective be done to reduce the cost of living, and that a statutory

³⁹⁴ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 17.

³⁹⁵ *MW*, November 17, 1915, p. 8.

³⁹⁶ *MW*, September 12, 1917, p. 4.

³⁹⁷ McLeod, p. 104.

³⁹⁸ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 21 no. 248, September 1915, p. 9.

³⁹⁹ Mr Malcolm, *NZPD*, Vol. 182, Addendum, n.d., 1918, p. 282.

minimum living wage be fixed which would rise and fall automatically with [the] rise and fall in the cost of living.⁴⁰⁰

In 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that 'one of the lessons of the war for women ought to be that women particularly have to guard against the lowering of the standard of living. The starvation wages which are being paid to women munition workers in England amount to a National scandal.'⁴⁰¹ The rising cost of living was an issue addressed in Parliament in 1917. It was asserted that the wage of women clerks in the employment of the Government did not include 'suitable annual increments, so that the rate of pay [bore] ... a proper relation to the high cost of living'.⁴⁰² In response, the Minister of Internal Affairs declared that 'suitable' increments existed, and a 'special war bonus' had been granted by the Government 'in connection with the increased cost of living.'⁴⁰³

The rising cost of living was also a concern for Wellington women. In 1917 the *Maoriland Worker* published an article declaring that housewives are 'hindered and hampered in the work of home-making by the high cost of living'. If Wellington housewives 'agree[d] to unite and act together' they could 'immediately reduce the cost of living by co-operative buying.'⁴⁰⁴ This belief that solidarity amongst women could achieve results indicates an awareness amongst women that they could make changes to existing social structures. This belief was echoed by "Wahine" in 1917 when the *Maoriland Worker* reporter declared that:

I have always believed that nothing could stand a concerted and determined effort on the part of any considerable number of [women, and women's movements, despite having] ... to contend with the inertia born of the traditional limitation[s] of woman's sphere.⁴⁰⁵

Although the war years resulted in many new opportunities being offered to women, not all of the changes produced positive gains. In 1917, the National University Senate was asked to consider a request from the Minister of Education that 'some encouragement should be given to girls to study domestic science.'⁴⁰⁶ The request resulted in the Senate stating that 'every girl enter[ed] for matriculation or entrance scholarship [is required to hold] ... a

⁴⁰⁰ *MW*, April 12, 1916, p. 3. Woollacott maintains that in Britain the cost of living rose abruptly with the outbreak of war due to the 'instability of the economy' and unemployment, and it is likely that these were causal factors in the increase in the cost of living in New Zealand, see Woollacott, p. 23.

⁴⁰¹ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7. This is another example of the situation in Britain being used to further the New Zealand workers cause.

⁴⁰² *NZPD*, Vol. 180, October 1, 1917, p. 552.

⁴⁰³ *NZPD*, Vol. 180, October 1, 1917, p. 552. The Board of Trade issued a report in 1918 maintaining that 'every endeavour ha[d] been made by the Government ... to keep the cost of living in New Zealand down to a reasonable level.' The report contended that food prices in New Zealand had risen at a lesser rate than 'in any other part of the British Empire.' See *NZPD*, Vol. 182, April 15, 1918, p. 251. This contradicts an earlier claim by an Australian economist that 'the home consumers of New Zealand [we]re being compelled to pay unduly high prices' for goods. Mr. Meredith Atkinson, quoted in *New Zealand Farmer*, April 1915, p. 533.

⁴⁰⁴ *MW*, November 14, 1917, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁵ *MW*, February 21, 1917, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁶ *MW*, February 14, 1917, p. 7.

certificate ... stating that she has taken a course in domestic science.⁴⁰⁷ The response from the *Maoriland Worker* was striking – under the headline “An Injustice to Women: Back to the Dark Ages”, the *Maoriland Worker* questioned the right of the Senate to ‘place restrictions upon the freedom which girls should have to enter any public examination which is the entrance to some future career?’ The article declared that the restriction was unjust, given that males did not face any similar restriction. The *Maoriland Worker* described ‘the members of that unjust body [the University Senate] ... [as being] of one mind with the German Kaiser.’⁴⁰⁸ The WCTU also disagreed with the stipulation, and wondered whether the requirement for extra study was ‘done to give the boy a better chance.’⁴⁰⁹

Conclusion

The increased participation of women in the workforce in both New Zealand and Britain during the Great War caused disruption to social norms and forced the New Zealand government and media to evaluate and discuss the employment of women not as an abstract concept but as a concrete reality. Measures adopted by the governments of both New Zealand and Britain emphasised women’s work as temporary and placed restrictions on the extent to which women could advance. Women’s participation in the workforce was also recognised as an important issue by the media, and received extensive coverage in newspapers. Even socialist newspapers such as the *Maoriland Worker* - which acknowledged the role of women - were ambivalent in their statements about women’s participation, fearing that it would lower wages. Despite this, women used their more public role in the workforce to campaign for equality with their male counterparts, and sought equal pay and political representation. As women gained confidence from engaging in political issues on a small scale, they turned their attention to wider issues, and petitioned for women to be eligible to hold positions of responsibility, such as justices of the peace and police. In both New Zealand and Britain, women wanted their political rights extended. In Britain, women were not yet eligible to vote, whilst in New Zealand women wanted the right to stand for Parliament. The debate that eventuated due to women’s demands for fair political representation will be discussed in Chapter Four.

⁴⁰⁷ *MW*, February 14, 1917, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁸ *MW*, February 14, 1917, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁹ *White Ribbon*, vol. 22 no. 260, February 1917, p. 9.

The Women's Parliamentary Rights Bill, enabling women to stand for Parliament, has been passed by both Houses.



A PEEP INTO THE FUTURE

The Honourable the LEADERESS of the
Opposition has a few words with the
HONOURABLE the PRIME MINISTER

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RETURN TO DOMESTICITY AND PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

Chapter Three examined the response to the increased number of women employed in both New Zealand and Britain during the Great War. This chapter investigates the post-war ramifications for women's employment, and outlines the actions undertaken by both governments to reduce the number of women remaining in employment after the war. The effects of the Great War on women's employment are analysed, and the post-war political concessions granted to women are examined. Firstly, the impact that returned servicemen had on women's employment is investigated. The government policies that decreed women's work was temporary and the post-war emphasis on maternity and domesticity are examined. New Zealand women were granted the right to stand for parliamentary representation after the war, and the reasons for this are analysed. Lastly, the progress of New Zealand and British women during the war period is measured, and the extent to which the war contributed to the progress is determined.

Rewarding Heroes: Employment for Returned Servicemen

After the war, the employment of women became an issue in both New Zealand and Britain due to the large number of men returning from overseas. Returning servicemen were held in great regard by society, and there was a natural desire to reward returning heroes. Women's wartime contribution had been acknowledged, however their role was seen as a temporary one. In New Zealand, returned servicemen received preferential treatment for vacancies, and by the early 1920s the employment opportunities for women in the public service, which had opened up during wartime, were diminishing.⁴¹⁰ There was considerable debate over the best way to integrate the returned soldiers into the workforce, and confusion over how to manage the surplus workers that would result. Mathieson has argued that New Zealand's 'sympathies were first and foremost engaged by the men who [had] fought for her. [Whilst] it was noted that such a policy could cause hardship to many women, nevertheless it was assumed ... that such a policy was proper and right.'⁴¹¹ Some publications foreshadowed these issues during wartime. The *Otago Witness* questioned whether women could 'rise above egotistical [aims], ... above even desire for the advancement of women alone?' The paper declared that 'returned soldiers must have the first consideration' when jobs were advertised.⁴¹² The 1916 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner notes that 'early

⁴¹⁰ Dalley, p. 23.

⁴¹¹ Mathieson, p. 24.

⁴¹² *Otago Witness*, August 21, 1918, p. 55, cited in McLeod, p. 114.

in 1915' it was decided that 'preferential consideration should be given to returned soldiers for any vacancies in the Public Service for which [the soldiers] ... were considered suitable.'⁴¹³ Reports reproduced in New Zealand from British newspapers reinforced the dominant discourse that women's work had been temporary. As early as 1917, the *Maoriland Worker* had printed an article from the British newspaper *The Exchange* on the topic of women's place in society. The article proclaimed that the "[w]oman's place is the home," [had previously been] ... the old tag used as an excuse for not giving women the franchise or paying improved wages to those actually employed.' The article concluded by declaring that although the 'old tag [wa]s now stowed away, ... it [would] ... be brought forth again when needed by our opponents!'⁴¹⁴ This is significant as it indicates that in the midst of the employment expansion experienced by British women during the war, there were some doubts as to the permanence of the changes.

In 1919 the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the Wellington branch of the Returned Servicemen's Association [RSA] had discussed the policy 'regarding the action to be taken where employers refused to dismiss women and girls who had been given temporary work'. A member of the Repatriation Department, Mr Batten, replied that the RSA was 'against any coercion' and doubted that the 'returned soldier wished to take a job from a woman or girl.'⁴¹⁵ Mr Batten did, however, believe that there 'was a certain type of employer who did not care whom he employed as long as he got cheap labour' and declared that these employers were 'most enthusiastic in their send-offs to the boys and had [promised to] "keep the job open" when the soldier returned.' Mr Batten concluded that 'only as a last resort would the Association press for the dismissal of these girls' and he asserted that the 'soldiers themselves ... would not consent to such tactics.'⁴¹⁶

Government bodies were planning for the post-war period before the war ended. The NEB was concerned about how returned servicemen would re-enter the workforce, and made a recommendation that the Government request employers to employ returned servicemen in 'all essential businesses and industries' despite women's efforts in the workforce.⁴¹⁷ The NEB believed that many returned servicemen would return to their previous occupations, and informed the Government that it would be helpful to the Board if they could gain access to any reports 'regarding repatriation in agricultural and industrial matters' from the US, Canada,

⁴¹³ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 8. McLeod maintains that with the end of the war, 'vigorous efforts were made to persuade women to surrender clerical positions in the Civil Service in favour of returned servicemen', cited in Olssen, 'Women, Work and Family', p. 180.

⁴¹⁴ *MW*, April 4, 1917, p. 7.

⁴¹⁵ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴¹⁶ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴¹⁷ National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Acting Prime Minister James Allen, June 5, 1918, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1918-1919, Vol. 3, Turnbull Library, qMS-1527.

Australia and South Africa.⁴¹⁸ The Board was also concerned about the occupations that the returned servicemen would engage in. In a report to the Acting Prime Minister in February 1917, the Board noted that it was 'afraid that there [wa]s a risk that returned soldiers may drift into occupations far below their true standard of fitness and efficiency, with a consequent loss both to the State and to the individual.'⁴¹⁹ The Board also noted societal concerns about the returning soldiers. In 1918 the NEB stated that there was 'a strong tendency among certain sections of the community to suggest that the first aim of repatriation should be to absorb as many men as possible in the public services.'⁴²⁰ The Board declared that they believed this to be wrong, and the aim should be to 'place the returned men in the various wealth producing occupations and ordinary channels of life.'⁴²¹

The Government set up the Repatriation Department under the 1918 Repatriation Act. The aim of the department was to 'help every discharged soldier requiring assistance to secure for himself a position in the community at least as good as that relinquished by him when he joined the colours.'⁴²² The department offered help with training, employment and financial aid, and also extended this to the widows of soldiers. The inaugural report for the Department noted that 'training facilities in useful occupations for soldiers' widows without children, and sustenance whilst undergoing training ... may be afforded by the Department.'⁴²³ However, the Department limited the income of the widows, noting that when their pension was added, their individual incomes were not to exceed £1 15s per week.⁴²⁴

Constructive Dismissals? Government Policies on Women in Post-war Employment

A variety of pressures and patriotic rhetoric were employed in the post-war period to encourage New Zealand women to leave the workforce.⁴²⁵ Nolan maintains that the Government 'channelled' women away from men's jobs in a 'subtle defence of men's interests' and the use of marriage bars led to the employment conditions of female public

⁴¹⁸ National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Acting Prime Minister James Allen, June 6, 1918, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1918-1919, Vol. 3, Turnbull Library, qMS-1527; National Efficiency Board Memorandum to Acting Prime Minister James Allen, July 8, 1918, in National Efficiency Board Memoranda, 1918-1919, Vol. 3, Turnbull Library, qMS-1527.

⁴¹⁹ National Efficiency Board Report, *AJHR*, 1917, H-34, p. 6.

⁴²⁰ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 13.

⁴²¹ National Efficiency Board 1918 Annual Report, Turnbull Library, qMS-1523, p. 13.

