A 'GOD-FORSAKEN' WILDERNESS? THE EFFECTS OF ISOLATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL RELIGION IN THE WANGANUI HINTERLAND, 1880-c1920

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Bruce Tristan Attwell

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In memory of my Father, Charles Herbert Attwell, (1885-1972) and the two other "Charlies" - Charles Brush and Charles Sturzaker - all drivers of heavy road transport on the notorious Wanganui-Raetihi Parapara road of the 1930's. The Parapara claimed the other two. May they be remembered as pioneers.

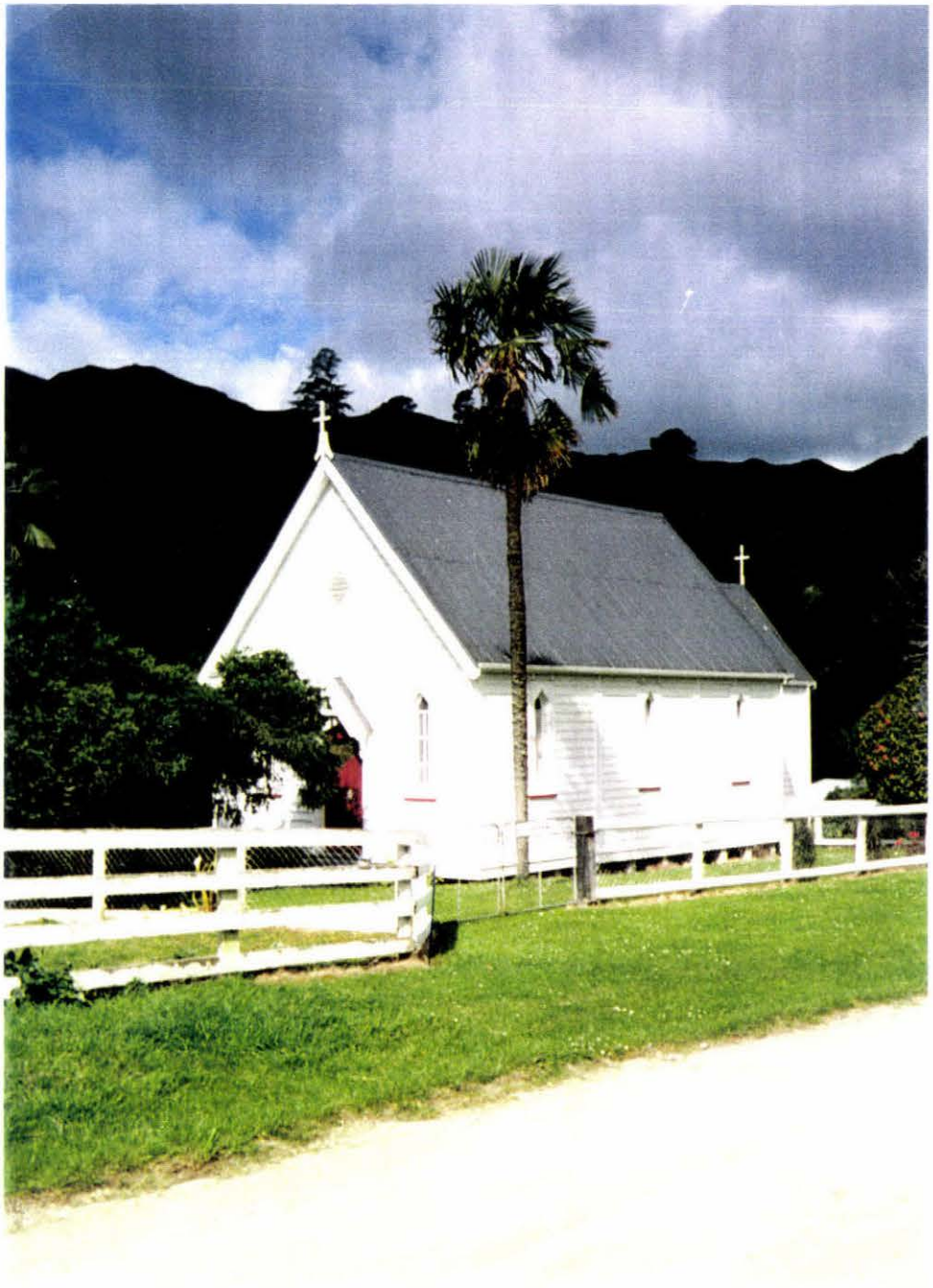
ABSTRACT

Government policy after 1880 was to open up the Wanganui hinterland for settlement. Building of the Main Trunk railway greatly facilitated this. New villages sprang up along the route. Settlement was encouraged and yeoman farmers moved into the interior as land was allocated.

Churches followed settlement. Most came from the Wanganui lowland area where "Wakefield" antecedents had bequeathed Anglican conservatism. Nevertheless, revivalist influence, and replication of English working-class chapel religion, ensured that hinterland townships gained strongly pro-active non-conformist churches. In reply to Government secular education, most churches operated Sabbath schools. Only the Catholics built their own primary schools.

Inter-denominational competition for membership and competitive church-building created financial stress, with consequently poor remuneration for hard-worked pastors. There was little time to carry the Gospel out into the back-blocks. Primitive roading and scattered population were combined handicaps. Inability of churches to take advantage of the "Nelson System" and take the Bible into country schools, also meant that back-country children grew up without religious input from clergy or Sunday schools.

Indications are that by the mid-1920's the churches had mostly lost the allegiance of a back-country generation. Improved communications had not improved congregations. Although the line was being held in the villages, the legendary, 'God-fearing pioneer' seems a rather chimerical figure. Whatever their beliefs, the back-blocks dwellers had reason to feel somewhat forsaken by their churches.



The Anglican Church of St Hilda-In-The-Wood (1904), at Ngamatapouri, some fifty kilometres up the the Waitotara River. The church is the only public building left in the lonely, narrow valley. There was once a store and a library, but today the Public Hall and School are several kilometres away down the valley. The church is the only one in the hinterland constructed apart from a township or village. St Hilda and the Presbyterian Church at Mangamahu on the Whangaehu River, were also the only hinterland churches built away from the Main Trunk Railway. Both are still in regular use. Photo, B.T.Attwell

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Bruce Attwell
Turakina Beach, November 1998

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INTRODUCTION

Anyone who has lived and worked in the back-blocks of the Wanganui hinterland, will certainly have had occasion on some depressing and rain-sad day, to dub their particular shut-in valley, a 'God-forsaken wilderness'. From the late nineteenth century until well past the mid-twentieth century years, that pejorative was certainly appropriate, in that religion had great difficulty meeting the challenges of settler isolation and the prescription of state-funded secular education in the back-blocks. This inability and the ways in which it influenced socio-religious development in the Wanganui hinterland, is the subject of this thesis.

Research has revealed unusual anomalies in religious practice in different areas of the hinterland. In the north-west, the isolated and avowedly God-fearing little community of Ngamatapouri constructed its own church in 1904 and enjoyed regular visits from travelling clergy. By comparison, settlers on the mid-section of the winding Parapara Road between Wanganui and Raetihi in 1918, regarded themselves as church-forsaken heathens,[1] isolated by mud and neglect. On the other hand, Raetihi and Ohakune, eleven kilometres apart, were well supplied with churches. Even Rangataua, just four kilometres south of Ohakune, opened an Anglican church by 1911. Yet Horopito, a growing milling and railway town about eight kilometres by rail north of Ohakune, and twelve kilometres north-east of Raetihi, was never to possess a church. Proximity to other churches over easy terrain probably accounted for this anomaly. Further south, in the Pohanui area west of Mangaweka, a Catholic priest visited parishioners just four times yearly.

Such diversity contradicts an often repeated shibboleth about the legendary piety and faith of back-blocks pioneers. Waimarino settlers, as recorded by one historian, displayed a faith, 'accepted without doubt or question'; and, '...all the early pioneers were God-fearing people. They all went

to church be it Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Salvation Army or Baptist.'[2] Such modern statements sound nostalgic and apochryphal; the pioneers' world was rather less ideal.

It was from Wanganui that much material, educational and religious support was derived during the settlement of the hinterland; but comparison of the two areas reveals wide differences in the physical and social environments. They were unlike worlds, wherein churches played dissimilar roles. The religious conventions of the earlier Wanganui settlers were those of a pastoral land-owning establishment of the "Wakefield" model. Many of the yoeman farmers and village shopkeepers who occupied the hinterland held rather different beliefs. Their propensities toward more fraternal and nonconformist faiths were strongly reminiscent of those common in English working-class towns and villages of the mid-nineteenth century. Such ideals were probably introduced by later immigrants, or inherited by the New Zealand-born settlers. The influence of revivalists and colporteurs of the more proactive sects in the Wanganui-Manawatu lowlands in the 1870-80 period, was probably another source of this dissent.

Rollo Arnold's book on the Revolt of the Field,[3] and consequent yoeman settlement of back-blocks areas of Taranaki, Wairarapa and Manawatu-Rangitikei, describes socio-religious attitudes that were common to both earlier Taranaki, and later Wanganui hinterland settlers. The English village communities with their high standards of sobriety, morality and familial piety, seem to have provided an inspiration for many a hinterland settler and villager. These attitudes among the labouring and artisan classes of late nineteenth century Britain appear to have been widespread, as both Hugh McLeod, Religion and the Working Class in NineteenthCentury Britain, and Allan Everitt, The Pattern of Rural Dissent: the Nineteenth Century, have recorded.

The highland settlers had quit an open and productive countryside, throughout which rapidly-improving rail, river and road transport, were complemented by developing postal and telegraph services. There were also numerous schools and churches serving country and town. From the lowlands, they had moved to penetrate and populate a roadless land that was heavily clothed in ancient rain forest. They had relinquished a society embracing modern industrialisation to create another, one that was initially dependent upon subsistence farming. They had been forced to adopt their educational and religious ideals to the exigency of lonely isolation and narrow means. There was little replication of the English models of society and religion so well established in the Wanganui lowlands.

The churches too, had been forced to embark upon a new mission. History has recorded that intense competition for members brought about an over-supply of churches and a shortage of parishioners in what one churchman, in 1902, described as '...this great mud-bound bush parish.' He was referring to Taihape, but the term would have fitted anywhere in the high country.[4] Indeed, that word, 'mud', might have been carved upon the heart of many an overworked and underpaid clergyman, recalling his horse plunging and floundering belly deep on some bush-hung bridle-track. Mud and isolation were to become almost synonymous terms in the world of the yeoman farmers and their families.

A peculiar feature of much of the settlement of the Wanganui hinterland was its relationship to the construction of the central portion of the great Main Trunk Railway. The rails had reached Hunterville by 1885, and the final linking of the lines from north and south took place near Horopito in August 1908. During the intervening years the work brought life and commerce to many an isolated cluster of huts around a store and accommodation house. Such staging and supply points were important centres for settlers

engaged in clearing the bush from their allotted sections. Many grew into busy townships as the rails reached them. Without the railway work and its navvies, settlement would have proceeded much more slowly. Permanent populations would have been slower to come. The schools, halls, churches and their offices, would have been many more years away. Transport of wool and timber, and later, dairy produce, would have remained a decades-away dream for many settlers.

It is an indicative fact that away from the railway, European churches arose only at Ngamatapouri at the head of the Waitotara Valley, and at Mangamahu on the lower reaches of the Whangaehu River. Although Raetihi had its first church well before the railway branch reached it in 1917, it was close enough to both Ohakune and Horopito during the construction years to have derived benefit from such proximity. This implies that the successful churches were dependent upon village development and the presence of large construction or milling camps. Nevertheless, because the settlement pattern was one of small family holdings, with rapid familial growth, hinterland population was by no means scant - although it was scattered.

Did the churches then, fail those people in not taking religion to the rural back-blocks in a more pro-active sense, having lost much church input into education after the 1877 Education Act? It would seem so; particularly in the Anglican case, where much rhetoric and energy was diverted into efforts to persuade government to put the Bible back into public education but little toward provision of Anglican schools and Sunday schools. Other Protestant churches concentrated on developing their Sunday schools. The Catholics built their own schools, with a consequent financial burden on parishioners.

The history of settlement in the Wanganui hinterland is a story of the high and the low; in terrain, in religion,

and in society itself. Yet, it is hardly a story of animosity and social division; and it is not, as Miles Fairburn[5] has it, one of social 'atomisation'. The railway navvies worked in co-operative gangs, and settlers and builders alike brought wives and families to the wilderness. Settlement of the hinterland was largely a family affair.

Because settlement of the Wanganui lowlands before 1870 had been largely of the "Wakefield" kind, it had been middle class, land-owning and mainly Protestant in religion. The new yeoman-farming laity of the hinterland, while also a land-owning (or leasing) class, was nevertheless prepared to relegate to history much of the European cultural baggage imported by the churches. So too, were many of the horde of egalitarian navvies, bushmen, road workers and tradesmen building or following the great Main Trunk Railway work; so churches were generally spartan and sometimes shared. Villages prospered, but congregations were variable, and some denominations failed for lack of steady support.

With the railway in operation, the government offered further land for settlement and eager settlers penetrated further into the rugged hinterland interior. Religion in the villages developed rapidly and somewhat competitively, as the various churches sought to service their followers and to gather new membership from the host of construction hands, timber millers, tradesmen and towns-people. For the outback settlers by comparison, religion was almost a luxury - perhaps a visit to a church once a month, assuming that weather and roading permitted the round journey of perhaps twenty miles or more by horse-back or buggy. There could be no regular Sunday school for children under such conditions.

In the villages, however, Sunday schools flourished, There the competing churches sought to counter state secular influence, and to encourage adult participation in religion.