⁴²² Memorandum regarding the organisation and operations of the Repatriation Department, *AJHR*, 1919, H-30, p. 1.

⁴²³ Memorandum regarding the organisation and operations of the Repatriation Department, *AJHR*, 1919, H-30, p. 6.

⁴²⁴ Memorandum regarding the organisation and operations of the Repatriation Department, *AJHR*, 1919, H-30, p. 6.

⁴²⁵ In Britain, women who had been encouraged to show their patriotism during the war by working were told after the war that it was unpatriotic to 'hang onto a job rightfully belonging to an ex-serviceman', see DeGroot, p. 262. Similar sentiments were also expressed in New Zealand, see McLeod, p. 117.

servants deteriorating, as these destroyed women's 'relative equality'.⁴²⁶ Enforcing the marriage bar ensured that female labour had a large turnover, which in turn kept women as a 'cheap pool of labour'.⁴²⁷ Nolan declares that single women were 'pushed to the bottom of the labour hierarchy and out of the [public] service'.⁴²⁸ Brown notes that 'postwar reservations' led to the number of temporary workers – most of whom were women – declining dramatically.⁴²⁹ She notes that in April 1921 the number of temporary workers in the Public Service peaked at 2 089, however this number had declined to 583 by November 1921.⁴³⁰ The decline in the number of positions labelled as "temporary" would suggest that the Public Service always intended to decrease the number of women it employed once the war was over.

In Britain, as in New Zealand, the end of the war proved problematic. If women were to return to their pre-war position in society, they would have to leave their jobs as soon as the war had finished in order to fit their characterisation as "temporary" war workers, who had done their bit "for the duration" of the war. If women workers stayed in their jobs after the war had ended, women would become 'permanent co-workers with men, and their industrial position would be transformed'.⁴³¹ One significant difference between Britain and New Zealand was that in the post-war period, the British Government adopted a vigorous legislative programme aimed at taking working class women out of the workforce. The Government was concerned about unemployment levels amongst returned soldiers and emphasised that employers should give priority to them over women and non-serving men.⁴³² Thom maintains that the British Government wanted to create the 'impression of novelty and difference' in reports analysing women's wartime employment which were written after the war. This would help to ensure that women's increased participation in the workforce during the war would not be considered typical.⁴³³ An official survey of subsistence wages was released after the war, which declared that a man's normal wage requirement was from 'one and a half to three times that of a woman'.⁴³⁴ This was despite an employment report which had revealed that about half of the women working for wages were supporting dependents.⁴³⁵ These measures reiterated that women's increased participation in the workforce during the war was to be considered temporary.

⁴²⁶ Nolan, p. 27.

⁴²⁷ Brown, p. 9.

⁴²⁸ Nolan, p. 27.

⁴²⁹ Brown, p. 33.

⁴³⁰ Brown, pp. 33, 59.

⁴³¹ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 174.

⁴³² Gail Braybon and Penny Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars*, London: Pandora Press, 1987, p. 121.

⁴³³ Thom, p. 89. She maintains that employers also supported this measure.

⁴³⁴ Mitchell, p. 380.

⁴³⁵ Mitchell, p. 380.

The British Government also passed legislation that favoured the return of men to the workforce. The Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act, which took jobs away from working class women, was passed in 1919.⁴³⁶ The Act was enforced for one year, during which men were reinstated in their jobs and women were dispersed 'so efficiently as to make their employment ... difficult in the future.'⁴³⁷ Briar notes that many women were 'hurried[ly] ... ejected from their wartime occupations', including those who were working in trades that had not existed before the war.⁴³⁸ This practice would seem to go beyond the scope of the bill, the title of which suggested that women would only be forced to leave jobs in which women had not worked before the war. That the Government removed women from areas of employment which had been developed since the onset of war suggests that the Government was trying to purge women in general from the labour force, and in particular from jobs which were not traditionally considered "women's work". Pressure was applied upon women to 'move back into low-paid, unpopular occupations, particularly domestic service or into dependence on a husband.'⁴³⁹ Braybon contends that once it was realised that women could work competently outside the traditional domestic sphere and undertake work that had previously been classified as "men's", society's criticism of working women deepened to 'outright hostility, and a determination to keep them out of men's jobs at all costs.'⁴⁴⁰ In occupations such as teaching and clerical work, which were open to both men and women, the marriage bar was used to limit both the number of women working, and the duration for which they could work. Although the marriage bar had existed before the war, Briar maintains that the use of it 'greatly intensified' after the war.⁴⁴¹ Once again, women's economic position was viewed in terms of their relationship within the family – women could work until they were married, but after this they were assumed to be working within the home.⁴⁴² This premise encouraged women to believe that they were still "employed" once they left paid work, neutralising resistance to their departure from wartime employment.

⁴³⁶ McCalman points out that this bill was supported by the National Federation of Women Workers. This group was the largest representative of women, and McCalman asserts that they were a group which would have been likely to protest had they disagreed with the proposal, see McCalman, p. 39. However, DeGroot notes that the Federation 'benignly accepted a moral obligation to give way to men', which may explain why the Federation did not criticize the bill, see DeGroot, p. 262. If so, the effectiveness of women's political representation may be questioned. Federation membership grew from 11 000 in 1914 to 60 000 in 1919. The Federation gained representation on government committees that were dealing with women workers, and 'negotiated ... with the bigger and more powerful male trade unions', see Davies, p. 87.

⁴³⁷ McCalman, p. 39.

⁴³⁸ Briar, pp. 45-47. See also Thom, pp. 44-45. Pugh describes the 'ruthless removal of women from their wartime role', see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 81.

⁴³⁹ Briar, p. 46. The war had caused the death of many male breadwinners, so the post-war period also saw many women legitimately competing for jobs as a means of feeding their families, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 29.

⁴⁴⁰ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 208.

⁴⁴¹ Briar, p. 52. Glucksmann maintains that in Britain the marriage bar was used by the Government to ensure that the primary role of married women was in the domestic economy, in an attempt to maintain the primary status of domestic work in a time 'when this might not occur automatically', see Glucksmann, fn 13, p. 300.

⁴⁴² Briar, p. 64.

The actions of the Government do seem to have been recognised at the time by some women. Winifred Holtby believed that the protective legislation that the British Government had introduced only:

perpetuate[d] the notion that [women] are not quite persons; that they are not able to look after themselves; to secure their own interests, to judge whether they are fit or unfit to continue employment after marriage, to enter certain trades, or to assume equal responsibility with men ...⁴⁴³

The British Government did not introduce any legislation after the war that supported the continuation of women in industry, and offered women training schemes for the traditionally female trades and also domestic education for war brides.⁴⁴⁴ The Ministry of Reconstruction believed that many women factory workers did not have the skills necessary to run a home.⁴⁴⁵ This resulted in the domestic service training scheme being set up by the Ministry of Labour, in an attempt to 'retrain "redundant" industrial workers and make them more suitable domestic workers' and develop skills considered necessary for being an efficient and competent wife.⁴⁴⁶ A pamphlet advertising one such domestic scheme stated that:

A call comes again to the women of Britain ... a call to help renew the homes of England, to sew and to mend, to cook and to clean and to rear babies in health and happiness, who shall in their turn grow into men and women worthy of the Empire.⁴⁴⁷

Thom contends that women were not particularly enthused about these schemes, however the schemes which taught 'genuine specialised domestic skill[s]' such as needlework or cooking proved most useful in aiding women to find work after the war.⁴⁴⁸ The domestic emphasis of the Government campaign was successful, with 40% more women being employed in the Domestic sector in 1919 than had been in 1918.⁴⁴⁹ Summers notes that the Government engineered the return of women into domestic work by denying women workers unemployment compensation if they refused the only employment offered to them - domestic service.⁴⁵⁰

It was not only the British Government that seemed to have no awareness that many women would be reluctant to revert to their pre-war roles. The *Daily Graphic* believed that women

⁴⁴³ Quoted in Susan Kingsley Kent, 'The Politics of Sexual Difference: World War One and the Demise of British Feminism', in *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3, July 1988, pp. 243-4.

⁴⁴⁴ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 180. Domestic education was also strongly advocated by the New Zealand Government in the post-war period, see *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁴⁵ Thom, p. 171.

⁴⁴⁶ Briar, p. 55.

⁴⁴⁷ Quoted in Thom, p. 41.

⁴⁴⁸ Thom, p. 171.

⁴⁴⁹ DeGroot, p. 264.

⁴⁵⁰ Anne Summers, 'Public Functions, Private Premises: Female Professional Identity and the Domestic-Service Paradigm in Britain, c. 1850-1930', in Billie Melman (ed.), *Borderlines: Genders and Identities in War and Peace 1870-1930*, New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 370.

war workers who were 'formerly in domestic service ... should have no difficulty in finding vacancies.'⁴⁵¹ It was simply assumed that women would return to their previous work, grounded firmly within the traditional female sphere. This may be due to the working class nature of the jobs – women who were employed in war work may have been praised for their work, but they did not gain promotion in any form after the war. If women were members of the working class before the war, and had been engaged in industrial working class jobs during the war, there was an implicit assumption that they would return to working class occupations in the domestic sector after the war, even if this meant a drop in earnings. The 'potential that had been shown during [by women] during the war was ignored, and women were still valued for their cheapness, dexterity, tolerance of boredom and lack of ambition.'⁴⁵² Briar contends that for the majority of British women, the interwar period was one where the 'small gains achieved by hard work before and during the Great War were systematically removed.'⁴⁵³ Briar maintains that despite evidence that women were 'much more productive workers than the men they had replaced', the state wanted to 'promote harmony between male labour and capital', even if this was at 'the expense of working women.'⁴⁵⁴ This is in contrast to the situation in New Zealand, where women were less likely to enter working class industrial jobs.

In both New Zealand and Britain, it appears to have been acceptable for a small proportion of educated women to work on a temporary basis in the professions. This may have been due to the belief that these women were not as politically conscious as the working class, and would not attempt to permanently change the status of women in employment. However, in apparent contrast to the Restoration of Prewar Practices Act, the British Government also enacted the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which enabled a few – mainly middle class – women to gain entry to the professions, provided that they were not married. These women entered jobs with the condition that they remained single, and on terms which were not the same as those accorded to male employees.⁴⁵⁵

Reviving and Recreating the Cult of Domesticity: Medical, Educational and Media Rhetoric

Government policy, as embodied by the NEB, and a revival of the "cult of domesticity" emphasising health concerns, led to a change in focus for many New Zealand women.⁴⁵⁶ The

⁴⁵¹ Undated article, quoted in Mitchell, p. 266.

⁴⁵² Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 226.

⁴⁵³ Briar, p. 64. This opinion would suggest that parliamentary representation was not considered to be a reward for wartime work.

⁴⁵⁴ Briar, p. 47.

⁴⁵⁵ Briar, p. 63. Rowbotham described the post-war period in Britain as being a 'confusing picture of advances and setbacks', see Rowbotham, p. 90.

⁴⁵⁶ In contrast to this, Olssen maintains that the 'great majority' of young working women had 'no desire for any career other than marriage', indicating that he believes women's

war had 'propelled mothers and babies on to the public agenda' and many of those women who had worked during the war now found themselves out of jobs, and were being influenced by the Government to repopulate the nation.⁴⁵⁷ Tennant maintains that due to the encouragements of 'the State and its agencies, [women] now consciously sought fulfillment in home-life and devoted, satisfied maternity.'⁴⁵⁸ Hence, domestic ideals began to take a larger role in everyday life and McLeod describes the influence that this 'glorification ... of the home' exerted.⁴⁵⁹ Daley notes that women's 'domestic work, motherhood, and ideas about true motherhood were intricately linked.'⁴⁶⁰ The wartime skills that had been gained by women working were now being advocated as being useful in preparing a woman for home making. Office work was advocated as teaching the 'business girl how to overcome difficulties' she would later face when running her household.⁴⁶¹ It was asserted by a female employee at Farmers in 1925 that the office girl had:

learned resourcefulness and acquired a habit of keeping her head under all circumstances, so that the problems of the home are comparatively slight, and she sets herself to mastering them with the same efficiency that has been required of her ... [in] her business career ...⁴⁶²

The economic recession which followed the war increased fears that the 'working woman was endangering the future of the nation by losing her maternal and domestic skills'.⁴⁶³ The *Maoriland Worker* reported in 1919 that the 'subject ... occup[ying] the minds of all society to-day' was 'Keep the cradles full, Save the babies, Replenish the nation.'⁴⁶⁴ However, the emphasis on domesticity was not embraced by all of society. The WCTU claimed that it

experiences during the war did not significantly change their own expectations, see Olssen, 'Women, Work and Society', p. 166. For a description of the "cult of domesticity" see Erik Olssen and Andrée Lévesque, 'Towards a History of the European Family in New Zealand', in Peggy G. Koopman-Boyden (ed.), *Families in New Zealand Society*, Wellington: Methven Publications (NZ) Ltd., 1978, p. 8.

⁴⁵⁷ Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 136.

⁴⁵⁸ Tennant, p. 117.

⁴⁵⁹ McLeod, p. 117. Owen maintains that the 'cult of domesticity' was promoted in newspapers in an effort to encourage women to leave the workforce and return home, see Owen, p. 13. Perrett notes that wartime medical inspections had shown many soldiers to be 'too unhealthy or unfit to participate fully in the war effort', which led to increased emphasis on the need for women to produce 'mentally and physically healthy British citizens' after the war, see Sara L. Perrett, "'Supreme Work of Home-Making and Child-Rearing.": Representations of Motherhood in 1920s Australia and New Zealand', BA(Hons) Research Exercise in History, Massey University, 2003, pp. 3, 15.

⁴⁶⁰ Caroline Daley, *Girls & Women, Men & Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999, p. 71.

⁴⁶¹ Brown, p. 67.

⁴⁶² Essay by Sylvia Stafford Walker, 'Does the Business Girl Make the Best Housewife?', published in *Every Girl*, 1925, quoted in Brown, p. 67.

⁴⁶³ Dalley, p. 23.

⁴⁶⁴ *MW*, December 3, 1919, p. 4.

would be bad for the nation:

if its women were only housekeepers, and nothing else. Worse would it be for those women who, after learning to housekeep, can do nothing but wait for some man to come along and provide the house for them to keep.⁴⁶⁵

The WCTU saw domestic skills as limiting women's potential, and inevitably leading to dependence on males for their livelihood.

Some parliamentarians also expressed concern about the position of women in society. In 1920, Mr Thomson, member of the Legislative Council, declared that although he had:

watched the work of women during the war ... with approval, ... [it had become] a matter of ... anxiety as to whether [women] ... were going to continue in the class of work they were doing, or were to fall back into the old ways that so many of them had followed before the war.⁴⁶⁶

Mr Thomson maintained that he was 'afraid that a great number of the younger women ha[d] fallen back into those idle ways, and [we]re losing the great impetus that the war [had given] ... them.⁴⁶⁷ Whilst details pertaining to the 'idle ways' that young women had apparently engaged in before the war were not given, Mr Thomson obviously believed that women's increased participation in the workforce during the war years had been a positive occurrence.

Motherhood, and the notion that women's place was in the home, gave 'increased legitimacy' to the concept of the sole male breadwinner as primary income earner, and indicated a return to pre-war ideals for women.⁴⁶⁸ In 1919, the *Maoriland Worker* reported that the Home Science Department of the Auckland Education Board had announced that 'it was a great mistake to suppose that cooking, keeping house, and rearing children came naturally to women' and that it was due to the low regard with which domestic duties were held that 'women have not thought it worthy of study and preparation.'⁴⁶⁹ The Education Board believed that '[o]rganised clubs of homemakers, lectures on home problems, magazines and bulletins' would help to 'lower the percentage of ignorance' amongst women.⁴⁷⁰ The article used a British context to demonstrate the necessity of domestic knowledge by stating that in the first year of the Great War, 'more babies died in the British Isles than soldiers fell in

⁴⁶⁵ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 22 no. 260, February 1917, p. 9.

⁴⁶⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 189, November 2, 1920, p. 458.

⁴⁶⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 189, November 2, 1920, p. 458.

⁴⁶⁸ Perrett, p. 3. This reiterated the ideal that women's place was in the home, and not in the workforce.

⁴⁶⁹ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁷⁰ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7. These concerns still appear to have been valid in 1922, when an article on the New Zealand Plunket Society noted that 'the average girl of to-day ... enters a profession, an office or a factory [once she has left school]. She has little desire and scant opportunity to learn anything about housekeeping. Of the care of babies she know absolutely nothing until she marries, and her own arrives.' Quoted in Perrett, p. 71. A similar concern seems to have been present in Britain – in the 1920s, the monthly magazines *Good Housekeeping*, *Women and Home*, and *Harpers Bazaar* all appeared for the first time, see Glucksmann, p. 239.

battle.⁴⁷¹ Wartime medical inspections of soldiers had also raised concerns about racial degeneration. Two-thirds of New Zealand's army recruits had not reached the top fitness grade due to ill health or lack of fitness, which led to an increased emphasis on women to produce 'mentally and physically healthy British citizens' after the war.⁴⁷² Domestic ideals were also emphasised in the aftermath of the 1918-19 influenza epidemic, due to the Commission of Enquiry into the epidemic concluding that one reason that the epidemic had spread so quickly was because of the 'unsanitary conditions in many New Zealand homes as a result of women's poor housekeeping skills.'⁴⁷³ The Minister of Health pronounced that all women should be 'compelled to attend public lectures on household management and hygiene.'⁴⁷⁴

Whilst domestic work was advocated as being most suitable for women after the war, women who chose to stay in the workforce did so despite increasing disapproval. In New Zealand, it was suggested that if women continued to work once the soldiers returned to work, competition for jobs would eventuate, with dire results for the children of the country. Competition was not viewed as being healthy for women, and would lead to the 'undesirable result of smothering maternal instincts, of increasing infant mortality and juvenile delinquency, of undermining women's physical strength, and so, ultimately, deteriorate the whole race.'⁴⁷⁵ The medical profession provided a scientific justification for women remaining within the domestic sphere, declaring that due to their distinctive biology, women were 'psychologically programmed to have children and manage households.'⁴⁷⁶ Interestingly, health concerns do not seem to have been touted as a reason to prevent New Zealand women from entering the workforce. The 1918 Annual Report for the Public Service Department includes statistics pertaining to the health of permanent officers. In the year ending November 30, 1917, the average length of time absent for all staff was four days for men, and eight days for women.⁴⁷⁷ It is immediately obvious that these statistics indicate that female employees spent more time absent from work than male employees, and if the department had so wished, a claim could have been made that women were not able to deal

⁴⁷¹ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7. Rowbotham notes that there was a 10 per cent rise in the infant mortality rate in the first year of the war, see Rowbotham, p. 81. Perrett notes that the infant welfare movement was formed in Australia in 1918, see Perrett, p. 2.

⁴⁷² Perrett, pp. 3, 15. Perrett notes that a similar campaign was underway in Australia, where it was declared that 'The Nation with babies has the future. Australia needs ... better babies [and] strong, healthy children with sound constitutions', Lactogen natural-milk food advertisement, 1920, cited in Perrett, p. 47.

⁴⁷³ Perrett, p. 15.

⁴⁷⁴ Perrett, pp. 15-16. Perrett also notes that by 1918 a female sanitary inspector had been appointed, see Perrett, p. 16.

⁴⁷⁵ *MW*, July 12, 1916, p. 3, cited in McLeod, p. 117. This post-war concern for maternal health and the link with the welfare of the nation was still evident in 1920. An advertisement in the *EP* for Kruschen Salts declared that the 'safeguarding of Women's health [would ensure] ... the future of our race', see Perrett, p. 50.

⁴⁷⁶ Olssen and Levesque, p. 8.

⁴⁷⁷ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 10.

with the physical and mental demands of work. However, no such comment was made in the report, suggesting that there were no significant concerns regarding the absenteeism of female employees. It was noted in 1918 that an 'influx of women into the Public Service' was underway, which 'necessitated the devising of means to meet the altered conditions, foremost amongst which [was] ... the care of women by a female medical officer.'⁴⁷⁸

In contrast to this, in Britain it has been contended that the issue of women's health was used to keep women out of certain jobs during the war, and for accepting their high rate of unemployment after the war.⁴⁷⁹ Britain's birth rate declined during the war years, and this, combined with concern about the lack of men available to fight meant that 'the attitudes of women towards their traditional function of motherhood became an abiding issue'.⁴⁸⁰ However, the war also challenged commonly held perceptions about women's health. In 1915, the Health of Munition Workers Committee investigated the effect of work on women's health. The ensuing reports opposed 'excessive hours of employment for women', however they did not imply that women were 'physically incapable of such work', which was a reason often given to deny women work, and equal pay.⁴⁸¹ However, factory work did involve an element of risk - in particular, munitions work was dangerous. Woollacott notes that a 'significant number' of both men and women died whilst working in munitions factories.⁴⁸² Factory injuries were common, whilst the poisonous chemicals used in the manufacture of shells led to TNT poisoning. Working with explosives also meant that there was a risk of explosions.⁴⁸³ Thom notes that the 'direct physical effects on the hands' caused by factory work often prevented women from working in domestic work, particularly needlework, after the war.⁴⁸⁴

McLeod notes that in New Zealand, the one group of women who were exempt from the pressure to give up work and aspire to domestic ideals were unmarried women who were slightly older. The *Otago Witness* described the period after the war as being the 'Great Spinster Age', and women who felt that they had little chance of finding a husband were told

⁴⁷⁸ 1918 Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner, p. 11.

⁴⁷⁹ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 137.

⁴⁸⁰ Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 15.

⁴⁸¹ Briar, p. 41.

⁴⁸² Woollacott, p. 9.

⁴⁸³ Woollacott notes that women working with TNT often developed jaundice, and were known as "canary girls", due to their face, hair and hands turning yellow. In 1916 it was decreed that TNT work was to be classified as a "dangerous trade". The number of fatalities during the 1914-1918 period due to factory explosions is unknown - Woollacott notes that the British Government believed that general knowledge of the incidents would 'undermine a public morale already fully challenged by the battlefronts of the war and would jeopardise the labour force necessary for munitions production', see Woollacott, pp. 80-86.

⁴⁸⁴ Thom, p. 73.

that 'they "must find the fullness of life in other ways", namely in a career.'⁴⁸⁵ Glucksmann has noted a similar trend in Britain, where the war had killed a significant proportion of young, unmarried British men, and thus there were many women who would never marry because all the eligible males had found brides. She notes that many of the unmarried "surplus" women chose to engage in continuous employment in the period following the Great War.⁴⁸⁶ The post-war period saw the average age of marriage increase, a trend which also observed in New Zealand. Briar notes that this indicates that women with careers often waited before marrying, in order to delay 'giving up their independent income.'⁴⁸⁷

However, this view is not held by all historians. Judith Owen asserts that the economic climate in New Zealand after the war was 'more favourable towards single women working.' She maintains that the maturing sex ratio, the deaths of many eligible men in the war and increased industrialisation resulted in more clerical and factory jobs being available for women.⁴⁸⁸ As discussed in Chapter One, women continued to increase their numbers within the Professional and Commercial sectors after the war, whilst the proportion of women within the Industrial sector remained steady.⁴⁸⁹ This indicates that although women were encouraged to leave the workforce, many chose to remain. This is possibly the result of the lack of manpower available after the war – nearly 17 000 New Zealanders did not return from fighting overseas.⁴⁹⁰ It is also possible that the post-war influenza epidemic which killed 8 573 people meant that all available workers were required.⁴⁹¹ Rice notes that between a third and one half of the total New Zealand population was infected with influenza during the epidemic.⁴⁹² In particular, males were more susceptible than females to the illness, and young adults aged 25-45 had an 'unusually high' mortality rate.⁴⁹³ This would have increased the number of women entering the workforce, however the epidemic was shortlived, and Rice

⁴⁸⁵ *Otago Witness*, October 31, 1917, p. 52 and December 26, 1917, p. 49, cited in McLeod, p. 113. However, it is interesting to note that in 1920, the matter of girls' education was discussed in Parliament. At the 'insistence of a number of ladies interested in education', Dr A.K. Newman queried whether 'continuation classes for girls up to 18 years of age' would be provided. He maintained that it 'was felt by a number of women that that [18] was a critical age for girls, and that it would be an advantage if they continued at some school till they were eighteen years of age.' See *NZPD*, Vol. 188, October 14, 1920, p. 572.

⁴⁸⁶ Glucksmann, p. 42.

⁴⁸⁷ Briar, p. 64.

⁴⁸⁸ Owen, p. 13. In addition, Owen notes that paid work also became more acceptable for middle class single women prior to marriage, see Owen, p. 13.