The towns were thus provided with moral leadership, ritual and rites, while the back-blocks were largely unserved. One writer claims that the nature of land determines the kind of religion produced.[6] Such an affinity quite probably resulted in eventual modification to back-blocks religion. Primary education and the relationship between religious and free secular education was another modifying factor. So too, was the eventual improvement in roading and the coming of the motor vehicle. Mobility and ease of access to larger towns would, in the end, deplete congregations.

The paucity of early records presented a problem in gathering material for this thesis. This was, especially, the case with turn-of-the-century newspapers. Some were not where thay were reportedly cached, and had to be tracked down. One hoped-for source, an early settler's diary, had been eaten by rats in recent years! Some old, weekly journals kept in trunks and suitcases, were falling apart. Nevertheless, other sources such as the archives of the Rangitikei County Council, yielded large, well-preserved minute books. They were informative. So too, were a number of school and church centenary booklets. One school reunion provided numerous old photographs and newspaper clippings. To there meet again one veteran from childhood years, and to share reminiscences, was a highlight of that reunion.

Cemeteries were sometimes informative indicators of religious ideology. They were also moving reminders of the brevity of many a Victorian life - tragically often, that of a child. Although dynastic ranks and monuments indicated families numbering up to ten and more, the memorials to the youngest of infants were frequently lavish. In the 1880's, these monuments would have been shipped from Dunedin,[7] and hauled over terrible, muddy roads. Such an obvious financial commitment declares deeply-felt grief and firm religious convictions. It might also indicate something of the social position of the bereft families.

No less than seven wonderful men and women, all well into their eighties, recaptured for the writer their school and back-blocks farming childhoods. Their depiction largely contradicted that projected by some later historians. Piety and religious education seemed not to have played any great part in their isolated rural upbringing.

The origin and extent of this discovered religious deficiency is an important issue in this study. The writer spent several late-childhood years in the back-blocks (Paparangi), and in later years lived and worked at Ruatiti, Paparangi, Raetihi, Waiouru and Taihape. Accordingly, some familiarity with the people of the high country is claimed. Knowing the Waimarino as a 'dry area' in the days of the alcohol embargo, and being the offspring of a pioneer driver of heavy road transport on the treacherous Parapara road of mud-and-metal days, it becomes possible, with the aid of reminiscences from old and new friends, to conjure up images of a vanished society and a world of contradictions.

It was a world of well-kept little churches; of silent Sabbaths, (except for the sound of church bells), and of Salvation Army bands on street corners.[8] Yet, it was also a world of 'beer-trains'[9] and sly-grogging; of hard-working and hard-swearing farmers struggling out of the Great Depression of the 1930's. It was a world of drab, unpainted mill houses and lonely farms; a world of bare-footed children and harassed mothers in sugar-bag aprons. It was frequently a world of struggle in an environment of desolate isolation - the 'back-of-beyond' - the Wanganui hinterland.

The sense of living in a forgotten world far from 'real' civilisation, was still most pervasive in the 1950's. The term, "God-forsaken wilderness", was a phrase that came readily to mind when living at the end of a forty-mile track in thinly-populated high country. Personal experience is that such back-blocks were generally church-forsaken.

Today, in some parts of the hinterland, it is possible to walk for many lonely kilometres over long-abandoned and overgrown roads - ways that once carried the hopes and dreams of a generation. Such roads were the curse and the despair of the Counties, devourers of rates and labour, and even in the 1950's, still easily rendered impassable by vagaries of the weather. The roadman with his shovel was perhaps, even more important to an isolated farmer than a clergyman. There is a history here that posterity has tended to ignore.

Except where necessary to illustrate a point, this thesis has not been concerned with the religious history of the Whanganui River. That is a well-worked field, and one basically concerned with Maori religious history. This thesis is about European settlement away from the river, although touching briefly on Maori (and Chinese) religion.

Because this study is being done under the auspices of the Department of Religious Studies at Massey University, the main focus will, as stated, be upon the religious attitudes of hinterland society. But such attitudes cannot be fully comprehended if they are abstracted from the matrix of history and environment. Therefore, this thesis is concerned as well with the historical and physiographical backgrounds to the period chosen. This is aspecially vital when considering relative aspects of the Wanganui coastal lowlands and the hinterland, and their relationship, each to the other.

Preserving objectivity in interpreting that history, was not always easy given the back-country experience of of the writer. But it is felt that an examination of various influences, whether extended from Warwickshire or Wanganui, or from legislation on road and railway development, might provide some explanation of a perceived disparity. It is the contradiction between the older images of an allegedly

God-fearing and devout Victorian society, and the one that obtained by the early nineteen-thirties. Somewhere, between the two may be found a clearer picture of a settler society and its religious reaction to settlement and isolation on what has been called 'one of the last rural frontiers'[10]

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 Doris Wallace, The Generation Gap: Unimportant People And The Parapara, Tauranga, 1973. The term 'heathen' is Wallace's own, referring to the absolute lack of religious contact while living on what was virtually a mud track in 1918. p.271.

2 Elizabeth Allen, In The Hills Of The Waimarino, Wanganui, 1984. pp.37;92.

3 Rollo Arnold, The Farthest Promised Land, 1981. In this and other works (see bibliography), Arnold deals extensively with the environment of religious dissent in the English backgrounds of many of the assisted immigrants of the 1870's.

4 Journal of Rev Percy Wise Clarkson. Quoted in Duncan Green and John McCaul, St. Margaret's Anglican Church TAIHAPE: 75 Years 1902-1977, Taihape, 1977. p.20, Clarkson, who began as a Stipendiary Lay Reader in Taihape in 1901, is also quoted describing how a vestry order for 500 feet of timber required four men, 12 horses and 14 bullocks, a fortnight to transport eleven miles through mud three and four feet deep! p.22.

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

6 Vine Deloria, God Is Red, New York, 1973, pp.75-76.

7 Personal observation of production dates on monument bases in the Presbyterian cemetery on Jefferson's Line near Marton, indicate Dunedin as the production source until about the early 1890's, when Wanganui and Palmerston North monumental masons began supply.

8 Salvation Army bands were apparently popular enough for the Raetihi Town Council about 1930 to provide a corner street lamp to facilitate their renditions. Information supplied to the writer by Ross Journeaux, custodian of the Waimarino Museum, 1998.

9 The "Beer Train" was a phenomenon of the alcohol-restricted area of the King Country. European settlers were permitted to import their own alcohol for personal consumption, and at Christmas and New Year, many wagons on a goods train would be loaded with the eagerly-awaited cargo. Transport companies on the Wanganui-Raetihi run would put on extra trucks to cope with the liquor trafic leading up to the Christmas season. There was also a fair amount of illegal contraband and trading across the borders and with the Maori, who had no liquor entitlement. Information from R. Journeaux and personal knowledge gained as a New Zealand Railways employee.

10 Erik Olssen, 'Towards a New Society', in Part III, The Oxford History of New Zealand, edited W.H. Oliver with B.R. Williams, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1981, p.274.

1: DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIONS: The 1870's

Wanganui, at the beginning of the decade of the 1870's, was a thriving regional communications centre and port, with an influence extending as far as Hawera in the north, and Palmerston North in the south. A twice-weekly coach service to Wellington via Turakina had begun in 1869, and the inaugural journey of a planned, regular service to Patea took place on 5 March 1870, '...over an excellent road, and through a country rich in memorable events.'[1] The roads, however, were generally unsurfaced and poor. Beach travel was often preferable to the muddy inland tracks. But as the easier and more accessible coastal land was settled, communications gradually improved. Travel became less tied to the beaches or coastal shipping, and by December 1873, work on the first section of the railway designed to link the ports of Foxton and Wanganui was proceeding well.[2] This would further encourage settlement of the broad, lowland acres of the Rangitikei and Manawatu, with settlers moving up the fertile valleys of the Whangaehu, Turakina and Rangitikei rivers as sections became available. The move into the hinterland was beginning.[3]

With the opening of the Wanganui Town Bridge in 1871, and completion of the railway link with Foxton in 1877, coupled with port development that began in 1878, the Wanganui district was well positioned to share in the expanding export trade in wool and meat that the advent of refrigerated shipping was to greatly promote in the 1880's. But, in the opening years of the decades from 1870 to 1880, the smaller rural villages were developing in comparative isolation, simply because slow and difficult communications imposed independence upon them. Small centres such as Turakina, Bulls, and the later-developing Marton, although not greatly separated by distance, were providers of many essential services to local settlers.

Turakina, for instance, was a thriving village in

the early 1870's, with Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches. The Presbyterians built their first church there as early as 1857, replacing it with a more substantial building in 1865. The Catholics followed with their church in 1868. But in the busy coaching junction and staging point that was Turakina of the 'seventies, it was the pro-active Presbyterian Church that provided not only pastoral guidance for a parish of largely Scottish descent, but also Sunday Schools and 'libraries of edifying books for the young'[4] in both the village and nearby Bonny Glen, where there was also a Presbyterian church.[5]

Bulls, by 1875, also had its Presbyterian Church and resident minister. The Rev James Doull was to remain in the growing communications junction for 34 years,[6] seeing it grow into a sizeable village as the earlier-available and gentle terrain of the coastal lowlands was taken up by eager settlers.[7]

Settlement north of Wanganui was also proceeding well in the 1870's. The settlement of Maxwelltown on the former military road to Waitotara and Patea boasted a hotel, store and Post Office in 1872.[8] A school was opened in 1874.[9] Barely five years had elapsed since the skilful Maori leader and tactician, Titokowaru, had abandoned his almost impregnable fighting-pa, Tauranga-a-Ika, only a few miles north at Nukumaru. With the gradual winding down of hostilities the earlier-settled and war-relinquished lands between Kai Iwi and Waitotara were rapidly re-occupied by settlers. With improvements in coach transport, hotels and stores were soon erected at staging points and stops such as Kai Iwi, Maxwelltown, Nukumaru and Waitotara.

The surge of building that took place in the Taranaki-Rangitikei lowlands at this time, was a consequence of a rapidly-increasing population. Stores, hotels, schools and churches arose to serve new villages springing up around

the various road junctions and coach staging points. All required land. The Vogel-inspired immigration surge of the 1870's was also to bring a new tide of the land-hungry to Taranaki, Wanganui and Rangitikei. With the lowlands surveyed, purchased and occupied, the new settlers were left only one way to go; they turned to the mountains.

There were, however, problems hampering unrestricted expansion inland - especially from Maori resistance to further alienation of their lands following the wars of the 1860's.[10] Equally as daunting, was the geological configuration of the area under consideration. For the purposes of this thesis, the margins of this area are as follows: In the north-west, a direct line encompassing the Waitotara valley and river, extends from the sea through Ngamatapouri at the head of the valley to the confluence of the Mangaparua Stream and the Whanganui River, thence to Erua on the Main Trunk Railway, the most northerly point of the block. A further line then reaches south-east through Taihape on the railway, to where it joins the Rangitikei River near Utiku, south of Taihape. From there the river marks the border with the Manawatu district, to where it meets the coast at Tangimoana. (Map 1). Geographically, the area takes in portions of the Lower and Upper Rangitikei County, most of the Waimarino and Waitotara Counties, part of Patea County, and all of the Wanganui County. (Map 2).

This area in the late 1870's looked almost entirely to Wanganui for supply, communications and local government. The town became the central office for Railways, and the district office controlling education. Therefore, the useful appellation of "Wanganui District" will be used in this study. The close relationship between lowland town and mountainous hinterland that later developed, was vital to both - economically, socially and even religiously. And the circumstances from which this relationship arose,

were generated by both geography and social history. The former largely dictated the time-scale and pattern of land settlement. The latter reflected the origins and aspirations of the settlers both before and after the so-called 'Vogel era' of land settlement. These factors were to have an important bearing on the shape and direction of religious development in the wild hinterland in the decades to come.

The physiography of the Wanganui Subdivision is described as comprising '...the coast, coastal dune complexes, the coastal lowland, and submaturely dissected upland.'[11] From the sea to the volcanic plateau, the land rises to almost one thousand metres, with numerous higher peaks. This, in winter, is snow country - as the Waimarino settlers were to learn.

The Geological Survey of New Zealand, (1959),[12] clearly shows how, from Bulls on the proper right bank of the Rangitikei River, to the lower Waitotara River valley on the western border of the area under consideration, the coastal dune area forms a long wedge tapering north-westward to the sea. Inland, this is overlooked by the higher, and mostly level terraces of the Brunswick and Rapanui formations. This 65 kilometre-long series of terraces is at its widest around Marton, and in turn tapers gradually past Wanganui to Waitotara in the north-west. In this, the settlers found an easy terrain, generally flat and drained by occasional shallow stream gullies fed by small lakes and shallow swamp areas. The only major breaks in this large and potentially productive expanse of lowland country, were the shallow valleys of the Turakina, Whangaehu and Whanganui Rivers, and the Kai Iwi Stream north of Wanganui. With only scattered manuka scrub, toe-toe and flax, and clumps of bush in the gullies and swampy areas, these gentle lowlands offered the earlier European settlers some of the richest pastoral farming lands in the southern North Island.[13]

The relative ease of communication over the Wanganui tableland, even in the early 1850's, is amusingly illustrated by the mode of transport of a Wanganui clergyman. Astride a bullock, he would travel some 21 kilometres from Wanganui to Turakina to preach in the growing settlement. As he went, the minister would not only read but also write his sermon as the docile beast ambled sedately along the muddy track![14] And English society was being surprisingly replicated in the benign and peaceful Rangitikei. A settler could write to England as early as 1857 that, '...Rangitikei is not the outlandish place it once was. You can hardly go out of sight of a house and the society is improving...[15]

This then, was the Wanganui district of the early 1870's: A high, roadless hinterland populated only by Maori, soaring above a broad wedge of fertile terraces and sandy dune country, criss-crossed by a web of adequate, if often muddy, tracks. These served a wide scattering of villages and hamlets, linking them each to the other, and all to the vital port and centre of Wanganui. There, religion and education were being well served in the number of churches and schools built and being built.[16] For, in the aftermath of the painful North Island land wars, the fervent missionary enterprise that once carried the Christian message afield from Wanganui to mid-Island Maori, was being replaced by a mission to Europeans.

Certainly, the land wars had done enormous damage to the religious affinity between Maori and Pakeha. The long highway of the Whanganui River had only recently been the safe road to the interior for Christian proselytization. Now, many of the lovingly-constructed Maori churches along that waterway were falling into ruin.[17] Maori antipathy toward European religion was illustrated by the widespread influence of the Pai Marire (Hau Hau) movement. Rather than welcoming European missionaries into their isolated river communities, many frustrated and disenchanted Maori

now rejected the creed that had seemingly blessed the soldiers and land sellers. The up-river tribes withdrew into their isolation, erecting boundary aukati signs. The message was clear: "Pakeha! Stay out!"[18] But a distant creak of spars, and the thudding of the steam engines in new immigrant ships was already sounding the knell to Maori isolation. A growing tide of immigrants and settlers from other parts of the colony, was about to end for all time the splendid isolation of the mountain lands known to the European population as the 'King Country'.

The new wave of settlers was to be quite different from the early comers. Wanganui had been a Wakefield settlement, and although initially hindered by land disputes with the Wanganui Maori, purchase and occupation of the Wanganui-Rangitikei area proceeded steadily after 1848-49. The easy lowland fields - or 'Feldon' in Rollo Arnold's Warwickshire terminology[19] - had required hardly more than money to stock and fence. Thus, the settlement of the Wanganui Feldon generally followed the Hawke's Bay pattern, the land being taken up in large holdings by people of means. On the other hand, the 'Arden', (or forest land in the other half of the Warwickshire description), would later be taken up by yeoman freeholders, men who possessed little more than a small monetary deposit plus an axe and a few other hand tools with which to further a fervent will to succeed and prosper.

Indeed, the Warwickshire analogy is a fitting one. The religious development of the Wanganui hinterland settlements was to produce villages somewhat similar to those of late nineteenth-century Southern England, of which Rollo Arnold wrote. In his work, The Farthest Promised Land, (1981), Arnold described the so-called 'Revolt of the Field' of 1872, during which farm labourers in South Warwickshire organised into a union and withdrew their labour. New Zealand at that time, was, in Arnold's words,

'...hungry for men accustomed to hard labour, and gifted in rural skills.'[20] Such promising immigrants were actively recruited by the Vogel administration from amongst the striking farm labourers. They and their families were needed to populate and open up confiscated or newly-purchased lands in the two decades following the closing of the land wars. And while few of those immigrants settled in the Wanganui hinterland, (most were settled elsewhere by the early 1880's), many of the hinterland pioneers would later display a social morality and religious cohesion remarkably similar to that of the radicals of Warwickshire, Kent or Cornwall.

From these areas, perhaps via a kind of social osmosis during earlier years of colonial mobility, there came a sturdy nonconformity of religious and political thought. Such ideals had matched - perhaps even spurred - resistance to social oppression. In the Wychwood area of Oxfordshire, the villages of Burford and Charlbury had their Baptist, Quaker and Wesleyan chapels. Milton had three dissenting chapels, and Ascot two, while in Lyneham, '...it was the Wesleyan chapel, not the Anglican church which dominated the scene.'[21]

This nonconformity, which marked an influential proportion of the migrant host who abandoned the oppressed and poorly-paid farmlands of Southern England after 1872, has often been remarked upon. Alfred Simmons, for example, chronicled in 1879, the 'singular fact' that at a Sunday service aboard a New Zealand-bound immigrant ship,'...not fifty of the people possessed Prayer Books, most of them professing to be Dissenters...'[22] Simmons, himself, was a radical union organiser and newspaper editor. And although his religious conviction is not known, his appointment as group leader aboard the steamship, Mongol, and his close association with farm union leaders who were also devout Methodist preachers, (such as Joseph Arch and

Christopher Holloway), illustrates the admixture of radical thought and religious dissent that immigration introduced into New Zealand after 1872.[23]

This nonconformity would differ considerably from the Anglican form of worship already secure in the Wanganui Feldon. Apart from clusters of Presbyterians around Turakina and Bulls, the term 'rural church' in the mid-1870's meant Anglican churches at Matarawa or Maxwelltown. Central headquarters of Anglicanism, as with other denominations, was Wanganui itself. But within a few years, religion in the backblocks would reflect its dissenting origins in a different kind of settler society. It would be a society in which lay involvement in community and chapel would recreate forms of adherence and worship strongly reminiscent of the English country village. As P.J. Lineham observed in an article on Protestant piety in New Zealand:

> The irregular and limited church attendance of England was reinforced in New Zealand by the greater lay initiative and commitment required to establish services....Lay initiative did not come naturally to lower-class Anglicans....[24]

Lineham's observation on the rural origins of most New Zealanders and the relativity of their backgrounds to Methodism and Nonconformity, is supported by Hugh McLeod's study of working class religion in nineteenth-century Britain. McLeod considered that working class religion was '...strongly practical, and was concerned especially with mutual aid, and with maintaining standards of 'decent' behaviour.'[25]

It seems obvious that the religious propensities of Arnold's Warwickshire farm workers were common to much of the British working class of the period. Although few Warwickshire farm revolt migrants came to settle in the Wanganui hinterland, the yoeman settlers who eventually conquered the forbidding Arden were to display the religious inclinations, (or lack of them!), that were common to wage-workers in both town and country Britain.

Peter Lineham, in a 1977 history of Brethren assemblies in New Zealand, commented on the popularity of revivalist and millenarian Christianity in bush settlements. The obvious impracticality of ecclesiastical structures calling for '...money, ministers and buildings which no-one could supply...', Lineham suggested, made the fellowship of simple assemblies an attractive and familiar alternative for the undenominational Christian.[26] And, as Lineham illustrates, there was already in the 1870's, a ferment of religious revival in the lowlands, expanding out from Foxton and Bulls as itinerant Brethren preachers carried their Gospel message throughout the Manawatu, Rangitikei and Wanganui districts.[27] Later, in the membership of the "small farm associations" formed between 1892 and 1895 to ballot for Waimarino lands offered under the Land Act of 1892, there would be many who must have heard that Gospel message, and who took it with them into the hinterland.[28]

A small number of 'Vogel' immigrants did eventually settle in the Rangitikei in the 1870's, making their homes along the edges of the lowland flats where the Feldon meets the rising Arden country,[29] But the yeoman settlers of the 1880's were to turn inland. For there, amid the tumbled bush-clad hills of the Mangawekas and Upper Rangitikei, and on the Murimotu plateau, (or Waimarino as it was later to be known), cheap land and a new living awaited them.

So it was, that as the decade of the 1880's opened, new transport technology was speeding change in the Wanganui Feldon. Population was growing, and with the increased numbers came new and different philosophies. Trains and better roading helped their spread. The high Arden was not, however, to be quite such an easy conquest, and for the enthusiastic pioneers, the price of this wonderful, new opportunity for at least the first two decades, was to be a fearful isolation, greater than most of them had ever known, or would ever know again.

NOTES: Pages 1 to 9

1: DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIONS: THE 1870's

1 Wanganui Evening Herald, 7 February 1870.

2 Weekly Herald, Wanganui, 18 April 1873.

3 Although a Rangitikei Highways Board was formed in 1872, there was no settlement north of Silverhope in the Porewa Valley. Roads in the newly-auctioned Hunterville Block (1874), were still mere mud tracks. See S.G. Laurenson, Rangitikei: the day of striding out, Palmerston North, 1979. p.37. See also, D.M. Laing, Hunterville: The First Hundred Years, Wanganui, 1983 p.5.

4 The strong Presbyterian influence in Turakina is well described by Rev. Malcolm Wilson in Turakina: The Story of a Country Parish, 1952. See also Jessie M. Annabell, Caledonia Stern and Wild: Scottish Identity in Wanganui and Rangitikei 1880-1918, M.A. thesis, Massey University, 1995.

5 Wilson, 1952, p.33.

6 R.A. Wilson, (Major), Bulls: A History of the Township, Palmerston North, (no date). p.16.

7 Bulls was the only commercial centre between Wanganui and Wellington. It had a Post Master and Telegraph Office by 1871. See R.A. Wilson, p.25.

8 Laraine Sole, The Way We Were: The Settlement of Maxwell and Waitotara 1850-1930, Waverley, 1990. p.16.

9 Sole, p.136.

10 Keith Sinclair, A History of New Zealand, Penguin revised edn. Auckland, 1988. p.147.

11 C.A. Fleming, The Geology of The Wanganui Subdivision, Wellington, 1952. p.X.

12 Geological Map of New Zealand, Sheet 10. New Zealand Geological Survey, 1959.

13 A.H. McLintock, An Encyclopaedia Of New Zealand, Wellington, 1966. Vol.3, p.549.

14 This was the Rev. David Hogg of Wanganui, who conducted irregular services in Turakina in 1853. See Wilson, Turakina, pp.22-3.

15 F. Basil Marshall, Early Settlers in the Porewa Valley, Rangitikei, (no date), p.31.

16 The Anglican Christ Church in Wanganui had been built in 1866, and St John's at Matarawa, the same year. The Wanganui Parochial District covered Matarawa, and St Mary's, Upukongaro, (1879). St George's at Turakina, was built later in 1885. Also built in Wanganui in the 'seventies were; St Paul's Presbyterian Church (1872), St Mary's Roman Catholic Church (1876-1877), Trinity Wesleyan Church (1873), and a Wesleyan church at Aramoho in 1877. There were also a Mosstown Public School (1870), a Wanganui Boy's School (1879), and a Wanganui Girl's School by 1880. See 'Wanganui' in Cyclopaedia Of New Zealand, Vol 1, Wellington, 1897-1908.

17 A.D. Mead, Richard Taylor Missionary Tramper, Wellington, 1966. pp. 253-256.

NOTES: Pages 1 to 9 Contd.

17 A.D. Mead, Richard Taylor Missionary Tramper, Wellington, 1966, pp. 253-256.

18 In 1883 an English explorer, J.H. Kerry-Nicholls, defied the aukati ban on Pakeha entering the King Country, and made a traverse of the Waimarino. At Ruakaka pa on the lower reaches of the Manganui a Te Ao River, he was fortunate enough to meet with hospitality rather than enmity. An old chieftainess, replying to an enquiry about religious belief, laughingly declared; "We believe in nothing here and get fat on pork and potatoes." Kerry-Nicholls considered the pa-dwellers,'...wrapped in the darkness of heathenism...[and]...a superstitious species of Hauhauism.' See J. H. Kerry-Nicholls, The King Country or Expolorations In New Zealand, 1884, (Capper Press reprint), 1974, p.278.

19 Rollo Arnold, The Farthest Promised Land: English Villagers, New Zealand Immigrants Of The 1870's, Wellington, 1981, pp.166;261.

20 Arnold, p.35.

21 Arnold p.111.

22 Alfred Simmons, Old England And New Zealand: The Government, Laws, Churches, Public Institutions, And The Resources Of New Zealand, Popularly And Critically Compared With The Old Country, London, 1879, p.111.

23 Arnold, pp.22;49.

24 P.J. Lineham, 'How Institutionalised was Protestant Piety in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', in Journal of Religious History, Vol.13, No.4, June 1985, p.375.

25 Hugh McLeod, Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain, London, 1984, p.11.

26 Peter J. Lineham, There We Found Brethren: A History of Assemblies of Brethren in New Zealand, Palmerston North, 1977, pp.32-33.

27 Lineham, pp.60-61. The non-denominational Brethren preachers cast their salvation net widely. Gordon Forlong - trained as a Presbyterian minister - drew large crowds in Bulls. He preached for the Presbyterians in Marton, for the Primitive Methodists in Feilding and later in the 'eighties, for the Salvation Army in Wanganui.

28 Lineham, p.33. Lineham points out that the founders of Brethren assemblies were also pioneers in their districts. In the Wellington Province, '...the main denominations were slow to establish themselves..delayed by shortage of ministers and money.' The environment was ideal for nondenominational and non hierachical religious organisations.

29 One Marton settler was Walter Warren, who arrived in Wellington with his wife and son aboard the Conflict in May 1874. He came to Marton via Wanganui three days later and quickly found work. Arnold quotes from Warren's letter home to the Labourer's Union Chronicle in December 1874. Arnold, Farthest, pp.240-41;256. Jeanette Galpin, Tutaenui: Garden of Rangitikei, (undated), postulates Walter and Elizabeth Warren as settled in Marton by about 1865. (pp.180-181). Arnold's sources negate this.

II: THE NEW FRONTIER

Driving out of Marton on a clear day, one may see, directly ahead at the end of the town's main street, Broadway, the snowy slopes of Mt Ruapehu, ninety kilometres to the north. At the town limits Broadway becomes Tutaenui Road, the oldest road in the district. Winding through gently rolling terrain, the road gradually rises for several kilometres, until it swings steeply up an ancient, eroded escarpment, which marks the edge of the higher and more steeply-tilted Kaiatea terrace formation. Looking back from this vantage point, one is rewarded with a sweeping view of the Northern Rangitikei plain.