⁴⁸⁹ Females constituted 41% of the Professional workforce in 1916, with a comparative figure of 43% for 1921. The proportion of women within the Commercial sector rose slightly from 25% in 1916 to 26% in 1921, whilst women constituted 17% of the Industrial workforce in both 1916 and 1921. See Table Three, p. 17.

⁴⁹⁰ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, 4th rev. ed., Auckland: Penguin Books, 1991, p. 233.

⁴⁹¹ I have used Rice's revised mortality figures, which combine numbers for the European and Maori populations, see Rice, p. 159.

⁴⁹² Rice, p. 2.

⁴⁹³ Rice states that 63% of Europeans that died in the epidemic were male, see Rice, pp. 3-4, 159.

notes that the cost of the epidemic to the 'business community was ... fairly readily absorbed' and the economic effect was limited.⁴⁹⁴

In the post-war period, there was continued speculation and debate regarding women's place in the New Zealand workforce, and letters to the women's page of the *Maoriland Worker* in 1919 echoed this. Mrs W.J. Williams of Greymouth declared that women did not take any interest in Labour movements due to their 'unintelligence and ... apathy' which were the result of allowing the 'struggles of life [to] get them down, [so] that they really fe[lt] there [was] ... no help for them and that it [was] ... a lost cause the men [we]re fighting, as they [saw] ... no immediate results.'⁴⁹⁵ Mrs Williams' solution for this was through women rising above 'this state of apathy and ignorance, ... and [put their] ... shoulder to the wheel with the men' which would lead to a 'much more hopeful state of affairs'.⁴⁹⁶ In October 1919, a letter to the editor of the women's page of the *Maoriland Worker* declared that it was 'much ... regretted that women [had] ... cut into the occupations hitherto held by the male sex'. A female reader's response to this letter declared that during the 'recent man-made war[,] men [had] invited and urged women to take up those occupations and [had] acknowledged that the war would not have been won otherwise.'⁴⁹⁷ "Shubia" also declared that 'the sex warfare which Mr Hulbert writes [of] is a figment. Women are indeed waging a war, but it is against injustice – not against men.' Thus the response had been written in 'protest against [Mr Hulbert's] ... letter, not because he is a man, but because he is unjust [in his accusations]'.⁴⁹⁸

The apparent contradiction in the reversal of sentiments regarding women's capabilities and value to the workforce was noted by the media. The *Auckland Labour News* declared in 1919 that women 'have discovered that the compliments bestowed on them for their services during the war were in many cases simply blarney'.⁴⁹⁹ However, women do seem to have received recognition from their peers for their work. The Department of Labour conducted interviews with many of their employees in 1919, and the majority of female employees were described in positive terms. For example, Miss Maxwell worked as a Correspondence Clerk and was described as 'doing very well', and as being 'fully acquainted with the details of the work in the Department'.⁵⁰⁰

Recent scholarship on post-war employment among British women has observed similar media reports to those identified in New Zealand. After the war, the return of large numbers

⁴⁹⁴ Rice, p. 191.

⁴⁹⁵ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁶ *MW*, August 27, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁷ *MW*, October 29, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁸ *MW*, October 29, 1919, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁹ *Auckland Labour News*, January 1919, p. 7, cited in McLeod, p. 124.

⁵⁰⁰ Reports on Staff Members, 1919, L9 - Department of Labour records, Staffing 1906-31, National Archives, p. 1. See p. 3 of the reports for additional examples.

of servicemen and a rapidly contracting job market meant that women could no longer be seen as the primary source of labour. To validate men as being the primary workforce again, a sudden reversal of public attitudes towards women workers was required, and the media were a strong force in this change of opinion of women workers. Clarsen notes that 'many' contemporary commentators noted the speed at which the 'discourse celebrating female technical competence turned against women of all classes' once the war ended.⁵⁰¹ During the war, the *Daily Chronicle* declared that the 'nation's debt to these heroic women [workers], many of whom have lost their husbands in the war, is so great that it may even be likened to the debt which the nation owes to its soldiers and seamen.'⁵⁰² However, the end of the war led the *Daily Graphic* to declare that 'the idea that because the State called for women to help the nation, the State must continue to employ them is too absurd for sensible women to entertain.'⁵⁰³ Women workers who did not give up employment after the war ended were 'suddenly' portrayed as 'parasites' and 'blacklegs' who chose to continue working for their own gains despite a more deserving source of employment being available – returned servicemen.⁵⁰⁴ The Ministry of Labour was 'unremitting in its endeavours to secure the reinstatement of men in their prewar jobs'.⁵⁰⁵ DeGroot contends that those women who did remain in industry in the post-war period 'usually had to accept menial jobs at lower pay.'⁵⁰⁶ Clarsen notes that after the war, the press 'elevated laundry work and domestic service into markers of the normalisation of class and gender relations.'⁵⁰⁷

It was evident in New Zealand and Britain that the end of the war would result in changes to the wartime employment opportunities that had been given to women. The return to pre-war standards and expectations for women workers in Britain stemmed from two main issues. Firstly, there was a 'post-war backlash', in which many men wanted to see women back in their peacetime roles as wives and mothers, and not as uniformed workers.⁵⁰⁸ This desire for domesticity and femininity was a reaction to the horrors of the war which many men had experienced, and historians such as Braybon have asserted that the wish for women to

⁵⁰¹ Clarsen, p. 343. Mitchell agrees, noting that both the press and the public began to be less complimentary about women war workers, see Mitchell, p. 266.

⁵⁰² *Daily Chronicle*, August 16, 1918, 'Our Amazons', quoted in Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 159. Briar maintains that British women war workers were 'eulogized for their efficiency and productivity and regarded as being in some ways superior workers' to their male counterparts, see Briar, p. 44. Thom notes that women war workers began the war being celebrated for 'their dexterity, capability to endure monotony and provide a sacrifice [and] ... end[ed] it criticised for extravagance and greed', see Thom, p. 14.

⁵⁰³ Undated article, quoted in Mitchell, p. 266.

⁵⁰⁴ Briar, pp. 45-46. DeGroot notes that women who 'tried to stay in "man's work" a day past the Armistice was instantly transformed from war hero to selfish bitch', see DeGroot, p. 138.

⁵⁰⁵ Quoted in Briar, p. 52.

⁵⁰⁶ DeGroot, p. 264.

⁵⁰⁷ Clarsen, p. 348.

⁵⁰⁸ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 221. For a similar view, see Mary Hilson, 'Women Votes and the Rhetoric of Patriotism in the British General Election of 1918', in *Women's History Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2001, p. 341.

'return to "femininity"' arose from the fear that women wanted to 'escape' from their domestic role.⁵⁰⁹ In 1919 *The Press* published an article detailing the problems encountered by Australian soldiers who had married just before leaving to fight overseas. The article noted that 'the majority of war brides were business girls, who did not allow the fact that they were married to interfere with their wage-earning, to which was added the allotment made by their husbands.' The article claimed that many of the business girls 'declare[d] that they actually know nothing about house and mothercraft, nor do they want to learn.'⁵¹⁰ Secondly, the 1920s heralded an age in which housekeeping was promoted as being a 'science, requiring intelligence and dedication', and the purchase of consumer goods was a key factor in this.⁵¹¹

The erosion of wartime gains was not totally acceptable to British women who had worked during the war – the experience of better working conditions, access to better types of employment and increased pay meant that women had similar expectations in the post-war period. In most cases these expectations were not met, and Braybon asserts that by the early 1920s, women's position in industry was 'possibly worse' than it had been before the war.⁵¹² This was not the case in New Zealand, where the Government did not introduce such harsh legislation focused on forcing women out of the workforce. Thom states that in Britain, women who had worked during wartime felt a 'general disenchantment' at the post-war situation.⁵¹³ Certainly statistics support this, as there were fewer British women in paid employment in 1921 than there had been in 1911.⁵¹⁴ In 1917 the first women munition workers were laid off, a process which was to escalate as war related industries tapered off production.⁵¹⁵ Munition workers were involved in demonstrations against their demobilisation at the end of the war, and Woollacott maintains that this was not because they 'thought they could or should continue to make the munitions of war, but [that the workers] ... demanded that their hard work be recognised by a public commitment to their continued employment in industrial work.'⁵¹⁶ Munition workers, and many women who had worked in other sectors of the workforce had no wish to return to the 'servility, low pay, long hours, poor conditions,

⁵⁰⁹ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 221.

⁵¹⁰ *The Press*, July 9, 1919, p. 7.

⁵¹¹ Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 221; Glucksmann, p. 6.

⁵¹² Braybon, *Women Workers*, p. 208.

⁵¹³ Thom, p. 187. The post-war period saw the demobilisation of five million soldiers, as well as three million civilian workers, see Mitchell, p. 267.

⁵¹⁴ Briar, p. 46. Beddoe maintains that the British female participation rate in the workforce was 2% lower in 1921 than it had been in 1911, however she neglects to state what these figures were, see Deidre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women Between the Wars, 1918-1939*, London: Pandora Press, 1989, p. 48. Briar contends that once the war ended, 'most working women were returned to menial work and economic dependency on men', see Briar, p. 46.

⁵¹⁵ Thom, p. 171.

⁵¹⁶ Woollacott, p. 5.

and lack of autonomy' that were features of domestic service.⁵¹⁷ However, the media portrayed this reluctance of women war workers to return to "traditional" forms of work as evidence that the war had 'upset natural class and sex hierarchies.'⁵¹⁸ These beliefs were also reported in the New Zealand media, allowing New Zealand women to be aware of the situation in Britain.

The wartime experiences of women had changed them, however this change had not improved their working lives - gender divisions and bias in paid and unpaid work 'remained entrenched.'⁵¹⁹ Thom also contends that women's wartime work was 'described only negatively as bearing any relation to a future career', and states that in the post-war period there was a negative connotation associated with factory work, which was thought to affect a woman's respectability and chance of gaining employment of a domestic nature.⁵²⁰ There is some evidence that British women accepted wartime work as simply that - work which was only to be undertaken until the end of the war. Thom asserts that some women perceived their experience as being one 'of war rather than of work' - 'one that they had enjoyed, valued and never wished to repeat.'⁵²¹ Pugh maintains that there was no concerted effort by women to retain their jobs as the end of the war approached. He states that 'women had always expected to vacate [their jobs] ... for the returning men, especially those officially stated to be replacing men.'⁵²² Some employers also believed that women's wartime work was deemed temporary, and in 1919, a report presented at the Committee on Women in Industry noted that 'a woman looks on her work merely as an incident in her career.... [and has the belief] that the work is not her life.'⁵²³

⁵¹⁷ Woollacott, p. 5. Women were also reluctant to re-enter work in occupations such as laundry work, dressmaking and tailoring, see Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 81.

⁵¹⁸ Clarsen, p. 348. *The Press* published an article in 1919 describing the plight of British women who had 'entered the motoring profession ... [with] purely patriotic motives' during the war but were struggling to find work after the war. The article believed that this was not because of female incompetence at the work, but rather 'a matter of prejudice against employing a woman for arduous work for which a man naturally prefers to employ a man.' See *The Press*, July 2, 1919, p. 2.

⁵¹⁹ Briar, p. 52; Thom, p. 45.

⁵²⁰ Thom, p. 73.

⁵²¹ Thom, p. 73. Rowbotham gives the example of a war worker at a labour exchange after the war. This woman 'accepted she would never earn high wages again but was nonetheless happy the war was over.' When asked what work she would do, the woman stated that she would do any sort of work except for domestic service, see Rowbotham, p. 89. The post-war dislike of domestic work was also noted in New Zealand women who had worked during the war, and reflected in the census statistics which show a declining rate of female participation in the domestic sector.

⁵²² Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 22. DeGroot maintains that women saw the wartime benefits as 'curious and enjoyable anomalies which would not alter the status quo' and women 'willingly surrendered' their jobs to returning soldiers, see DeGroot, pp. 223, 305-306.

⁵²³ Sir Alfred Herbert, representative of the Machine Tool and Engineering Federation, quoted in Glucksmann p. 222.