On our left, concealed in its broad, shallow valley, the Rangitikei River winds a south-westerly course past distant Bulls to the sea near Tangimoana. Somewhat to our right, hidden under the edge of the downland, is Turakina village on its narrow valley flats. Between these two points, and extending away beyond Lake Alice to the coastal dune lands, a broad panorama of wheat-fields, farms and copses, reminds us that this indeed, is true Feldon. Nor would the scene in the 1880's have differed greatly. There would certainly have been fewer farm buildings in evidence, for still far in the future in 1915,[1] was the purchase and division of the 1000-acre Greystoke estate into small farm lots for Great War veterans. But, undoubtedly, this was true 'English' downland. It was also to a surprising extent Nonconformist church country.

Running across below the escarpment from the Rangitikei River valley, and angling away toward the south-west, is Jefferson's Line. This becomes Fern Flats Road as it crosses Tutaenui Road, to eventually wind its way to Bonny Glen through lovely hedged and tree-lined English-looking lanes. Along these wandering country roads, three small churches once served their rural communities. One was Methodist,

two were Presbyterian.[2] They complemented more than a dozen other churches in Turakina, Bulls, and Marton. In an area small by today's car-measured distances, no less than six of the district's churches were Presbyterian! Of the others, four were Anglican, three were Methodist, and there was, in Marton, a Lutheran Church to serve the district's many settlers of German origin. There was a Roman Catholic Church at Turakina, and another at Bulls, but Marton was not to have its own Catholic Church until 1903.[3]

This pattern of nonconformist churches outnumbering less pro-active 'establishment' churches in early settler communities, is perhaps, not surprising, given the rural antecedents of English religious dissent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Alan Everitt has shown that rural mobility in nineteenth-century England created '...a need for the intense fellowship of the chapel community...[when] severed from friends and family.'[4] This 'severence' was infinitely more grievous for early English settlers in New Zealand - especially those who found themselves, by direction or choice, suddenly deposited in an unpeopled hinterland. It is toward this hinterland that we now turn.

Driving a few further kilometres up the steps of the Kaiatea formation toward Mount Curl, we emerge onto a narrow ridge, Here, we are rewarded with a view that is stunning in its immensity; and here, perhaps for the first time, we begin to have some conception of the term 'hinterland', and what it must have meant in the late nineteenth century. As far as the eye can see, from the west around to the north-east, and blue-hazed in the afternoon sun, an immense expanse of deeply-scored and ridged high country extends in jagged confusion right to the flanks of Ruapehu on the distant volcanic plateau. Cleared today of bush and scrub, and green-clothed in productive grasses, this view presented in the early 1870's a very different and daunting prospect

to the eye of the selection purchaser. He, perhaps one of two Cornish immigrant brothers, Robert and Joseph Warring, who had been granted purchase rights for Rangitikei Blocks 34 and 35 in October 1874, would have clambered up through the thick bush from the benign downlands of the Tutaenui for a first glimpse of what they had bought. He must have been taken aback! Leon Soler, who today farms Ernscliffe, just below the ridge, describes the similar scene that greeted the original buyer of the Ernscliffe property:

> ...all James Johnson could see when he looked out from the top of Mount Curl in 1873 was solid bush stretching to the horizon - with the exception of a bare hilltop in the far distance called "Bald Hill"....Bald Hill is part of Papanui Station, west of Taihape near Collier's Junction and the name for the hill is still retained.[5]

This huge area, much of which was still being milled and cleared in the 1930's, would be penetrated from the line of the projected railway route on the eastern side, and from Pipiriki on the Whanganui River. The valleys of the Turakina, Whangaehu, Mangawhero and Waitotara Rivers, would all provide road and river routes into the interior as the land was purchased from the Maori, (sometimes, sight unseen),[6] and offered for settlement. Around the long arc of the eastern boundary, villages developed to service settler needs and to provide accommodation facilities for travellers. One such early rural centre, was Hunterville.

Situated on the south-eastern edge of the 10,000 hectare (46,975 acres) Paraekaratu Block purchased from the Maori on 16 March 1872, Hunterville sprang up at the junction of the Onga and Murimoto tracks. The former gave access to the heavily-bushed hill country towards the Turakina Valley, while the latter track was the main route to Murimoto and the volcanic plateau. The land was surveyed and auctioned in 1874, and settlement proceeded slowly. The first building was a store, and after a decade, basic

civic amenities were available. A Post Office and a hotel were erected in 1885, and a weekly mail service to Marton by horseback commenced the same year.[7] A school for 60 pupils was opened in 1877, and the schoolroom served as the venue for the first Anglican service that year. The Anglican church of St John The Baptist was completed in 1886; the Presbyterian church opened a year later.[8]

It is interesting to note in the Hunterville case, that the Anglican Church was first into the building field. Presbyterian influence was now some distance away in the lower Rangitikei, and Hunterville was growing rapidly into a permanent settlement. There had been since 1885, an Anglican church much nearer to Hunterville than Marton. This was the privately-built St John's church at Porewa on the Rangitikei river flats. Built by Major John Williams Marshall on his estate, Tutu Totara in 1884, the church fulfilled a need long felt in an area where there were large, labour-intensive farms. A visitor in 1881 described the hospitality of the estate, and the English Sunday observance:

> It was Sunday, about 10 a.m. and...I returned to the drawing-room and found all the family assembled for morning service. There is no church near so Mrs M. has service every Sunday and all the young men attend. Those who live any distance away remain for the night;..[9]

This description indicates not only the religious piety of an upper class English family, but also the factors of both lay preaching and travel where religious and social interaction were concerned. Hunterville and Tutu Totara were barely 15 kilometres apart, but although the route along the Porewa Valley and Stream was virtually dead flat, the track ran through heavy bush between Hunterville and Rata. In such terrain, it was not unusual to experience mud up to the horse's girth.[10] Roading was indeed, primitive.

On this point, the description of James G. Wilson, is revealing. Wilson arrived in New Zealand in 1873, and

some time after the survey of the route for the Main Trunk railway was completed, he travelled with a party along the cleared bridle track to Taihape, where the Government provided a traveller's whare. Wilson's depiction is graphic:

> The track through the bush was indescribable - a series of holes filled with water and ridges in between. The horses ...tried to step on the ridges but soon gave the attempt up, for they continually slipped into the mud-holes, and thereafter, simply plunged foot after foot into holes made by countless horses passing along the track.[11]

Wilson's journey would have taken place sometime after 1886, when Public works engineer, Ross, surveyed and opened a bridle track along the proposed line of the railway between Marton and Taihape. But it was the separate path of the "Murimotu Line" to the Waimarino plains that constantly commanded the attention and funds of the Rangitikei County Council and short-lived (1872-1883), Rangitikei Highways Board, formed after the abolition of the Provincial Councils in 1876.

With newcomers pouring into the country under the Vogel immigration scheme, both national and local governments were hard put to finance the constant requests for new roading access, and even in some cases, social support in a growing population. Minutes from the Minute Book of the Rangitikei County Council in 1880 record frequent financing of works on the "Hunterville Line", with one vote for the allocation of 100 pounds to the Highways board for expenditure on that road.[12] Later in the year, 2000 pounds had been allocated by Government for '...further opening up communication with the Murimotu Plains..'. A condition attached to the grant was that employment be given to '...25 or 30 of the unemployed [from] Wellington.'[13]

Life for the early settlers was hard, especially when separated from even the basic civic ammenities of the raw townships. The 1880's were a time of Depression and money

was scarce. The County Council Minute Books reveal numerous claims for charitable financial support for incapacitated and destitute citizens and their families. Surprising but commendable, was the charitable action of the Council in May 1880, when it made a grant of five pounds, followed by the sum of four shillings weekly '..to Mrs Doughty for support and education of child, Mary Ann Emily Tucker deserted by her parents in Bulls.'[14] Although payment was made 'under provision of Section 9 of the Financial Arrangements Act 1878', the gesture nevertheless displays a laudable social awareness. The Minutes give no clue to indicate whether the existing churches in Bulls played any part in this sad affair.

The Reverend Arthur Towgood, Vicar of St Stephen's Anglican Church, Marton, was an active petitioner on behalf of destitute settlers and their families. In February 1886, for instance, he appealed for aid to a family named Teal, living in the Paraekaretu Block between Hunterville and Marton. It was resolved that a grant be made of ten shillings per week, until the end of the following month.[15] In April, Towgood applied for a further two months payment to 'James Teal', and this was granted at the same rate. Yet again, on 3 July 1886, we find Towgood, with the backing of a Dr Sherman, once more pleading for two months financial assistance from the hard-up Council. It makes one final grant, testily resolving, '...that Mr Towgood be advised that the funds at the disposal of the Council will not warrant a further continuance of such aid.'[16]

The above melancholy chronicle, recorded in the flowery handwriting of the Victorian minute-keeper, tells us nothing of the hardship suffered by the unfortunate Teal family. And although no doubt the actors were, in the main, generous Christians who wanted to help, it is also obvious that both the Council and the churches were facing great financial problems in providing their respective services.

The Council had threatened a year earlier to impose dire legal penalties 'without respect to persons', on ratepayers in arrears of rates,[17] and in September 1885, had been forced to close the Hunterville Road for wheeled traffic for a month, while declaring itself unable to undertake new work. Apart from meeting such appeals as those of the Rev. Towgood, the County was also obliged to give financial support to the Wanganui Hospital Charitable Aid Board on a proportional basis, according to property valuation in the county.[18]

The financial positions of some churches were similarly unsound. In a relatively prosperous town like Wanganui, the Anglican Church had begun the decade by doubling its indebtedness. It could not even entertain repairs to its Parsonage, described as being in 'a dilapidated state'[19] For those churches that were attempting to keep pace with the rapid advance of 'frontier' settlement, the financially straitened circumstances of most of their yoeman-farmer parishioners provided scant backing for building programmes. Rapid settlement 'on a shoestring' meant low valuation levels, and consequently, low rating returns to finance desperately-needed roading. Semi-isolation of the growing settlements in turn made for constant difficulty of service for the hard-worked travelling clergy. The obvious solution was to erect churches and attract resident ministers; but of course this required finance - that essential link in an endless circle.

By 1888 the railway was in use as far as Kaikarangi, a few kilometres north of Hunterville. The relatively easy terrain had allowed completion of the Marton-Hunterville section in two years, but the rugged thirteen miles between Mangaweka and Taihape would require sixteen years of effort to complete the nine tunnels and three viaducts of the section. Neither Makohine tunnel nor viaduct were complete for traffic until 1902, and it was August 1904 before the

first goods train arrived in Taihape. The section was opened for goods traffic somewhat earlier than intended, because of the bad state of the roads, which had imposed increased costs on goods transport.[20]

Although communications had improved, isolation was still a major handicap of life, especially in the villages that sprang up at railway construction depots. Two of these were Ohingaiti and Mangaweka, both engaged in construction of massive viaducts, earthworks and tunnels. Both were initially construction camps, and both expanded in population and facilities as the rugged hill country about them was opened up for settlement. New families arrived, and new stores, schools and churches were soon required and brought into operation. In each case, the religious requirements of the earlier arrivals were filled initially by household and hall meetings.[21] Such services were often taken by lay readers.[22] At intervals, clergy would travel from the more substantial settlements further 'down the line', coming from Marton in the case of Hunterville, and from Hunterville in respect to Ohingaiti and Mangaweka.[23]

Wherever settlement sprang up - wherever there were a few rough homes in proximity to some track junction (the meandering mud-tracks hardly warranted their ambitious titles of roads), it seemed as though religion rose out of the soil. We read frequently in the early chronicles how lay readers held services in stores, woolsheds or parlours. And what seems to emerge from these reports, is a picture of the religious enthusiasm of certain individuals or families encouraging lay religious services and occasional visits by church ministers. Progression to active fund raising, and the eventual building of a church followed in many cases. A good example of this took place on the western edge of the Wanganui district at Ngamatapouri, some 50 kilometres up the rugged Waitotara River valley.

In 1965, Bernard Annabell wrote a brief account of the settlement of the Upper Waitotara Valley.[24] He had been the first white child born in Ngamatapouri in 1893. Another history offers a fine character sketch of Bernard's father, former Lands and Survey Department surveyor, Joseph Robert Annabell, J.P. He is described by an early settler, J. Haddow, in these words:

> He was a big handsome man, and he had a beautiful character. In other words he was a real gentleman. Of course a gentleman of that character was a great asset to a new district. He didn't drink, he didn't smoke and didn't swear. The result was that quite a lot of us didn't do any of these things.[25]

Bernard Annabell's parents insisted that as soon as their children were able to read, they had to read a chapter of the Bible every night before bed-time. An aunt started a Sunday school, and the children learned Moody and Sanky hymns. 'Something in the nature of a religious revival swept the district...'. Children were baptised, and a Bishop confirmed a number of grown-up settlers in the newly built library.[26] Led by the brothers Joseph and Edward Smith, money was raised to build an undenominational church on a site in Ngamatapouri secured by the Wellington Board of Diocesan Trustees of the Anglican Church.

In 1898, the Anglican Vicar of Waverley, Rev C.A. Tisdall, held a meeting in Armstrong's store, where it had been the practice to hold occasional church services. A committee to collect subscriptions for the church fund was appointed. But although support was forthcoming from enthusiasts as far away as Wanganui, it was realised that the church would be somewhat utilitarian. As Walton Smith declared: "We shall not be able to go in for stained glass windows and that sort of thing".[27] But the little community enjoyed an unforeseen stroke of good fortune. When Rev Tisdall returned to England in 1900, he took with him photographs of the services in Armstrong's store. The photographs aroused great interest among the parishioners of the Darlington church of St Hilda In-The-Wood. An

anonymous donor gave 150 pounds with the provision that the church be consecrated an Anglican church in the name of St Hilda.[28] The committee accepted this excellent offer. But Bernard Annabell declares that his mother, a staunch Wesleyan, so resented the change to Anglican exclusiveness, that neither she nor her husband ever afterward attended services, apart from weddings and funerals, in the new church.[29] The ban on other denominations using the church was finally lifted many years later.

The Ngamatapouri case is unusual. From 1897 when the store was opened there, the 'village' grew only by the addition of a small combined library-cum-hall in 1901, and the church in 1904. The store closed in the 1960's, but the church is still regularly used. For the first three decades of the century the road in from Waitotara was a tortuous, muddy track, often blocked by slips or washouts. Yet, in the early years, ministers such as the Rev H.F.Wilson would walk the 35 miles (57 kilometres) from Waverley, to take a service in the Ngamatapouri church.[30]

The desire of such a small and isolated community to provide for the religious and educational needs of their settlement (there were, at different times, several schools in the area), is underlined by the long existence of a community library. The above-mentioned Joseph George Haddow considered the settlers of Ngamatapouri to be '...above ordinary bush dwellers in intelligence.'[31] Haddow himself, studied at night to qualify as a barrister, while also teaching three days each per week at Marohema and Taumatatahi Schools! This intelligence, operating in an environment of quite formidable isolation, perhaps marks Ngamatapouri as being in a class of its own in social awareness. Certainly, a list of settlers compiled from Laraine Sole's 1986 book, reveals a surprising number of artisans and tradesmen (Appendix 1). Wives and daughters also brought education and social skills to the valley.[32]

The incompleteness of Sole's and Annabell's histories, both compiled when many of the pioneers had passed on, makes for difficulty in determining origins. Of 26 names listed by previous occupation or birthplace, eleven appear to have originally come from the United Kingdom, two from other countries, and ten seem to have been born in New Zealand. A great deal more research would be needed to determine the religious origins and convictions of the early Ngamatapouri settlers. Surprisingly, it seems that none came from the English Counties affected by the Revolt of the Field of the post-1872 migration years. No doubt the immigrants were well settled in Taranaki, Hawke's Bay and elsewhere by the time the Upper Waitotara Valley was offered for settlement.

A comment quoted by Bernard Annabell, illustrates the view held by some as regards settlement of the Arden backblocks. Made to Annabell's mother by a worried lady, it concerned the future of his Aunt, Mrs Braithwaite (who began the first Sunday School, and later became midwife to the community.) "Surely," exclaimed the lady, "your brother is not going to take his wife - that intelligent little woman - up into those backblocks, so far from the means of Grace."[33] Take her, he did, and she and the other women of the valley became - as did many another pioneer woman on the hinterland frontier - the guardians of social grace and propriety in a harsh and often ugly land.

NOTES: pages 12 to 22

II: THE NEW FRONTIER

1 Jeanette Galpin, Tutaenui Garden of Rangitikei, Marton, p.208.

2 Jeanette Galpin, (p.123), relates: 'Old William Galpin, a staunch Presbyterian, gave the land for the Tutaenui Church and cemetery in 1873, mainly because he'd had to walk to Bonny Glen to bury his wife the previous year.' The distance is about 11 kilometres.

3 Paul Melody, They Called It Marton: The Life and Times of Marton, 1866-1979, Palmerston North, 1979, p.269.

4 Allan Everitt, The Pattern of Rural Dissent: the Nineteenth Century, Leicester, 1972, p.64.

5 Galpin, p.208.

6 Rusk Harris, Otairi 1881-1981, Palmerston North, 1986, p.29.

7 D.M. Laing, Hunterville: The First Hundred Years, Hunterville, 1983, pp.5-7.

8 Laing, p.7.

9 F. Basil Marshall, Early Settlers in the Porewa Valley, Rangitikei, Rotorua, 1974, p.29.

10 Laing, p.5.

11 James G. Wilson, Early Rangitikei, Wellington, 1914, p.249.

12 Minutes of the Rangitikei County Council, 6 January 1880.

13 RCC Minutes, 9 March 1880.

14 RCC Minutes, 9 March 1880.

15 RCC Minutes, 6 February 1886.

16 RCC Minutes, 3 April 1886 and 3 July 1886.

17 RCC Minutes, 5 September 1885.

18 RCC Minutes, 3 April 1886.

19 The Yoeman, (Wanganui), 31 July 1880.

20 R.S. Fletcher, Single Track: The Construction of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, Auckland, 1978, pp.183-4.

NOTES: Pages 12 22 Contd.

21 In Ohingaiti for instance, a visiting Roman Catholic priest held monthly services in Wells & Hertz's Hall, while the Primitive Methodists had two services on a Sunday, and one on Thursday, conducted by a missionary, Mr Bourne, from Marton. Refer 'Ohingaiti' in Cyclopaedia Of New Zealand Vol 1, Wellington, 1897, p.1294.

22 J.P Aldridge and C.M. Pedder were early Lay Readers for Anglican services in the Ohingaiti Public School as part of the Hunterville Parish of Rev J.M Devenish. See 'Ohingaiti' in Cyclopaedia, p.1293.

23 The above-mentioned Mr Bourne from Marton, (Primitive Methodist), and Rev Devenish for the Anglicans, were two who travelled the muddy tracks to minister to their flocks. When the Anglican Parish of Marton extended as far north as Taihape, (from 1870 to 1888 when Hunterville became a separate Parish), the Rev A.Y. Towgood of Marton journeyed as far north as Ohakune and Karioi to hold woolshed services. See St Margaret's Anglican Church Taihape: 75 Years 1902-1977, Anniversary Booklet, p.2.

24 Bernard Annabell, Ngamatapouri: An account of the early settlers of the Upper Waitotara Valley, Wanganui, 1984.

25 Laraine Sole, The European Settlement of the Waitotara Valley 1890-1930, Wanganui, 1986, p.122.

26 Annabell, p.30.

27 Sole 1986, p.59.

28 Annabell, p.31.

29 Annabell, p.31.

30 Sole 1986, p.60.

31 Sole 1986, p.56. Sole also records that Haddow brought 100 books into the valley for the small library.

32 Sole 1986, p.146. Elizabeth Duffy was a London-trained teacher. Violet Washington was also a teacher. (p.56). Martha Brathwaite (mentioned above), taught Sunday School.

33 Annabell, p.9.

III: FAITH IN THEIR FUTURES

If one overall characteristic marked the settlement pattern of the Main Trunk villages, it was surely the common factor of 'unsettlement'. Rata, Silverhope, Mangaonoho, Ohingaiti and Utiku, all sprang into life as the rails arrived. Each had its brief day of prosperity. Then, with the completion of the section the workers left. With them went the contractors with their wagons, their horse and bullock teams and the men who handled them. The hamlets subsided into small but essential service centres for the scattering of settlers who lived along the spider-web of muddy tracks radiating out into the inland wilderness. In only a few such settlements, was there the population or time for churches to put down visible or enduring roots.

Beyond Hunterville, only Mangaweka had any real permanence. Ohingaiti, when it was the railhead in 1897, had one completed church. This was the Presbyterian Church under the stewardship of the Rev Mr Griffiths. The Anglican, Roman Catholic and Primitive Methodist churches were all serviced by the periodic visits of clergyman, priest or home missionary travelling from Hunterville, Turakina or Marton. Ohingaiti was in the Church of England Parish of Hunterville,[1] but by 1890 St Martin's in Mangaweka had become the centre of the Mangaweka Parochial District. All religions shared the common origin of school-room and home services, for few had the funds to build new churches.

The free availability of school rooms was not, however, to be taken for granted. In some places there seemed to be an undercurrent of animosity between school committee and church. The Paraekaretu School Committee in 1885 displayed a rather ambivalent attitude about religious usage of the little school. In February 1885, they granted the Rev Towgood permission to use the school for '...Sunday hearvest' [sic] at 3 o'clock by helping to keep it clean'.

Two years later the committee refused the use of the school-room for a Sunday school.[2]

Perhaps here we have an echo of the heated argument concerning the Bible in schools and religious content in education, that was currently raging. The crudely-written and mis-spelt minutes in an old exercise book seem, artlessly, to bespeak a group of down-to-earth yeomen farmers with little ability or inclination for the niceties of grammar or formal religion. Education for their children would have been the primary reason for their participation in such a committee, and it would seem they were not over-awed by the Oxfordian, Rev Towgood. If he wanted their school for church services, he would have to help keep it clean! This might have been a not-so-subtle rebuff of the well-remembered patriarchy of the Church of England by a few nonconformist yoeman farmers. There were, certainly, Brethren and Lutheran settlers on the committee.[3]

School committees seem also to have been regarded by some as 'tyrannical' and 'irresponsible' in exercising their authority. They were so labelled by a newspaper editor in 1893. He went on to claim that it was 'well known' that many committees were composed of members '...quite unfit for the position, by reason of their uneducated condition.'[4] The irascible editor was referring to disputes at Bulls and Turakina, but he probably was familiar with the 'tyranny' of the Paraekaretu School Committee. There was a discernible gulf between the yeoman farm settler and the lettered middle class of the growing towns.

The settlers who constructed their slab whares in the wilderness, and the trades-people and artisans who set up their corrugated iron stores and workshops in the muddy villages, shared a common faith in the future. A few speculators and itinerants there may have been, but the hopes of the majority lay in a prosperous and secure

future, whereby their perseverance and hard work would be rewarded.[5] After the depressed decade of the 1880's, the final decade of the nineteenth century promised better things. As the century drew to a close, and the rails of the great Main Trunk Railway crept nearer to Taihape, a new and different society was challenging the energies and philosophies of the various churches.

Indeed, the old-established social order inherited from England had largely been left behind on the rolling downlands of the Rangitikei-Wanganui Feldon. The raw villages and hamlets strung along the completed rail route were peopled now by service workers - hoteliers, blacksmiths, stable-keepers and grocers. These in turn were complemented and supported by representatives of the banking, legal and medical professions; and here and there, a devoted and hopeful pastor toiled as shepherd to his scattered and penurious parish flock. Such an environment demanded, and generally produced, a special breed of clergy.

The pattern of settlement was therefore one of new and scattered bush communities growing quickly alongside, and often ahead of, railway-building and roading. A few clergy, mainly Anglican and Presbyterian, kept pace with the development in a 'leap-frogging' movement, never far behind the 'front' with their home and school services and their sometimes competitive church-building. Their zeal was commendable, but at times it appeared something of an inter-denominational race.[6] For the isolated settlers along the bush tracks, religion was dependent upon family practice, supported by occasional visits from circuit clergy. These could be somewhat irregular.

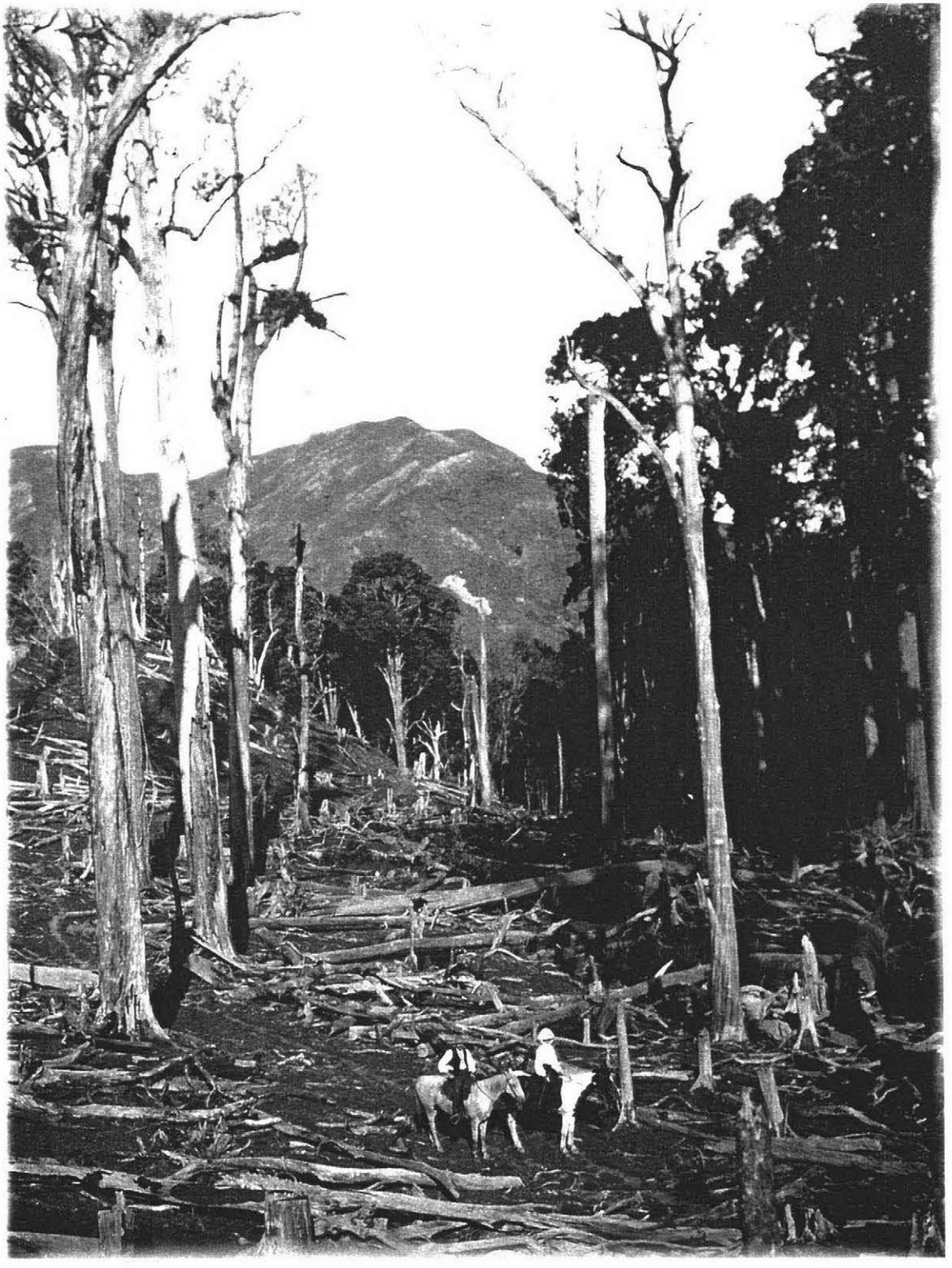
At Pohanui in the remote Tiriraukawa Survey Block, the Catholic O'Rielly family kept a front room and front bedroom especially for the Priest to use during his three-day visit once every three months.'[7] The three-month gap

between visits indicates something of the problems facing clergy in general, and the Catholic clergy in particular. Until a new church was built in Mangaweka in 1907, the Catholics of Pohonui had only the alternatives of Turakina, or the more circuitous route via Mataroa to Taihape, where a Catholic Church had been opened in January 1904.[8]