Rewarding Women's War Work? Parliamentary Representation for Women

Dombrowski notes that women in many countries 'hoped that their participation [in war work] would earn them a larger role in public and economic affairs after the war.'⁵²⁴ This belief was supported by the *Maoriland Worker* which noted these aspirations during and after the war.⁵²⁵ Several Western nations, including Britain and New Zealand 'honoured women's work and sacrifice with political enfranchisement.'⁵²⁶ This was not, however, a universal trend. Countries such as France and Italy 'quickly marshal[ed] women out of the factories and offices and back into the homes without much more than polite discussion about granting them the vote.'⁵²⁷

In New Zealand, the post-war period also led to an increased demand for political representation – the lack of permanent change in the working conditions for women led some to believe that a collective voice would ensure permanent change eventually occurred. In 1919, "Wahine" declared that without the proposed Women's Union, women would remain 'helpless units without cohesion'. She acknowledged that forming the union would be difficult, 'but as we march on united in one body, obstacles [would] ... disappear, and the way to the goal of our desires [would] ... become clear.'⁵²⁸ "Wahine" also noted that a 'Union of Women Workers could do great things in Maoriland: it would be a power that made for righteousness, for social betterment, for clean politics, for a broader outlook, for a wider, fuller, freer life.' The article also urged women to exercise the political freedom and rights that were now available to them, and advocated that women should 'raise [their] voices, become articulate, become real citizens, and not [just] mere shadows of [their] ... men folk.'⁵²⁹ Kate Sheppard also believed that women's position in society had improved due to their wartime involvement. In her address at the 1919 NCW conference, she declared that 'during the war, truer and clearer perceptions of truth and justice, of rights and duties have been gained and already fresh attempts are being made for a fairer and more equitable adjustment of power and responsibility.'⁵³⁰

⁵²⁴ Nicole Ann Dombrowski, 'Soldiers, Saints, or Sacrificial Lambs? Women's Relationship to Combat and the Fortification of the Home Front in the Twentieth Century', in Nicole Ann Dombrowski (ed.), *Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with or without Consent*, London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1999, p. 6.

⁵²⁵ See *MW*, Jan 31, 1917, p. 7 for an article encouraging women to run for district council/local government elections; the *MW* declared in 1919 that 'during the [war years] ... many women have found occupations in various departments of life as a temporary expedient, but so successful have they proved in their new occupations that many of them will be retained' in the post-war period, see *MW*, Jan 29, 1919, p. 7.

⁵²⁶ Dombrowski, p. 6.

⁵²⁷ Dombrowski, p. 6.

⁵²⁸ *MW*, December 3, 1919, p. 7.

⁵²⁹ *MW*, December 3, 1919, p. 7.

⁵³⁰ Betty Holt, *Women in Council: A History of the National Council of Women of New Zealand*, Wellington: The National Council of Women, 1980, p. 49.

A small sector of New Zealand society, primarily women, had campaigned for the right to sit in Parliament since women had gained the vote in 1893.⁵³¹ Their demand became stronger in the post-war period, as the result of their wartime experiences.⁵³² New Zealand women had undertaken a more active role in society, working in new occupations and becoming more aware of their unequal position in society. They wished to change this, and agitated more vigorously for the vote. Wallace claims that the granting of the vote and the right to stand for election to the House of Commons to British women 'clearly acted as a spur to the resurrected women's movement in New Zealand.'⁵³³ The increased agitation of the women's movement contradicts the post-war domestic emphasis that was being urged by the government to some extent, however both politicians and the women's movement used the domestic focus to justify and validate granting women the right to stand for parliament.

Holt maintains that the 'great tragedy of the 1914-1918 war ... showed a need for reform in many matters affecting national life in New Zealand' and thus in several centres there was a post-war 'desire to revive' the NCW, and women's organisations in general.⁵³⁴ However, the resurgence may have predated the war – in August 1914, the *White Ribbon* declared that there was currently 'a renaissance of the buoyant activity, the novel enthusiasm that stirred us all to be up and doing in the first flush of our emancipation.'⁵³⁵ The magazine maintained that the WCTU had 'cohesion and a resolution this year that we had not even two seasons ago. This re-birth of civic earnestness is now, as never before, uniting women of every class and party for the common good.'⁵³⁶ Page states that the war had acted as a catalyst to re-establish the importance of women's issues.⁵³⁷ Ellen Melville declared in 1919 that the war had given women's organisations 'a stronger sense of the value of common effort, had drawn

⁵³¹ Sandra Wallace notes that the suffrage campaign feminists of the early 1890s claimed they did not want the right to stand as candidates for Parliament. She maintains that if the suffragists had demanded the right to sit in Parliament, it 'would have endangered women's right to the vote.' See Sandra Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians: New Zealand Women Parliamentary Candidates', PhD Thesis in History, University of Otago, 1992, p. 26.

⁵³² Wallace notes that the war had enabled New Zealand women to prove their 'capabilities and usefulness in a more public way than had hitherto been the case', see Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians', p. 49.

⁵³³ Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians', p. 50.

⁵³⁴ Holt, pp. 47-8. The NCW had gone into recess in 1906, when 'women's rights [had become] ... subordinate ... to women's duties and women's welfare', see Page, *The National Council of Women*, p. 47. Nicholls and Page contend that the 'catalyst of World War I precipitated a revival of the women's movement in New Zealand', see Roberta Nicholls and Dorothy Page, 'National Council of Women of New Zealand 1896-1906, 1916- ', in Anne Else (ed.), *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand*, Wellington: Daphne Brasell Associates Press/Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1993, p. 82.

⁵³⁵ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 1.

⁵³⁶ *White Ribbon*, Vol. 20 no. 230, August 1914, p. 1.

⁵³⁷ Page, p. 68. This is confirmed when the growth pattern of women's societies in New Zealand is examined. There were four societies established between 1900 and 1910, but then no new societies until 1921, see Ann Margaret Burgin, 'Women in Public Life and Politics in New Zealand', MA Thesis in Political Science, Victoria University, 1967, p. 139. Nicholls disagrees, maintaining that 1913 was the 'pivotal year' for the resurgence of the women's movement in New Zealand, see illustrated essay by Roberta Nicholls, 'The Women's Parliament: The National Council of Women of New Zealand 1896-1920', www.nzhistory.net.nz/Gallery/NCW/ncw.htm, viewed 25/10/04.

them together more closely, [with] the practical results to be derived from organisation having been seen and remarked.⁵³⁸ Melville noted that women's experiences during the war 'had removed their sense of inferiority to men.'⁵³⁹ Whilst this could be considered an exaggeration, it is evidence that women had extended their own sense of place in society, and their awareness of their own abilities.

The reconstituted NCW differed from the initial organisation, in that there were no representatives from political leagues or suffrage associations. However, the WCTU and the Society for the Protection of Women and Children were still affiliated with the NCW.⁵⁴⁰ Dalziel describes the new NCW as being 'an umbrella body for all women's organisations, recognised by government and the media as a significant source of opinion [which was] ... able to make itself heard, if not always heeded.'⁵⁴¹ The focus of the NCW was still primarily on furthering the position of women in society. There were 16 remits passed in 1918, and of these, 6 related to general social welfare issues, and 10 dealt with the status of women.⁵⁴² Concerns related to better conditions for women teachers, equal pay for equal work, and fuller representation of women in law administration, particularly as justices of the peace, police and jurors – issues that had been raised during the war as well.⁵⁴³ At the 1919 NCW conference, Kate Sheppard gave the keynote speech, and she delivered a list of matters which still needed to be addressed.⁵⁴⁴ Issues that were on her list included further improvement in 'educational matters' – including overcrowded schools, the unfair treatment of women teachers and an increase in the government grant for education. Other matters were co-guardianship of children, the principle of equal pay for equal work, the economic equality for husband and wife, and the inclusion of women police, Justices of the Peace and jurors.⁵⁴⁵

However, the role of New Zealand women during the Great War has also been constructed within a traditional, feminine and maternally based perspective. It has been argued by Woods that New Zealand women participated in the war as maternal figures, whether it be as members of voluntary patriotic organisations, mothers of soldiers or 'moral mothers of the nation'.⁵⁴⁶ She declares that through these 'traditionally feminine roles ... women were able [to] consolidate the position of maternalism and motherhood as a political position from

⁵³⁸ Ellen Melville, quoted in Raewyn Dalziel, 'Political Organisations', in Anne Else (ed.), *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand*, Wellington: Daphne Brasell Associates Press/Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1993, p. 60.

⁵³⁹ Dalziel, p. 60.

⁵⁴⁰ Holt, p. 51.

⁵⁴¹ Dalziel, p. 60.

⁵⁴² Holt, p. 51.

⁵⁴³ Page, p. 59.

⁵⁴⁴ Holt, p. 49.

⁵⁴⁵ Holt, p. 49.

⁵⁴⁶ Woods, p. 105.

which to negotiate a place for themselves in the nation.⁵⁴⁷ In a letter to Sir William Hall-Jones, member of the Legislative Council and former Prime Minister, in February 1919, Kate Sheppard wrote that she hoped to hold the annual NCW convention in Wellington during the Parliamentary Session, so that 'a strong deputation [could] ... wait on the Government and present our claims.'⁵⁴⁸ She questioned 'why should not the Constituents be able to send a woman representative to Parliament if they so decide?' [original emphasis].⁵⁴⁹

Women's right to stand for parliamentary representation had to be approved by Parliament's Legislative Council, and the members of this council held vastly different opinions on the role of women and their capabilities and rights to equality. The issue of women being awarded equality with men was highly contentious. The debates that were held in Parliament reflected both traditional beliefs about women's capabilities, resulting in a reluctance to allow women into the traditional male forum of Parliament, and the acceptance by some members of Parliament that women had proved themselves during the war, and deserved to be granted the right to stand for Parliament. The Women's Parliamentary Rights Bill was introduced into Parliament in August 1919 and underwent intense debate in both the House of Representatives and the Legislative Council, and underwent several readings before finally being passed on 29 October 1919.⁵⁵⁰

Whilst each member had their own opinion on whether women should be allowed representation in Parliament, there were several primary reasons given by members who approved of the Bill. Firstly, parliamentary representation was seen as an extension of the franchise, which had been granted to women in 1893. The Prime Minister, Mr Massey, was in favour of allowing women the right to stand for Parliament, declaring that the Bill was 'really the outcome of granting the parliamentary franchise to the women of this country' in 1893.⁵⁵¹ Mr Ward declared that it was 'the complete complement to the extension of the franchise to women'.⁵⁵² It was also believed that New Zealand, being at the forefront of women's rights, should grant women this right as other countries had done the same. Dr Newman stated

⁵⁴⁷ Woods, pp. 105-6.

⁵⁴⁸ Letter from Kate Sheppard to Sir William Hall-Jones, February 4, 1919, Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-5755-68; Hall-Johns, John. 'Hall-Jones, William 1851-1936'. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 16 December 2003. <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>

⁵⁴⁹ Letter from Kate Sheppard to Sir William Hall-Jones, February 4, 1919, Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-5755-68.

⁵⁵⁰ Wallace maintains that women were granted the right to contest parliamentary elections 'with the expectation that women politicians would devote themselves almost exclusively to family and welfare issues', see Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians', p. 350.

⁵⁵¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 964. Sir J.G. Findley concurred, maintaining that women had secured the right to vote in 1893, and 'the inevitable corollary was the right to sit in the Chamber to which they were entitled to appoint representatives', see *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 211.

⁵⁵² *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 965. Mr Parr also agreed, see *NZPD*, September 26, 1919, pp. 967-8. Mr McCombs declared that he 'regret[ted] they [women] were not given the right [of parliamentary representation] ... when they were given the franchise', see *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 969.

that although New Zealand boasted that it led 'the van of civilisation' in granting equal rights to women, it had not yet granted women places in Parliament, whilst countries such as Norway, Finland and Canada had done so.⁵⁵³ Mr Samuel declared that the basis of a democratic society was 'the government of the people by the people', and women could not therefore be denied the right to representation in Parliament.⁵⁵⁴

Parliamentary representation was also seen as being necessary for New Zealand women due to the advances recently given to their British counterparts. Mr Massey noted that women in Britain had recently gained the right to stand for Parliament, and he believed that 'women in New Zealand should be placed in the same position as the women of England'.⁵⁵⁵ Mr Isitt noted that Britain had 'paid a warm tribute to the wonderful work which women ha[d] done in the defence of the Empire'.⁵⁵⁶ Sir Joseph Ward noted that the recent parliamentary legislation passed in Britain provided that 'sex shall not disqualify a person from the exercise of any public function or from the occupation of civil or judicial office, or from engagement in any civil avocation' which removed 'a number of existing legal disabilities' from women.⁵⁵⁷

The perceived moral influence of women was also given as a reason to allow women into Parliament. Mr Massey believed that the addition of women to Parliament would be a positive move, noting that women 'would have a very steadying influence upon members'.⁵⁵⁸ Mr Holland noted that the 'influence which a good mother brings into the home[,] a good woman will bring on to the floor of this House'.⁵⁵⁹ Mr Fraser declared that 'political economy' should be treated as 'national housekeeping', and believed that women would 'amplify and extend and enforce the best viewpoint in politics at the present time'.⁵⁶⁰ Mr Jones noted that 'as far as morality is concerned[,] women are men's superiors', and maintained that women 'form the character of men'.⁵⁶¹ Mr Isitt declared that 'the women who come into this House are likely to be the most gifted and intelligent women amongst us, and ... their presence and influence will be for the good of this country'.⁵⁶² Women were also desired in order to provide a female perspective on issues involving women and the family. Dr Newman maintained that when 'women questions' were discussed in the present Parliament, the Members were 'apt to overlook the needs of the women and of the children, and the

⁵⁵³ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 972.