The Pohonui Protestants fared little better. From their tiny 'township' of store and Post Office, cemetery, domain, and stock reserve, the settlers faced a six-hour journey by gig or buggy over the 29 miles to Hunterville.[9] The trip to Mataroa and the train occupied four hours. These were the only alternatives for funerals, until in 1903, a cemetery was authorised at Tiriraukawa. Norman Leary comments:

> As in all communities the Tiriraukawa settlers had their accidents, tragedies and sickness. One of the Peed children, a little girl, was drowned when trying to cross the flooded Mangaone stream on a log. A man ...was killed by a falling tree on Emil Anderson's property and there were several deaths from pneumonia and influenza.[10]

Life for the women settlers was especially lonely and hard. The husband would be away all day clearing bush, while the wife remained alone in their rough, isolated home. One settler's daughter remarked that often the only sounds of life would be birds and animals; and for her mother, '...it was the honking of the geese across the river...'[11] She also described the difficulties in getting her mother out to medical assistance for the birth of her first child. It was horseback for the first five miles, as there was no road, then a gig for the next fourteen miles; but the horse began to stagger, and the pregnant woman had to walk on through the bush toward Mataroa while her husband tended to the horse. He caught up and 'hurried her along, but too late.' They missed the train and the woman had to spend the night in Mataroa before going on to Feilding.[12] Such was a woman's life in the back-blocks.



ABOVE: This nineteenth-century bush scene of unknown origin depicts a typical horse track through partially cleared and burnt bushland. This would have been the kind of terrain travelled by the pregnant woman in the story related on page 28, in her journey to Mataroa. In winter, such tracks demanded competent horsemanship from visiting clergy. F.A. Hargreaves Collection. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington N.Z. G-23283-1/1

In April 1894, the Presbyterians noted that the Wanganui area was, 'the most extensive Presbytery within the bounds of the Northern Church', declaring also an intent to move toward '...a charge [admonition or urging] at Fordell, which should embrace the Mangamahu and Mangawhero country, north-east of Wanganui.'[13] There had been a Catholic church at the Maori village of Kauangaroa on the banks of the Whangaehu River since 1888, but it was 1909 before the Presbyterians were to see a church at Mangamahu, further up the Whangaehu River. The Rev B. Hutson told the congregation at the inaugural service: 'We have built this church to remind all who pass this way that they are in a Christian land.'[14] The determination of the Presbyterians, (perhaps more than any other denomination) to make it so, was patent; and perhaps the most vital factor in the Presbyterian success was the character and calibre of the church women.

A Church-published article, 'Why More Women Than Men Attend Church', reprinted from an American publication, declares: 'The moral sense of women is superior to that of men'. Indeed, the woman '...with true maternal instinct...seeks out the church....as the safest place for her children.'[15] We may smile at such paternalism and patronising attitudes, but the 'christianising' of the hinterland was hardly possible without the influence of the women. Men were, however, more visibly active in church affairs as office-holders in the townships. A report from Mangaweka in early 1902 deals with the raising of money to purchase a horse for the minister, and to liquidate debt on the church. The congregation is declared to be increasing, with 'men in the majority'. The women, it adds as a kind of after-thought, had assisted in raising money for the horse.[16]

It is difficult to assess the depth and sincerity of European Christian belief in the Main Trunk and

hinterland areas in the 1890's. The Manawatu-Rangitikei districts had been swept by numerous revivals during the period. But it is also obvious that Main Trunk Victorians, in the absence of the recreational and social amenities we take for granted in our time, were inveterate 'joiners'. Small though the new towns may have been, they nevertheless supported a number of fraternal organisations - mainly for men.

The 1897 edition of The Cyclopaedia Of New Zealand lists Hunterville as possessing a Masonic Lodge, a Foresters Lodge, and a Go Ahead Lodge I.O.G.T. [Imperial Order of Good Templars; a temperance movement]. Ohingaiti has its Loyal Awarua Lodge, and a Foresters Lodge.[17] That these organisations with their high-sounding titles should have sprung into being in what were little more than shanty-towns, rather challenges the theory of 'atomisation' of settler society. Such a theory, mainly propounded by Miles Fairburn in his 1989 book, The Ideal Society and its Enemies, paints a picture of the itinerant, lonely and inarticulate labourer, drowning his frustration and despair in hard liquor. On the subject of loneliness, Fairburn declares,

> ...the evidence that loneliness was extensive has been drawn from the statements by the literate and educated, chiefly back-country women. The bulk of lower-class men and the inarticulate, in town and country, expressed and compensated for their loneliness through excessive drinking.[18]

Loneliness there certainly was, and hard drinking amongst the itinerant railway labourers and later bush-mill hands; but a major portion of the bush clearing was done by farm settlers who required every penny they could raise to finance their hope for the future. Money earned by casual road work for the County or on railway construction (when in reasonable distance from their sections), was supplemented by selling of butter and produce from a few cows and a garden managed by wives and children. All went

to further the dream. An occasional 'booze-up' at the opening of a new school, woolshed or house, there may have been; but the publican would hardly have prospered from the custom of the back-blocks settlers.

Although nearly half of the farm settlers and township trades-people were New Zealand born, the influence of Victorian England and its rigid social morality remained strong in the land. Among the more active religious denominations, Methodism represented the ideal of the Victorian work ethic. Ruth Fry wrote of Methodist women:

> ...colonial life meant no change in the religious ideals and expectations which they brought from England...The reputation for respectability which Methodism encouraged in Victorian England was transported to the colony and church membership provided a step on the ladder by which people could 'better themselves'. Women, with their concern for appearances were committed to maintaining standards... it seems that...their contribution to Methodist settler churches was considerable.[19]

It is hardly surprising that churches with origins in English and Scottish dissent should have so rapidly extended their influence over the frontier settlers. The yoeman farmers were no more than a generation removed from the countries many still called 'Home'. Memories of a class-structured hierarchy upheld by churches were recent enough to create a distrust of priest or parson. The dissenting churches on the other hand, showed a genuine social awareness that must have been highly attractive, especially to women-folk along the bush roads and rivers.

Here were churches advocating the very qualities requisite for those who would carve out a new and verdant Arcadia in this fearful wilderness. For the women, their own and their children's futures rested upon the success of their menfolk in bringing the wilderness to productive order. There was no place for immoral or profligate behaviour in such dreams. Diligence, frugality and faith in their God and their futures, were requisite equipage

in their struggle with a demanding land. Such qualities were advocated repeatedly by pro-active Protestant churches.

Although many settlers suffered fearful isolation by distance and terrain, there were few who were completely beyond the rural mail deliveries on at least a weekly basis. A copy of the Presbyterian weekly paper, The Christian Outlook, or its later post-1899 version, The Outlook, cost a mere one-and-a-half pence, later just a penny for 40 pages of good, enlightening Christian reading. The influence of this paper, which was published until 1986, must have been considerable. With the sub-title, "A Christian Weekly For The Home", the Outlook was a forum for Methodist as well as Presbyterian religious ideology and socio-political aspirations.

The patent evangelism of the Protestant Churches in Mangaweka and Ohingaiti is well displayed in a 1902 report from Mangaweka. Describing the prize-giving at the half-yearly ceremony for about 40 members of the Ohingaiti Sabbath School, the report goes on to claim:

> Souls have been saved...The parents have been got at through the interest taken in their children in the Sabbath Class; a Bible class has been commenced for adults, the majority being men, heads of families; a choir has been formed...[20]

The report also commends a coach proprietor, Mr Berry, who '...since his conversion has thrown himself into the work of the Sabbath School and Church work generally'.

Although there was competition, there seemed no overt enmity between the mainstream Protestant churches. A united Coronation Service to celebrate the coronation of Edward VII, held in the Mangaweka Public School, was opened by a Presbyterian; a prayer was read by an Anglican, and an address was given by a Wesleyan.[21] Nor was such co-operation a precedent. The older, Anglican church at Matarawa near Wanganui was deliberately left unconsecrated

by Bishop Abraham in 1866, enabling its use for worship by Presbyterians or Methodists on two days of each month.[22]

Such religious liberality, however, was not displayed at St Mary's Anglican Church at Upukongaro, eleven kilometres up-river from the town of Wanganui. Before the church was consecrated in 1879, there was much argument as to the name, with St Mary the Virgin, and St Benedict's being put forward as names. These Romanish names were rejected, inspiring one church historian to comment that 'Anglo Catholicism had not yet reached New Zealand.'[23] Perhaps not; but nor it seems, had religious liberality reached that particular Anglican Church. A lay reader was forbidden by the vicar to take church services, '...because his wife along with others took part in amateur plays.'[24]

In spite of such isolated pockets of Anglican rigidity, there was, meanwhile, steady settlement and socio-religious development in the Wanganui hinterland from the early 1880's into the first decade of the new century. It was a process expanding largely from the 1877 Land Act and John Ballance's 1885 legislation encouraging small lease-hold farms. It also coincided with an active revivalist movement at work in the country, and especially in the Wanganui-Manawatu district during the period. The socio-religious morality that was preached, incorporated fully the social vision of Victorian Protestants, especially the moral regeneration philosophies of Presbyterians and Methodists. In its advocacy of the ethic of self-improvement through hard work, frugality, and honesty based on Christian values, it matched closely the vital qualities required to conquer the formidable hinterland. Such qualities were never more needed than in the Waimarino district in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

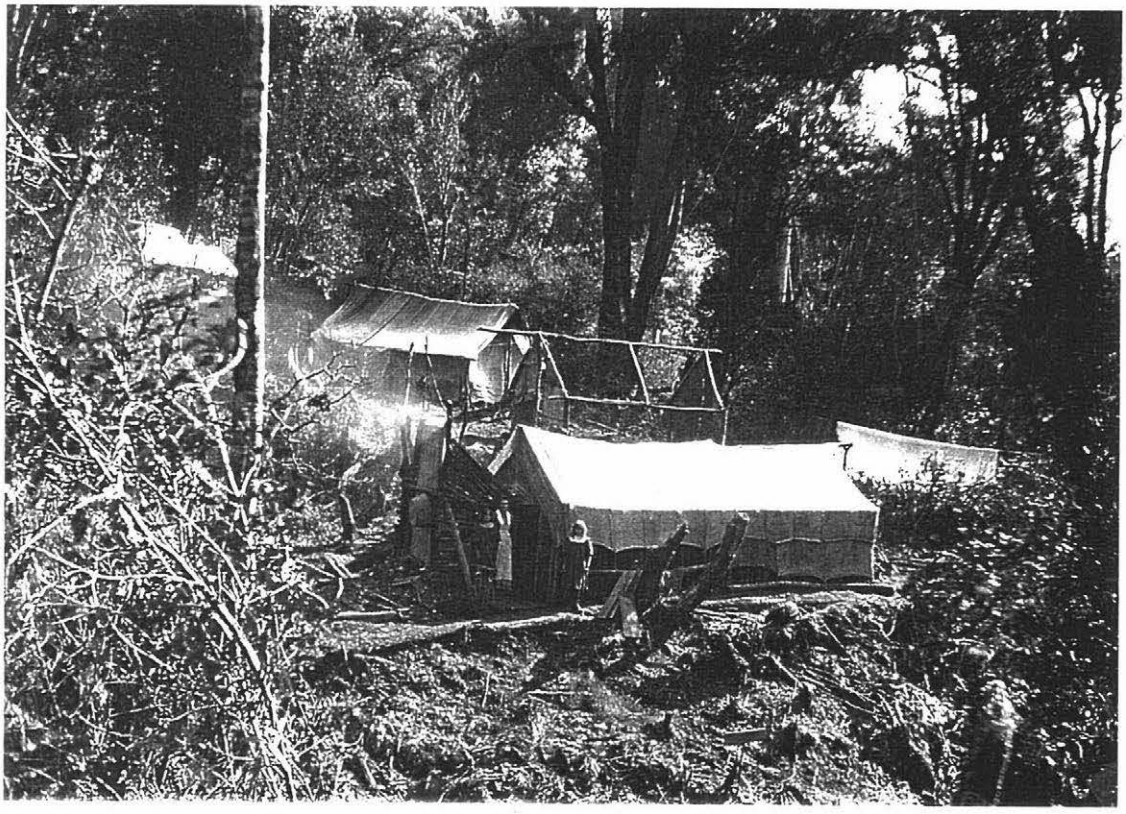
Europeans were farming at Karioi from 1874, and the manager of the Karioi run acquired further land at Makaranui

in 1889. One or two others took up Crown leases in the area over the next decade, but it was the arrival in 1893 of the first settlers of the Special Settlement Association that heralded the beginnings of Raetihi and Ohakune.[25] Elizabeth Allen, telling of the arrival of John and Rose Punch via the mud-track from Pipiriki in April of 1893, vividly reconstructs the dismay of Rose Punch:

> "Oh John, whatever sort of place is this you have brought us to? Why, I can't even see the sky!"
> "Oh yes you can, my dear. The sky's still there if you look straight up - and high enough."
>
> Where her far-seeing husband saw fortune she saw only those immense giants of the forest shutting out the sun's light and hemming her in. Before her was a small slab whare with a shingled roof...she looked around the tiny dwelling for a clean place to lay her baby.[26]

The Government purchase and survey of the Waimarino Block, and its allocation in 300-acre lots attracted an influx of farm settlers, as well as those like John Punch, with an eye to the milling prospects. Raetihi and nearby Ohakune developed rapidly, even though communications and transport were almost impossible in winter.[27] The Pipiriki road was widened to a dray road that was later churned into a quagmire by bullock teams hauling stores and material for the construction of the Main Trunk railway.[28]

Isolation, for those living in Raetihi, was real enough in winter; but the isolation of settlers in the Orautoha and Ruatiti valleys to the North-East of the township, and many another area more than a mile or two from 'civilisation' (such as it was), became only marginally relieved under the summer sun. Until time and money were spent on widening access tracks, and until timber-milling made its impact, the problem for the outlying settlers was one of sun-blocking bush that prevented many stretches of road from ever drying enough for wheeled transport. For the entire district, there was great frustration in the knowledge that when the Whanganui River contained enough



ABOVE: "Oh John...I can't even see the sky!" Rose Punch's lament (p.34) would have struck a chord with the lady in this East Coast scene. Such basic initial contracting or farming settlements were common in the Wanganui hinterland.
F.A. Hargreaves Collection Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. G-24134-1/2

BELOW: With a year or two of hard work, a rough farm property emerges from the bush. The house is still basic, even though it boasts a corrugated iron roof. No road is evident in this unidentified scene. There may have been a school within a reasonable distance, but the nearest church could have been up to thirty or more kilometres away.
James McAllister Collection. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. G.8469-1/1

water for river steamers to reach Pipiriki, the roads were well-nigh impassable; and when the roads dried out in summer, the river was too shallow for Hatrick's steamers.[29] As late as 1906, summer work on the central portion of the railway was delayed by shortages of cement, and even food for the 600 workers on the route, owing to the wet summer season, and the condition of the Pipiriki Road.[30]

Although roading progressed more slowly than Waimarino settlers might have liked, their enforced isolation dictated rapid development of the township of Raetihi. While the settlers in the older hamlet of Taihape had, after a year's wait, only just been allotted town sections,[31] Raetihi was already in 1895, noting the need for a school, with children 'growing wild'.[32] A similar rapidity of development in church affairs was also noted at the Wesleyan District Synod, held in Wanganui. The Rev. W. Lee described '...the rapid extension of the work throughout the district, especially in the Waimarino and adjacent blocks of settlement.' He asked the church to grant sixty pounds for the establishment of a bush mission in the district south-west of Ruapehu.[33]

By 1895, hinterland settlement was proceeding steadily. The development of numerous townships had been speeded by railway construction. Religion and education, however, struggled to keep pace, while adequate roading was something now far away on the verdant terraces of the lowlands. Away from the sound of a train whistle, in the lonely slab whares on many an isolated valley farmstead, there would be a need for a new and dedicated mission to reinforce a frontier people's faith in both their God and their futures.

NOTES: Pages 25 to 35

III: FAITH IN THEIR FUTURES

1 Cyclopaedia of New Zealand, Vol. 1, Wellington 1897, p. 1292.

2 Minute Book Paraekaretu School Committee. Minutes for 13 February 1885, and 2 October 1887.

3 In the October 1887 vote, the Committtee decided by a vote of 4 to 2 not to allow Rev Towgood to conduct a Sunday school in the school room. Mr V. Aldworth, caretaker of the Hunterville Settlers' Museum, and a grandson of one of the first Anglican Lay Readers, stated that the Committee contained at least one staunch Brethren, while another, (Voelkerling), was possibly Lutheran. With two others of the 'no' persuasion, we perhaps have an indication of the extent of the antipathy felt by the Committee toward the Rev Towgood.

4 Paraekaretu Express, 5 September 1893, p.2.

5 Cyclopaedia, Vol 1. In its introduction to the Section on Hunterville the settlement is referred to as 'a rising and go-ahead township...' The progressive attitude is also found in the name of the Go Ahead Lodge in Hunterville. Given the Victoria work ethos, order and morality, the new world could not fail to go ahead and flourish.

6 In areas like Ngamatapouri and Matarawa where congregations were sparse, a sensible sharing of a building was entertained. But in villages like Hunterville, Mangaweka and Ohingaiti it seems that as worshippers' numbers multiplied, sectarianism revived.

7 Norman Leary, 77 Years Among The Kowhais: Beyond Hunterville 1896-1973, Wellington, 1977, p.11.

8 Denis Robertson, "give me TAIHAPE on a Saturday night." Waikanae, 1995, p.72.

9 Leary, 77 Years, p.49.

10 Leary, 77 Years, p.77.

11 Leary, 77 Years, p.66. Leary quotes Lucy Morton, daughter of an original Koeke settler.

12 Leary, 77 Years, p.66.

13 The Christian Outlook, (Presbyterian Weekly, Dunedin), No 10, Vol 1, April 21 1894, p.110.

14 M.H. Campion & others, The Road To Mangamahu, Wanganui, 1988, pp.57-60.

15 Christian Outlook, No 10 vol 1, 21 April 1894, p.117.

16 The Outlook, No 40 Vol 8, 2 November 1901, p.35. This is the Christian Outlook under new name after 1899, and including Methodist news.

17 Cyclopaedia, Vol 1. Lodges are described in Hunterville, p.1286, and Ohingaiti, p.1294. Hunterville also had a Caledonian Society, p.1288. No women's societies are listed.

NOTES: Pages 24 to 33 contd.

18 Miles Fairburn, The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900, Auckland, 1989, p.203.

19 Ruth Fry, Out Of The Silence: Methodist Women of Aotearoa 1822-1985, Christchurch, 1987, p.51.

20 'Mangaweka (M)' notes in The Outlook, No.39 Vol. 9, 11 October 1902, p.36.

21 Outlook, No. 38 Vol. 9, 4 October 1902. p.38. See also no 17 Vol.9, 24 May 1902, p.36, re Methodist decision to hold a united Mangaweka mission with Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Salvation Army.

22 Rev. Len Mould & D. Strachan (ed.), The Centennial Of St John's Church Matarawa (Wanganui) 1866-1966, Wanganui, 1966, p.4.

23 Records of St Mary's Church Makirikiri (Upokongaro), arr. Rev W. Tye B.A., Vicar of Wanganui, 1929, p.6.

24 Records, p.15.

25 Elizabeth C. Allen, In The Hills Of The Waimarino, Wanganui, 1984, p.18.

26 Allen, p.19.

27 The Cyclopaedia Of New Zealand (1897) lists on page 1460 of Vol 1, the proprietors of a Raetihi boarding-house; a bookseller and tobacconist (with billiard table); a general storekeeper, and Hatrick & Co's general store and agency. p.1460. The next page lists a bootmaker and Bennett and Punch, sawmillers. This in barely three years!

28 Allen, pp.44-46. Elizabeth Allen describes the unending problems of maintaining this most frequently-used road in the pre-rail days, and before the Parapara road between Raetihi and Wanganui was suitable for wheeled traffic in 1917. See R.H. Voelkerling & K.L. Stewart, From Sand To Papa: A History of the Wanganui County, Wanganui, 1986, pp.143-4 & 151-160.

29 Allen, p.45.

30 F.K. Roberts, A Compendium of Railway Construction: Part 2: North Island Main Trunk. Wellington, 1990, p.44.

31 Yeoman, (Wanganui), Vol. 32, No. 1529, 14 September 1895. p.7.

32 Yeoman, No. 1538, 16 November 1895. p.14.

33 Yeoman, No. 1542, 14 December 1895. p.9.

IV: ADVERSITY AND ADAPTATION

Farm settlement of the Wanganui hinterland in the four decades from 1880 to 1920, almost invariably meant isolation. This could be quite severe away from the slowly developing road network, or the central railway as it crept from north and south toward its eventual union in 1909 just north of Horopito. But even with a completed Main Trunk railway, Raetihi was still comparatively isolated. The 1908 trial survey for a branch line from Ohakune, was made through dense bush.[1] With the coming of rail transport, this huge resource of millable timber became the foundation of a sustained export trade. It also provided an additional source of income for the struggling farm settlers and set the small towns on their feet.

The requirement for schools and teachers, churches and ministers, grew with the townships. By the mid-1890's there were three growing settlements in the area - Raetihi, Ohakune, and Horopito - each about 11 kilometres from the other. If the back-blocks farmsteads were undeveloped and rough, the townships were little better. A report in The Yeoman of 5 January 1895 describes a fire that burned two houses and a navvies' camp in Raetihi. The correspondent warns that the number of logs and standing tree-stumps constitute a source of danger, and '...it is fully expected that the whole township will be swept away should a fire be started and a breeze spring up.'[2] The expectation was to be tragically confirmed with the disastrous Raetihi bush fire of 18-19 March 1918.

The daughter of an early settler also recalled the inconvenience of the timber-strewn environment. She told how, from a house not far from the Anglican Church in Seddon Street, her mother was forced to clamber over intervening logs and stumps with a lantern in hand, when she went to play the church organ for Evensong on a Sunday.[3] The bush,

whether standing or fallen, bore heavily on the lives of farmers and towns-people alike; and nowhere did it impose greater obligations upon the developing churches, than in the areas of accident, death and burial.

Already in 1897, concern was being expressed at the need for properly consecrated burial grounds. An editorial comment in The Yeoman of 13 February 1897, after describing an illegal backyard burial, went on to quote Section 83 of the Cemeteries Act of 1882, wherein a penalty of up to fifty pounds could be imposed for interment of a body in other than a properly appointed burial ground. The comment closed with an observation that in the past there had been some excuse for burial 'in the most convenient spot found suitable' on account of the distance from consecrated ground. Now, the writer concluded, '...the stringent penalty ...should act as a deterrent'.[4]

Penalty or not, fatal accidents were frequent and makeshift burial grounds were used. A year after the above comment, James Carolan was killed while bush-felling at Rangataua near Ohakune. The bearers bringing out the body had to clamber over logs on a narrow track for 7 kilometres to William Atkinson's house in Ohakune. An inquest was held before a Justice of the Peace, and Father La Croix conducted the funeral when Carolan was buried in the temporary burial ground in Ohakune. The J.P. and the inquest jury called upon the Minister of Justice to make urgent provision for a cemetery in Ohakune.[5]

The frequent accidents and fatalities in bush-felling, timber milling and construction work, reflected the dangers from those occupations; they were also indicative of the pervading importance of timber in the lives of everyone from construction navvy to small farmer. Except for a few major viaducts on the railway, everything was built of wood. Houses, bridges, stores, schools and churches - all

were constructed from that abundant and relatively cheap resource. Cooking and heating were fuelled by an endless supply of wood. But falling trees, glancing axes, rolling logs and lashing tow-cables crushed, slashed and mangled a steady toll of bush and sawmill workers. Conducting funerals like that of James Carolan in Ohakune, became a regular routine for the frontier pastor as the work-force increased.

Funeral conventions were quite rigid in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Raetihi, in the first decade, did not have its own cemetery. The necessary twelve-mile journey to the Ohakune cemetery in Lakes Road has been described by an old identity. A cortege was headed by a hearse drawn by horses with black plumes. Blinds were drawn in houses along the route. A doffed hat and bowed head were roadside tributes accorded the passing cortege by even the most casual by-stander. For the family of the deceased, black suits and armbands would be the order for six months, '...and even in the struggling back-blocks, the conventions were strictly observed.'[6] Adaptable and enterprising though the settler society may have been, it nevertheless returned to the church for the final rites of passage; and they were not stinted.

An indication of the rapid growth of milling as the railway advanced, was evident in Taihape. In 1903 there were 10 sawmills in the area. By 1907, the numbers had grown to 20, employing some 420 men.[7] The peak was reached in 1908 with 30 mills, and numbers declined thereafter. At different times there were 68 other mills in the surrounding district.[8] The tales of how the army of tough bushmen spent their high wages in Main Trunk hotels became legend.[9] Less often publicised, were the histories of the unflagging efforts by numerous back-blocks churchmen and women to provide some form of religious service and comfort to such a rough and generally indifferent pastorate.