⁵⁵⁴ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, October 2, 1919, p. 1103.

⁵⁵⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 964.

⁵⁵⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 215.

⁵⁵⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 17, 1919, p. 500.

⁵⁵⁸ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 964.

⁵⁵⁹ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 967.

⁵⁶⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 975.

⁵⁶¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, pp. 761-2.

⁵⁶² *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 972.

requirements of the household.⁵⁶³ Sir Joseph Ward maintained that a 'few good brainy women' would improve Parliament greatly.⁵⁶⁴ Mr Holland maintained that all members of Parliament knew 'that there [was] no serious opposition whatever to women having a right to sit in Parliament', and admitted that 'women could not possibly do worse in the legislative halls of this country than the men have done.'⁵⁶⁵

The work undertaken by British women during the war had been a major factor in the granting of the vote and the right to stand for Parliament for women in Britain. In New Zealand, the war work was one of several factors, and does not seem to have been used as the primary reason to give women the right to be elected to Parliament. Sir Joseph Ward noted that 'the war ha[d] altered the whole aspect of the question of what is due to the women of the world', and thus allowing female parliamentary representation was, 'in the altered circumstances of the world, the right thing to do.'⁵⁶⁶ Ward also declared that 'the work that women had done during the war warranted their recognition to the fullest extent, and their having equal rights with men to stand for the House of Representatives.'⁵⁶⁷ Mr Isitt maintained that 'during the past four or five years', New Zealand women had 'borne more than their fair share of the burden of life.'⁵⁶⁸ Mr Payne noted that it had been discovered 'during the war that women [were] ... able to carry out work that ... [had never been] entrusted to them before [the war]'.⁵⁶⁹ Sir William Hall-Jones noted that Parliament was aware 'that from the North Cape to the Bluff[,] many thousands of women did splendid work during the war-time'.⁵⁷⁰ He went on to say that Parliament should show 'women that we appreciate the work they have done in the past'.⁵⁷¹ Pacifism seems to have been believed to be a common attribute of women. Mr Semple declared that if women were allowed into Parliament war would 'become a thing of the past.' He maintained that the 'mothers of the nation will not pursue a policy that [would] lodge their boys upon the points of bayonets or in front of machine-guns.'⁵⁷² In fact, Mr Semple believed that if 'the women of the world [had]

⁵⁶³ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 973. Mr Grimmond believed that women would inform Parliament 'what the women of the Dominion wanted in respect to social legislation', see *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 767.

⁵⁶⁴ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 212.

⁵⁶⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 214.

⁵⁶⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, pp. 964-65.

⁵⁶⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 965. It must be noted that Mr Michel declared that women had undertaken great work during the war, but recognition must be limited as 'in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred[,] that work was planned and organized by men', see *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 759.

⁵⁶⁸ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 215.

⁵⁶⁹ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 217.

⁵⁷⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 758.

⁵⁷¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 758.

⁵⁷² *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 979.

been permitted to bring their influence to bear on the last international quarrel there would have been no world's war.⁵⁷³

There also seems to have been a recognition that these rights had been denied to New Zealand women for too long and it was time that women were treated more equally. Mr Holland noted that women 'ha[d] certain rights which have been too long denied to them'.⁵⁷⁴ Mr Paul asked 'what right [did the Legislative] ... Council ha[ve] to disqualify half the population from holding a seat' in Parliament?⁵⁷⁵ Sir J.G. Findley noted that the country would benefit, declaring that if women's voices could 'be heard [in Parliament, New Zealand's] ... progress [would] be more permanent, more rational, and more beneficent than it has been in the past under the regime of men.'⁵⁷⁶ Mr Poole declared that the Bill would result in 'the emancipation of women, who have done a good deal towards building up the superstructure of our national life.'⁵⁷⁷ Mr Payne declared that 'the time ha[d] come when women should stand on an equality with men, not only in regard to entering the professions, but also in representing their sex and families by directly having seats in [Parliament]'.⁵⁷⁸ Mr Jones declared that 'in every respect, so far as pluck, and energy, and persistency are concerned, women are men's equals.'⁵⁷⁹

Whilst many members approved of the potential Bill, there were several members that were against allowing women the right to gain parliamentary representation. Mr Statham, admitted that he 'may be rather old-fashioned and rather conservative' in his views, but declared that 'equal rights carry with them equal responsibilities, and we could never ask women to have imposed on them the responsibilities that are imposed on men.'⁵⁸⁰ However Mr Statham admitted that there was 'no logical reason, [since] ... women have a vote in this country equally with the men, why they should be excluded from being candidates for a seat in the Legislature.'⁵⁸¹ Mr Earnshaw 'absolutely den[ied] ... that women ha[d] earned their right to enter every avenue of life' and was 'absolutely opposed ... to any woman standing on the floor of Parliament'.⁵⁸² The basis of his argument was that 'the intrusion of women into too much of that which pertains physically to man's work' had led to their physical deterioration, and women would not be able to cope with the pressure and strain of

⁵⁷³ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 979. Similar sentiments were expressed by Mr Jones, see *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 762.

⁵⁷⁴ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 967.

⁵⁷⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 762.

⁵⁷⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 974.

⁵⁷⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 978.

⁵⁷⁸ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 217.

⁵⁷⁹ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 761. See also the views of Mr Paul, *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 764.

⁵⁸⁰ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 966.

⁵⁸¹ *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 966.

⁵⁸² *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 765.

Parliament.⁵⁸³ Mr Newman declared that 'very few' 'country women ... desire to enter Parliament and after they have been in Parliament a short time they will probably be sorry they came.'⁵⁸⁴ Mr Michel declared that although women had for many years had the right to sit on local governing bodies, 'they ha[d] carefully refrained from taking part or from showing any great desire to win seats on those local governing bodies.'⁵⁸⁵ Mr Michel maintained that since women had shown no interest in local politics, there was 'no desire on the part of the women' to enter national politics.⁵⁸⁶ Mr Earnshaw agreed, stating that there had 'been no response from the women of this country' indicating their wish to enter Parliament.⁵⁸⁷ Mr Moore declared that Parliament 'must first await from the women of New Zealand an intimation of their desire to become members of this body' before allowing them to stand for Parliament.⁵⁸⁸

The bill was passed despite these protestations and three women contested the 1919 elections. Women stood for election in the Parnell, Grey Lynn and Thames electorates, however the first female Member of Parliament was not elected until 1933, when Elizabeth McCombs from the Labour Party entered Parliament.⁵⁸⁹ This is in stark contrast to Britain, where women were awarded the right to sit in Parliament in 1918, and gained representation in the same year. New Zealand women had to wait 26 years between being awarded the vote and gaining the right to stand for Parliament, which was a significantly longer period than countries such as Australia, Britain, Canada and the United States.⁵⁹⁰

The connection between women's work during wartime and women gaining the right to stand for parliament was recognised by contemporary writers. Kate Sheppard wrote in 1918 that British women's enfranchisement and eligibility for parliamentary representation – both rapid developments - were an effect of the war. The chaos caused by the war meant that 'fossilized prejudices crashed' as women entered domains that had previously been those of

⁵⁸³ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 765.

⁵⁸⁴ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 9, 1919, p. 218.

⁵⁸⁵ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 758.

⁵⁸⁶ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 759. In 1918, letters by women to the *EP* and the *Lyttelton Times* declared that women's service during the war and the influenza epidemic was evidence not only 'of women's contribution to society, [but were] ... factors which had prevented women from actively campaigning for their political rights', see Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians', p. 54.

⁵⁸⁷ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 766. Wallace notes the campaign for women to be allowed to stand for Parliament did not involve 'other women to nearly the same extent as the suffrage campaign did', which led to the perception that women did not truly want this reform, and resulted in comments such as that made by Mr Earnshaw above. See Wallace, 'Powder-Power Politicians', p. 28.

⁵⁸⁸ *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 23, 1919, p. 767.

⁵⁸⁹ Wallace, pp. 356, 361. McCombs also wrote for the *MW*, and edited the paper for a short period after the First World War, see Roberts, p. 15.

⁵⁹⁰ Wallace, p. 65. In Australia, women were granted the vote in 1902 and the right to stand for Parliament in the same year. In Canada, women were granted the right to vote in 1918 and the right to stand for Parliament in 1919. Women in the United States were granted the right to vote and the right to stand for Parliament in 1920. As noted above, British women were granted both the right to vote and the right to stand for Parliament in 1918, see Wallace, p. 65.

men, and contributed greatly to the war effort.⁵⁹¹ Woollacott asserts that 'most historians' contend that in Britain, the gaining of the vote was a 'token of gratitude for women's critical role in the war effort.'⁵⁹² However, this opinion is problematic. In 1918, the vote was granted to those women over the age of 30 who were local government electors, or married to a local government elector. This ensured that women did not constitute a majority of registered electors.⁵⁹³ This essentially denied the vote to the working class women, who had comprised the majority of the munition workers – who had worked most visibly for the war effort. Pugh maintains that the Government feared that if working class women were granted the vote they would use it to defend their place in industry, and 'retreat further from marriage and motherhood.'⁵⁹⁴ However, the post-war vote was not simply to be used to voice women's opinions. Hilson states that in the 1918 elections, women were encouraged to vote as 'proxies for their male relatives', thus marginalising their own wartime experiences which may have encouraged them to vote differently.⁵⁹⁵

When the correlation between the wartime activities undertaken by New Zealand women and any change in the status of New Zealand women is examined, it is debatable to what extent the war instigated change. There is strong evidence to suggest that in the post-war period an attempt was made by society to return to pre-war conditions. Nolan contends that economic progress made by women during the war was not permanent and the post-war period was one of regression.⁵⁹⁶ The 'rigid segmentation of the labour market', the increased use of the marriage bar and 'gendered pay differentials' helped to ensure that women had no chance of 'threaten[ing] men's dominance within the labour market.'⁵⁹⁷ In short, conditions in the public service regressed to pre-war standards. Brown has argued that the Great War was not the 'key factor in explaining women's entry into the New Zealand office workforce.'⁵⁹⁸ She notes that statistically, women were entering the office workforce in higher proportions

⁵⁹¹ Kate Sheppard, quoted in Roberta Nicholls, *The Women's Parliament: The National Council of the Women of New Zealand 1896-1920*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1996, p. 111. Sheppard was not the only New Zealander to believe this. When the New Zealand Parliament was discussing the Women's Parliamentary Rights Bill in 1919, it was noted by Ward that the war work undertaken by British women had totally 'changed the view of men in the Old Country who previously were strongly opposed to conferring the franchise upon women', see *NZPD*, Vol. 184, September 26, 1919, p. 965. Jill Rowe has suggested that 'political citizenship contained no guarantee that the other forms of citizenship (social, economic) would follow', cited in Lake, p. 3. This comment could be pertinent to both Britain and New Zealand, and explain why the Governments of both countries granted women parliamentary rights after the war.

⁵⁹² Woollacott, p. 189. Pollard notes that British women's increased participation in the workforce led to a 'revolutionary advance' in their economic position. He maintains that women were rewarded with the vote after the war 'with virtually no opposition', see Pollard, p. 42. See also Kent, who maintains that contemporary observers also believed that the vote was a reflection of the Government's appreciation of women's wartime work, see Kent, p. 234.

⁵⁹³ Martin Pugh, *Votes for Women in Britain 1867-1928*, London: The Historical Association, 1994, p. 34.

⁵⁹⁴ Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement*, p. 42.

⁵⁹⁵ Hilson, p. 327.

⁵⁹⁶ Nolan, p. 16.

⁵⁹⁷ Olssen, 'Working Gender, Gendering Work', p. 85.

⁵⁹⁸ Brown, p. 26.

in the period before 1906.⁵⁹⁹ In 1921 the Labour Department closed its Women's Employment Bureau branches, maintaining that the decline in the number of engagements did not justify the expense of running the Bureau.⁶⁰⁰ The marriage bar ensured that women did not generally stay in the workforce for the length of time necessary for career advancement. Another indication that women did not achieve complete equality with men due to their war work is the absence of equal pay legislation. After the war, women continued to receive wages that were less than that of men, despite this often being for the same or similar work. Corner notes that the equal pay claim received little attention despite the increased female participation in the labour force.⁶⁰¹ In 1919, the Prime Minister was asked whether he would instill legislation 'making provision for equal pay for service rendered, regardless of sex?' The Prime Minister replied that such legislation was 'not necessary[,] as the Arbitration Court ha[d] sufficient power to deal with it.'⁶⁰² The Prime Minister's position suggests that he was unwilling to force equal pay to become mandatory and permanent, emphasising that the position of most women in employment was considered to be temporary.

It can be argued to a certain degree that the employment of women to replace men who were away fighting was a solution of a temporary nature, which was apparent from the start of the war. McLeod has asserted that the temporary nature of the gains which women made in the course of the war 'illustrates that beneath the rhetoric of "emancipation" and "liberation", the basic prejudices concerning women's role in society persisted.'⁶⁰³ This seems to be borne out, however the expansion in the number of women's societies formed during the war indicates that to a certain extent, women did realise their potential power. The reformation of the National Council of Women in 1917 and the discussion of the formation of a Women's Union in 1919 confirm that women were more aware of their 'potential power', and recognised that an organisation was a successful way of utilising this power.⁶⁰⁴ Clarke maintains that women's war experiences had 'accelerated the[ir] growing consciousness', however the 'overarching beliefs of society, in terms of the importance of women's domestic role[,] was not challenged.'⁶⁰⁵ This seems to be borne out, given the pressure exerted by the

⁵⁹⁹ Brown, pp. 26, 43. For information regarding the long term trend for women entering the office workforce in New Zealand, see Brown, p. 176. In 1891 women constituted 2% of the clerical workforce; this had increased to 40% by 1921, see Brown, p. 176.

⁶⁰⁰ McLeod, p. 119. Nolan believes that the closure of the Bureaux was 'further evidence of the move [by the Government] to confine women to domestic duties', see Nolan, p. 27. The NCW passed a resolution at their 1921 Conference that the 'Government Labour Bureaux met a decided need in Auckland and Wellington' and should be reopened, Second Conference of the NCW, 1921, Minutes of Annual Meetings and Conferences of the NCW 1919-1944, Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-1371-126, p. 10.

⁶⁰¹ Corner, *No Easy Victory*, p. 14.

⁶⁰² Mr Semple to Mr Massey, *NZPD*, Vol. 185, October 22, 1919, p. 654.

⁶⁰³ McLeod, p. 104.

⁶⁰⁴ McLeod, p. 107.

⁶⁰⁵ Clarke, p. 15.

Government and the media on women to return to their homes and reproduce, in the post-war period. So whilst the war may not have led to major changes in the employment of women, the employment patterns of women did change, and women's experiences during the war led to an awareness amongst women, and indeed society to some extent, of their capabilities which had exceeded pre-war expectations.

British historians are divided in their opinions regarding the degree to which British women received recognition and reward for their wartime work. Some historians have claimed that British women were 'not adequately rewarded' for their part in the war effort.⁶⁰⁶ Beddoe notes that socially and economically, 'the lives of the vast majority of women remained much the same as before the First [World] War.'⁶⁰⁷ A woman's place was still in the home, and if she worked, it was in a low-paying job. However, others believe that the war helped to bring about changes. Woollacott maintains that the Great War was not a causal factor in changes in women's social behaviour, but was in fact an accelerator.⁶⁰⁸ Mitchell agrees, declaring that the 'speeding of the women's revolution was one of the Great War's most important and resounding victories.'⁶⁰⁹ Davies contends that the Great War had demonstrated 'how outmoded [the] ... Victorian ideas of woman as a male possession, a mere perpetuator of the race' had become.⁶¹⁰ Women had demonstrated that their capabilities extended beyond traditional avenues of employment, and this was important for the long term improvement of women's position in society. A few, such as Mitchell, have more extreme views and believe that the Great War was a 'clear-cut victory for women's emancipation.'⁶¹¹

The Great War resulted in an increase in the number of women working in the New Zealand workforce. Women entered the professional and commercial sectors in greater numbers, and moved out of the domestic sector. Gender ratios altered as women constituted a slightly greater proportion of the workforce by the end of the 1911-1921 period, despite a variety of pressure on women to move out of the workforce. British women also entered the workforce in greater numbers. The work of both New Zealand and British women led to recognition after the war, and political gains were granted to women of both countries. The major influence of the Great War was 'to accelerate the movement of women into more skilled occupations and consolidat[e] the trend towards employment in them, in certain selected areas where eventually job reservation became established.'⁶¹² Whilst the war was primarily

⁶⁰⁶ Briar, p. 46.

⁶⁰⁷ Beddoe, p. 7.

⁶⁰⁸ Woollacott, p. 215.

⁶⁰⁹ Mitchell, p. xvi.

⁶¹⁰ Davies, p. 89.

⁶¹¹ Mitchell, p. 389.

⁶¹² Simich, p. 29.

responsible for temporary gains in the status of women, the employment opportunities available to women during the war enabled women to participate more fully in the workforce than had previously been possible, and it was the demonstration of their capabilities which was the longest lasting effect of the war.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the role of New Zealand women during the Great War, an area which has not yet been fully addressed by historians. I have focused on the employment patterns of New Zealand women between 1911 and 1921, and investigated how these patterns were affected due to the war. I have also examined the public responses to women in employment from a variety of perspectives – women’s organisations, mainstream media and the government. In the course of this research I have demonstrated that in New Zealand, the employment of women acted as a catalyst for discussion of wider issues such as the legal and political rights of women, and women’s place in society. I have also investigated how the issue of women in employment was treated after the war, and examined the links between the work of New Zealand women during the Great War and the granting of parliamentary representation in 1919. Whilst historians such as Simich have examined the participation of women in employment during the early twentieth century, and McLeod has researched the various roles of women during the Great War, no one has yet extensively examined the impact that women’s employment during the war may have had on the extension of women’s role in the political, social and economic dimensions of New Zealand society during the post-war period. The increased involvement of women in employment also affected class and industrial relations. As social attitudes and political decisions in New Zealand were often influenced by what occurred in Britain, I also undertook some comparative research and examined the general employment patterns of British women during the Great War. I have taken a decentralised approach and looked outside of New Zealand for possible explanations for actions undertaken by the New Zealand government. The strong links between the actions of the British and New Zealand governments are evident with the reproduction and use of the British booklet on women in employment that was issued by New Zealand’s NEB during the Great War. Strong links between New Zealand and Britain were also revealed in the extensive New Zealand wartime media commentary that I examined.

In Chapter One, I examined the statistical evidence relating to the participation of New Zealand women in the workforce in the early twentieth century and investigated the changes which occurred during the 1911-1921 period. I used the 1911, 1916 and 1921 censuses to distinguish the trends in the different sectors of women’s employment. The national trends indicated that whilst the percentage of women working in the Professional and Commercial sectors increased steadily throughout the period, the percentage of women working in the Domestic and Industrial sectors declined. The percentage of women working in the Transport and Communication and Agricultural sectors remained stable. When the data for the individual provinces was analysed, there was evidence of much higher rates of women’s

participation in some sectors. For instance, in Taranaki, the agricultural sector employed 25% of working women, a figure 16% higher than the national average. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate all of these individual areas in detail, however the separate regions deserve further research. Despite the variation present in the Taranaki statistics, my research has demonstrated a generally consistent pattern of female workforce participation across New Zealand, therefore it is reasonable to assume that my thesis findings hold true for most of New Zealand.

I have proved that as a result of the war, the employment opportunities for women increased. These opportunities for increased participation were not solely restricted to wartime, and occurred despite much public discourse, and some specific legislation in opposition to women continuing in employment after the war ended in 1918. In New Zealand, significantly more women were working in 1921 than 1911, despite seemingly small percentage increases in employment participation. In New Zealand, the professional sector experienced the largest increase in the number of women working in the sector, which tends to suggest that the opportunities were for women in the middle and upper classes. My comparison with Britain has demonstrated that although there were some parallels between the two countries, there were also important differences. Whilst the war led to increased employment opportunities for women in both New Zealand and Britain, the leading employment sectors differed in each country. As noted above, the sector of employment which experienced the greatest increase in employment for New Zealand women during the 1911-1921 period was the Professional sector, whilst in Britain the sector in which employment of women increased the most was the Industrial sector, primarily due to the demands of munitions production and other wartime necessities. This is in contrast to New Zealand, where the percentage of women working in the Industrial sector declined during the period.

In Chapter Two, I examined the sectors which experienced the greatest growth of female employees during the war period. In New Zealand, the proportion of women working in the Professional sector increased by 6% between 1911 and 1921, whilst the proportion of women employed in the Commercial sector rose by 4% during the same period. Many women entered public service employment, however job opportunities were often limited due to the employment being designated as temporary and low paid positions. In Britain, the sectors which experienced the greatest growth in the number of female employees were the Commercial and Industrial sectors, which each increased their proportion of the female employment sector by 5% during the 1914-1918 period. The opinions of government bodies have also been analysed, and revealed contrasting beliefs as to the necessity of increasing female labour in the workforce. The NEB was set up by the Government to better cope with

the labour shortages that resulted from many men being channelled into military duties. The NEB believed that during the war, women were increasingly needed to maintain production levels, and suggested to the Government that women should be used for agricultural work, however the Government disagreed and did not apply the measures suggested by the NEB. Nevertheless, a government agency had acknowledged the ability of women in the workplace and, albeit as a temporary measure, advocated that the state encourage employment for women.

In Chapter Three I investigated a range of contemporary opinions regarding women's place in the workforce. Public opinion has been consulted through an analysis of newspapers such as the *Maoriland Worker* and the *Evening Post*, which revealed the contrasting opinions of the time. The *Maoriland Worker* was not opposed in principle to women working, and the publication expressed some hope that women's participation in the workforce might lead to more women being recruited into the class struggle. However the newspaper also demonstrated a clear ambivalence regarding an increase in the employment of women, with concerns being expressed that the influx of women into the workforce would lead to lower wages and the loss of jobs for men, thus hindering the class struggle. The *Maoriland Worker* was aimed towards the working class population, whilst the *Evening Post* was a more mainstream newspaper, and both newspapers represent a range of opinions. I have also demonstrated that New Zealand newspapers were aware that these developments were not confined to New Zealand and that there were worldwide changes occurring, which led to considerable attention being devoted to events which occurred in Britain. There was also some speculation about how the increased number of women in employment might affect gender roles. My thesis has demonstrated that the discussion of women in work was connected to a wider debate on the place of women in society. The increased employment of women during the war strengthened women's claims to equal rights. In order to investigate this in a New Zealand context, I examined the opinions of several women's organisations. Whilst many women's organisations such as the WCTU and the NCW believed that women deserved equal pay, trade unions and male employers did not believe this to be the case. Significantly, the government did not support women in their claim for equal pay, a stance which was also held by the Arbitration Court.

In Chapter Four, I examined the impact that the post-war period had on the employment of women. In both New Zealand and Britain, the temporary nature of much of the wartime work meant that the gains women had made in both pay equity and the range of jobs available to them disappeared after the war. The British Government undertook this explicitly, and introduced legislation taking away the wartime work from women, whilst the New Zealand Government used the marriage bar to prevent women from advancing in their

positions. Despite these policies there were some areas where women's participation continued. I have demonstrated that some upper class women in Britain were allowed to remain in the workplace, and my analysis in Chapter One demonstrated that in New Zealand, the proportion of female workers engaged in the professional sector was higher in 1921 than 1916. In both countries, post-war rhetoric advocated women returning to their homes, and becoming homemakers in the interests of their nation's welfare. Whilst this rhetoric, and a revival of biological arguments against women working, were articulated in opposition to women's employment, in practice this did not prevent some women continuing to participate in the workforce. One explanation for the differences in policies between Britain and New Zealand might be that whereas the majority of women employed in Britain during the Great War were in the Industrial sector, employment opportunities in New Zealand were mainly in the Professional sector, and thus it was expected that many of these women would leave the workforce after marriage. In Britain, there may have been concern about a large unemployed male working class and the potential for social disruption, but this was not applicable in New Zealand.

However, in both New Zealand and Britain, connections were made between wartime work and political rights. In both countries political rights for women were extended shortly after the war. In New Zealand, the wartime work of women was one factor cited during the political debates regarding the issue. In Britain, the granting of the vote to women was seen as a reward for the work that women had undertaken during the war. Women's organisations in New Zealand also experienced a revival after the war to some degree.

The most significant feature of the war for women was the credibility they had gained as a result of their workforce participation. In the early years of the twentieth century, much of the initial impetus of first wave feminism had dissipated. The NCW had gone into recess in 1906 and regulations were introduced in 1913 which resulted in unfavourable working conditions for women. Lower rates of maximum pay were introduced, women were barred from sitting the public service examinations, and upon marriage, women were forced to resign their positions. Women's efforts in paid employment during the war gave a renewed impetus to women's quest for legal, social and political equality. I have demonstrated that women participated in the workforce in increased numbers and that these numbers were maintained after the war. New areas of employment were opened up for women in areas such as transport and communication, and significantly, women's participation in the workforce disproved notions of women's physical inability to work. Although women were not able to realise all of their objectives for greater legal, social and political advancement during the war, women's participation in the workforce was perceived as giving greater moral legitimacy for renewed agitation for better conditions for women, as shown by the causes

adopted by the revived NCW after the war. Women's participation in the workforce gave legitimacy and credibility towards a revived quest for equal citizenship for New Zealand women. It is significant that women's gains during the Great War came at a time of regression of women's rights in the workforce and arguably women's participation in the Great War halted a pattern of negative trends in women's employments, and produced some limited gains. If women's participation in the voluntary sector underscored their moral claim to citizenship, then women's participation in paid employment underscored their material and physical claims for social, legal and political equality. These aims may not have been realised in the immediate post-war environment but my research has shown that they had, at the very least, been placed back on the agenda.

My research has demonstrated the importance of women's paid employment in New Zealand during the Great War. This area has been under-researched in comparison with the employment patterns of New Zealand women during the Second World War, and I hope that my research has contributed to knowledge in this important area.

APPENDIX ONE

	NUMBER OF WOMEN IN THE NEW ZEALAND WORKFORCE			
	1891	1896	1901	1906
PROFESSIONAL	5 739	7 247	8 960	10 520
DOMESTIC	19 391	22 930	27 852	30 210
COMMERCIAL	2 866	3 793	5 528	8 629
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	N/A*	325	485	749
INDUSTRIAL	11 325	13 243	16 310	18 487
AGRICULTURAL	2 686	3 114	3 914	3 467
TOTAL	42 007	50 652	63 049	72 062

*There was no category for Transport and Communication in the 1891 census. Statistics are taken from 1891 Census, p. 237; 1896 Census Report, p. 63; 1901 Census Report, p. 56; 1906 Census Report, p. 56.

APPENDIX TWO

Regional Data from the 1911, 1916 and 1921 Censuses

AUCKLAND	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	5427	3202	8629	6882	4642	11524	9440	6245	15685
DOMESTIC	3033	7488	10521	2891	8134	11025	2959	9164	12123
COMMERCIAL	14241	3650	17891	14017	4892	18909	18278	6344	24622
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	9254	351	9605	11253	657	11910	16020	900	16920
INDUSTRIAL	31867	4788	36655	27410	5192	32602	31830	6249	38079
AGRICULTURAL	31604	1841	33445	33806	2851	36657	43784	3144	46928
TOTAL	95426	21320	116746	96259	26368	122627	122311	32046	154357

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

AUCKLAND	FEMALE WORKFORCE [†]			GENDER PROPORTION [‡]		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	15	18	19	37	40	40
DOMESTIC	35	31	29	71	74	76
COMMERCIAL	17	19	20	20	26	26
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	2	3	4	6	5
INDUSTRIAL	22	20	20	13	16	16
AGRICULTURAL	9	11	10	6	8	7
AVERAGE				18	22	21

[†]Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector [‡]Female proportion of total sector workforce

TARANAKI	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	846	578	1424	919	749	1668	1198	960	2158
DOMESTIC	380	1246	1626	355	1314	1669	362	1468	1830
COMMERCIAL	2068	419	2487	1771	506	2277	2285	647	2932
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1189	42	1231	1264	87	1351	1459	118	1577
INDUSTRIAL	5078	427	5505	4264	369	4633	4301	419	4720
AGRICULTURAL	8602	884	9486	8917	1491	10408	10315	1170	11485
TOTAL	18163	3596	21759	17490	4516	22006	19920	4782	24702

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

TARANAKI	FEMALE WORKFORCE [†]			GENDER PROPORTION [‡]		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	16	17	20	41	45	44
DOMESTIC	35	29	31	77	79	77
COMMERCIAL	12	11	14	17	22	25
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	3	6	6
INDUSTRIAL	12	8	9	8	8	10
AGRICULTURAL	25	33	24	9	14	6
AVERAGE				17	21	21

[†]Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector [‡]Female proportion of total sector workforce

HAWKE'S BAY	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	896	638	1534	1195	910	2105	1551	1195	2746
DOMESTIC	639	1703	2342	602	1760	2362	557	1840	2397
COMMERCIAL	2438	496	2934	2382	747	3129	2832	935	3767
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1762	74	1836	1768	116	1884	2138	135	2273
INDUSTRIAL	5172	645	5817	4425	597	5022	4689	540	5229
AGRICULTURAL	6216	298	6514	6604	440	7044	7464	437	7901
TOTAL	17123	3854	20977	16976	4570	21546	19231	5082	24313

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

HAWKE'S BAY	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	17	20	24	42	43	44
DOMESTIC	44	39	36	73	75	80
COMMERCIAL	13	16	18	17	24	22
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	3	3	4	6	7
INDUSTRIAL	17	13	11	11	12	9
AGRICULTURAL	8	10	9	5	6	10
AVERAGE				18	21	19

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

WELLINGTON	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	5283	2792	8075	6583	4071	10654	8056	5217	13273
DOMESTIC	2975	8087	11062	2497	7355	9852	2341	7140	9481
COMMERCIAL	12181	2804	14985	11006	3989	14995	13877	4875	18752
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	8963	289	9252	10929	561	11490	14426	638	15064
INDUSTRIAL	23483	3786	27269	21182	4212	25394	21027	4165	25192
AGRICULTURAL	17452	1138	18590	18098	1425	19523	21765	1354	23119
TOTAL	70337	18896	89233	70295	21613	91908	81492	23389	104881

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

WELLINGTON	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	15	19	22	35	38	39
DOMESTIC	43	34	31	73	75	75
COMMERCIAL	15	18	21	19	27	26
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	3	3	3	5	4
INDUSTRIAL	20	19	18	14	17	17
AGRICULTURAL	6	7	6	6	7	6
AVERAGE				21	24	22

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

MARLBOROUGH	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	262	198	460	254	233	487	280	277	557
DOMESTIC	154	559	713	128	478	606	141	451	592
COMMERCIAL	612	115	727	522	137	659	642	178	820
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	452	20	472	382	35	417	513	26	539
INDUSTRIAL	1729	135	1864	1204	113	1317	999	102	1101
AGRICULTURAL	2713	94	2807	2684	178	2862	3268	174	3442
TOTAL	5922	1121	7043	5174	1174	6348	5843	1208	7051

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

MARLBOROUGH	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	18	20	23	43	48	50
DOMESTIC	50	41	37	78	79	76
COMMERCIAL	10	12	15	16	21	22
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	3	2	4	8	5
INDUSTRIAL	12	10	8	7	9	9
AGRICULTURAL	8	15	14	3	6	5
AVERAGE				16	18	17

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

NELSON	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	742	604	1346	733	689	1422	845	799	1644
DOMESTIC	586	1384	1970	370	1234	1604	309	1141	1450
COMMERCIAL	1598	404	2002	1322	585	1907	1327	548	1875
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1685	49	1734	1498	97	1595	1730	100	1830
INDUSTRIAL	4424	533	4957	2921	389	3310	2152	321	2473
AGRICULTURAL	9345	147	9492	8707	328	9035	9239	329	9568
TOTAL	18380	3121	21501	15551	3322	18873	15602	3238	18840

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

NELSON	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	19	21	25	45	48	49
DOMESTIC	44	37	35	70	77	79
COMMERCIAL	13	18	17	20	31	29
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	3	3	3	6	5
INDUSTRIAL	17	12	10	11	12	13
AGRICULTURAL	5	10	10	2	4	3
AVERAGE				15	18	17

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

WESTLAND	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	311	245	556	267	287	554	322	294	616
DOMESTIC	226	585	811	181	387	568	123	342	465
COMMERCIAL	710	174	884	479	184	663	547	203	750
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	721	28	749	689	29	718	910	34	944
INDUSTRIAL	2206	212	2418	1458	138	1596	753	125	878
AGRICULTURAL	1657	83	1740	1256	86	1342	1870	93	1963
TOTAL	5831	1327	7158	4330	1111	5441	4525	1091	5616

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

WESTLAND	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	18	26	27	44	52	48
DOMESTIC	44	35	31	72	68	74
COMMERCIAL	13	17	19	20	28	27
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	2	3	3	4	4	4
INDUSTRIAL	16	12	11	9	9	14
AGRICULTURAL	6	8	9	5	6	5
AVERAGE				19	20	19

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

CANTERBURY	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	2793	2368	5161	3423	2899	6322	4009	3664	7673
DOMESTIC	1456	6020	7476	1643	5598	7241	1134	5638	6772
COMMERCIAL	9457	2367	11824	8476	2829	11305	9806	3538	13344
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	5258	159	5417	5292	327	5619	7463	328	7791
INDUSTRIAL	19364	4488	23852	15683	4340	20023	17346	4089	21435
AGRICULTURAL	20706	906	21612	18195	1088	19283	20897	930	21827
TOTAL	59034	16308	75342	52712	17081	69793	60655	18187	78842

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

CANTERBURY	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	15	17	20	46	46	48
DOMESTIC	37	33	31	81	77	83
COMMERCIAL	15	17	19	20	25	27
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	3	6	4
INDUSTRIAL	28	25	22	19	22	19
AGRICULTURAL	6	6	5	4	6	4
AVERAGE				22	24	23

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

OTAGO	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	2450	1708	4158	2794	2101	4895	3133	2572	5705
DOMESTIC	1126	4352	5478	900	3886	4786	762	3874	4636
COMMERCIAL	7035	1761	8796	6012	2122	8134	6480	2436	8916
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	4198	152	4350	4559	276	4835	5905	284	6189
INDUSTRIAL	14583	4149	18732	11233	3855	15088	11517	3678	15195
AGRICULTURAL	14878	783	15661	13379	869	14248	14202	908	15110
TOTAL	44270	12905	57175	38877	13109	51986	41999	13752	55751

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

OTAGO	FEMALE WORKFORCE ¹			GENDER PROPORTION ²		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	13	16	19	41	43	45
DOMESTIC	34	30	28	79	81	84
COMMERCIAL	14	16	18	20	26	27
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	3	6	5
INDUSTRIAL	32	29	27	22	26	24
AGRICULTURAL	6	7	7	5	6	6
AVERAGE				23	25	25

¹Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector ²Female proportion of total sector workforce

SOUTHLAND [†]	1911			1916			1921		
	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***	M*	F**	TOTAL***
PROFESSIONAL	786	587	1373	899	705	1604	969	859	1828
DOMESTIC	316	1952	2268	304	1650	1954	239	1704	1943
COMMERCIAL	2654	578	3232	2162	723	2885	2445	897	3342
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1730	57	1787	1547	84	1631	2101	107	2208
INDUSTRIAL	5778	708	6486	4719	669	5388	3999	631	4630
AGRICULTURAL	9926	1308	11234	8537	929	9466	9932	661	10593
TOTAL	21190	5190	26380	18168	4760	22928	19685	4859	24544

[†]Includes census data for the Chatham and Kermadec Islands provinces, which were incorporated into the Southland province in the 1916 and 1921 census listings

*Number of male workers in the region **Number of female workers in the region ***Total number of workers in the region

SOUTHLAND	FEMALE WORKFORCE [†]			GENDER PROPORTION [™]		
	1911	1916	1921	1911	1916	1921
PROFESSIONAL	11	15	18	43	44	47
DOMESTIC	38	35	35	86	84	88
COMMERCIAL	11	15	18	18	25	27
TRANSPORT/ COMMUNICATION	1	2	2	3	5	5
INDUSTRIAL	14	14	13	11	12	14
AGRICULTURAL	25	20	14	12	10	6
AVERAGE				20	21	20

[†]Proportion of female workers engaged in each sector [™]Female proportion of total sector workforce

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