The inadequacy of priest, pastor and home missionary for their demanding tasks was, however, frequently revealed. The 'leap-frogging' manner of the series of construction camps and mushroom townships that marked railway development and resultant farm settlement, made for constant instability of tenure and task. The army of construction navvies moved on. The sawmills moved further out and back as the nearer millable blocks were cut out, while settlers penetrated further into the hinterland interior. Then, as churches were eventually erected in the townships, there ensued an inter-denominational competition for allegiance within a limited population of permanent town and farm dwellers. Accordingly, some missions and churches had comparatively brief lives. That many of the buildings themselves were built of borer-prone white pine was also an added handicap. Their austerity and brief lives must have dismayed Europeans accustomed to centuries-old stone churches and houses.[10]

At the same time, the missionary zeal of some of the Protestant denominations demanded a consequent onward thrust. There seemed never any real measure of permanence, and human and financial resources were continually being stretched beyond sustainability. On this point, a modern religious historian, E.W. Hames, makes no bones about the fact that the Methodist Church in the early years of the 20th century was exceeding the manpower resources available, and was pushing young, untried home mission workers into isolated and difficult positions where they often failed.[11] Hames quotes an unidentified and 'sorely tried' layman in a 'Main Trunk town', who is forthright on the point:

> Sending young, inexperienced and untried men to work such a station is condemned. The impression made by being first to send an agent into the district is dying out.[12]

Hames points out that the policy was aimed at putting the appointees to the Home Missions on trial, thus finding the best candidates for later college training. Such hard

apprenticeship arose, according to Hames, from the Church's lack of finance and supervisors. 'The shortage of what Methodists used to call "agents" was more serious than the shortage of money.'[13] This was well illustrated in Ohakune in 1897, where a new church was opened two-thirds debt free;[14] and yet, within eighteen months, three preachers had come and gone.[15] The demanding work of expanding the Methodist circuit of preaching places in the Waimarino must have been difficult for new men. Methodist Probationers were literally pitched into the wilderness to survive or go under. 'They generally survived...they did not need to be theologians but ardent believers, with a love for Christ and men, a tough body and plenty of gumption.'[16]

For the Presbyterians, the problems were of a similar nature. Catechists became Home Missionaries in 1874 when New Zealand was no longer classed as a Mission District. It had to find its own finance. Indeed, the church that had long propounded the necessity for a university-trained ministry, leant as heavily on poorly-paid agents as did the Methodists. A recent Presbyterian historian puts it bluntly: 'Dedication and poverty went hand in hand'. The harsh realities of such dedicated lives on the Main Trunk in 1908, is further described by the same author:

> George Crockett, at Rewa (in the Taihape region), travelled 100 miles each week and 30 miles on Sunday for a stipend of two pounds. A.H. Lennox, missionary to the railway workers on the main trunk line, lived with his wife in a tent throughout the Ohakune winter.[17]

Such hardship, of course, must have given a true and valuable insight into the lives of the hinterland settlers. Even the rough slab cottages and corrugated iron stores of the so-called 'townships' must have seemed greatly civilised in comparison with the crude canvas-and-punga constructions wherein many a woman strove to create the simplest of homes. The pastor - of whatever religion - who arrived on his tired and mud-spattered horse for an

hour or two of conversation (and perhaps, given the frequent loss of children to disease or accident, a few healing words of consolation), would have earned acceptance as one far removed from big-city 'mahogany' religion.[18]

That such consolation was often needed, was resultant from not only the obvious dangers of the environment such as gorges, streams, animals and weather, but also from disease, which claimed men, women, and sadly too often, children. On this last point, there arises the question of baptism of children. What was the attitude of isolated and somewhat endangered pioneers, when it came to the question of preparation for, and provision against, the ever-present threat of death to their children - and indeed, themselves?[19] As recorded above, before the Ngamatapouri settlement had built its church, children were baptised and adults confirmed by a visiting Bishop in the newly-built library. But other settlers, remote by distance from permanent townships were long denied even an occasional visit by church representatives.

Settlers of the Mangawhero River valley, on the line of the infamous Parapara track between Wanganui and Raetihi, were never to have a church on their road beyond the Anglican church at Upokongaro. There the road swung away from the Whanganui River to begin its winding, undulating way toward Raetihi, just 75 kilometres away on today's State Highway 4. In 1914, when Bert and Doris Wallace were newly-weds on their year-old farm section near Raukawa falls, the negotiable road for wheeled transport ended at Kakatahi, near the Parapara junction with Field's Track, the route to Karioi.[20] Today, the journey from Kakatahi to Raetihi is a mere 34 kilometres over a sealed road. In 1914 however, this upper section of the road had barely improved since it was opened as a bridle track in 1897. Then, a through trip on horseback to Wanganui lasted 12 hours.[21] A clay road was opened in 1917, but ten years

of squabbling between the Wanganui and Waimarino County councils over responsibility for the upper section of the road meant that it was not completely metalled until 1932.[22] Such an area was not easily penetrated by religion. Doris Wallace writes:

> We were positive heathens as far as religion in the form of attending church went. A church? There just wasn't one! No-one had time to give church a thought back in 1914, and no minister would think of taking to the road, with mud in places up to a horse's belly, or up to the axle of a buggy, to conduct a brief service for a congregation that might number only from three to ten.[23]

Nevertheless, one stormy night, Captain Brown of the Salvation Army appeared at the Wallace's door on what was to become an annual fund-raising circuit. As Doris Wallace says, '...this was the way the first minister came into our lives....He usually appeared muddy, tired to the extreme, and hungry.'[24]

Bert Wallace and his two partners employed bushmen to help them clear their bush selection. These men in their austere bush camps were the workers who more closely fitted Fairburn's estranged archetype, rather than the settlers themselves. Doris Wallace decribes with sympathy and feeling, the hard-working and sometimes tragic lives of such forgotten pioneers: An Australian bushman, 'far too young to die', expires as his mates take turns in carrying his stretcher toward the driveable road and a journey to medical aid. An attempted suicide victim is carried three miles by men often knee-deep in mud, because,

> ...even strong men wilt under such circumstances and 'way back' living; under camp conditions, nightmares are bred and loneliness - intense loneliness of the spirit is theirs. There was very little reading matter in the camps...Sundays were spent doing chores...one Sunday after another and each with much the same tempo.[25]

Such insights suggest that it was the bush itself, the towering, silent green oppression of the endless bush

that so crushed the human psyche. Horizons, fraternal and physical, extended barely beyond the arc of an axe-swing. New faces were rare. While the railway construction gangs received regular visits from evangelical clergy,[26] the small gangs of bushmen seldom if ever saw another human, except perhaps, their employer. On their infrequent forays 'out' to Raetihi, Taihape or Hunterville, such town-hungry men with their large pay-cheques were warmly welcomed in the sly-grog shops and hotels. They were seldom welcomed anywhere else. Apart from billiard saloons or gambling, there was little other recreation. Unlike the land settlers, the bushmen were marked by a known itinerancy, which probably ranked them as poor prospects for religious conversion or encouragement.

In the townships and mill camps, and along the back roads of the farm settlements, the women of the new frontier frequently filled a role that extended far beyond the Victorian concept of man's 'helpmeet'. The injured bushman or navvy, or an illness-stricken traveller, would often be carried hopefully to the nearest house or farm whare. There, the women-folk would give whatever aid and care possible while a doctor was sought, or onward carriage arranged. But while there was generally a doctor available in the townships, hospital accommodation was slow in coming. Taihape did not open its first hospital until 1911, while Raetihi waited until 1919 for a cottage hospital.[27]

The social and moral obligations thus imposed upon a woman, perhaps barely into her twenties, were cruelly challenging. Left, possibly alone to comfort a rough bushman dying of internal injuries, while someone rode desperately to town for help, such a woman became nurse, doctor and minister - and tragically often in her position of the latter, it was she who provided the last comfort in the face of imminent death. Considering the high percentage of Roman Catholics resident in the Waimarino

County in the early years of the new century,[28] the position of a mortally-hurt Catholic man, or a Catholic woman near death from complications of childbirth, must have been rendered the more fearful and despairing in the absence of a priest to give absolution. Religious comfort of any kind - a murmured prayer - a woman's hand held in a pleading grasp - were perhaps the only ease in an era that knew no instant communication or rapid transport to medical assistance.[29]

There is no doubt that a firm religious faith supported many in their struggle with a harsh environment. One example was the remarkable Arthur George Harvey, of Waverley. For thirty years from 1895, this son of an Anglican Priest devoted himself to the medical care of a large rural district, which included the Waitotara Valley. Dorothea Joblin's book details the Doctor's wild horseback rides in conditions of road and weather quite outside the imagination of any modern medical practitioner.

Called urgently to a breech birth case at Ngamatapouri by a carrier-pigeon message from a worried midwife, Doctor Harvey sets out at a gallop from Waverley on a night of wind and rain. Twice he must cross and recross the flooded Waitotara River to circumvent slips - four times having to swim his mount before reaching his first horse change near Ngutuwera. On again without rest, again having to swim the river twice, until the horseman reaches his second staging-point.

> As the dripping horse and man scrambled from the water, an oilskinned figure flashed a lantern light over them. "Holy Mother of God!" cried Shan O'Rielly. "Sure it's a livin' sin to be so reckless for yourself and beast." The doctor's face was stern as he beat the water from his clothing. "There's a just God, Shan. I have nothing to fear if I am needed on the other side. Where is my fresh horse?"[30]

So, on into the night and the new day pressed the

devoted doctor. The mother and baby were saved, and we have no reason to doubt the accuracy of Dorothea Joblin's reconstruction of what represented just one of the many similar adventures in the life of her father. The religious foundation of that life is clearly outlined in her book. As described earlier, the lives of the original settlers of Ngamatapouri at the turn of the century, were similarly marked by an active religious conviction. It was, in many cases, the exemplary behaviour of those individuals that inspired others to emulation. In such fearful isolation, it was, perhaps, the only available reassurance against the shadows of danger and grief that so often fell across their lives.

Isolation was a fact of back blocks settlement. Yet it did not, as a general rule, result in the 'atomization' of rural society that Miles Fairburn attributes to the rapid frontier expansion of Victorian New Zealand.[31] There certainly was separateness; and naturally, in an era when communication was governed in distance and time by the speed of the horse, such separateness bred a neccessary material independence. But this was not social insularity. Nor did it develop into the social transience of the nature of the railway and roading construction camps. Nor yet was it marked by the restless itinerancy of the bush fellers. On the contrary, although settler society was characterised by apartness, it also developed a remarkable cohesion and co-operation in the face of the hardships imposed by the land.

Rustic recluses and hermits there may have been - roadmen, fencers, or women-shy single farmers; but these were hardly the norm. Yeoman settler society was largely a family society, and as such it developed its own practical interdependence and collobaration. Rollo Arnold, in rejecting Fairburn's theories of a fractured and transient society, describes how necessity made for pooling of

available talents in pioneer societies:

> When skills such as those of nurse, barber, midwife, undertaker, and horse doctor were needed, they were commonly sought among one's neighbours. Such community resources as school, church, cemetery, public hall were obtained and maintained by pooling labour, materials, and talents.[32]

As Arnold further points out, locally-produced and circulated newspapers kept communities informed of each others' progress. In this, the local newspapers of the townships would have been supplemented by such papers as the aptly-named Yeoman weekly, printed in Wanganui with its reports by 'Own Correspondent'. In the religious sense, reports of church activities and weekly homilies and dissertations of a morally improving nature would have been available from the widely-circulated denominational weeklies such as the Presbyterian Christian Outlook, or the later War Cry of the Salvation Army.[33] If the people could not come to the church, the church must, perforce, take religion to the people. The mailman was the auxiliary of the priest.

For those who lived and worked far from the villages, with their several churches and parish membership, the papers and an occasional saddle-borne pastor would have been the only spiritual advocacy from the 'outside' to reach and sustain them in a sometimes depressing world of worry and struggle. But it had become obvious by the first decade of the new century that the churches lacked both finances and personnel to fully care for the people of the 'back-of-beyond'. From the beginning, individual strength of character and adaptability had been the mark of the men and women of the high country. In time, to a large extent, such qualities would both mark, and become, their religion.

NOTES: Pages 38 to 48

IV: ADVERSITY AND ADAPTATION

1 F.K. Roberts, A Compendium of Railway Construction, Part Two: North Island Main Trunk, Wellington, 1990, p.45.

2 Yeoman, Vol 32 No 1493, 5 January 1895, p.14.

3 Elizabeth Allen, In The Hills Of The Waimarino, Wanganui, 1984, p.86.

4 Yeoman, Vol 32 No. 1603, 13 February 1897, p.12.

5 Merrylin George, Ohakune: Opening To A New World, (2nd Edn.) Wanganui, 1993, p.47.

6 Allen, p.216.

7 Denis Robertson, "...give me TAIHAPE on a Saturday night", Waikanae, 1995. pp.45; 333.

8 Robertson, p.334.

9 Robertson, p.46.

10 The Methodist churches at Matarawa and Jefferson's Line near Marton were two that did not last. See Galpin, Tutaenui Garden of Rangitikei, pp.17-18. The Anglican church at Matarawa was likewise rebuilt in 1908 because of borer. See L. Mould & D. Strachan, (eds), Centennial of St John's Church Matarawa, 1899-1966, Wanganui, 1966, p.3.

11 E.W. Hames, Out Of The Common Way: The European Church in the Colonial Era, Auckland, 1972. p.112.

12 Hames, p.112.

13 Hames, p.54.

14 Yeoman, Vol 34 No 1615, 8 May 1897. 'Ohakune Notes'.

15 George, p.324.

16 Hames, p.55.

17 Laurie Barber, '1901-1930: The Expanding Frontier', in Dennis McEldowney, (ed), Presbyterians in Aotearoa, Wellington, 1990, pp.81-82.

18 Lineham, NZJRH, June 1985, p.373.

19 Disease threatened adults and children alike. A newspaper report tells of a stock inspector killing a heifer and finding it infected with tuberculosis. Yeoman, Vol 32, No. 1660, 19 March 1898, p.9.

20 Doris Wallace, The Generation Gap: Unimportant People And The Parapara, Tauranga, 1973. See illustrations between pp.192-3.

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21 Yeoman, Vol 35 No 1672, 11 June 1898, p.10.

22 Rex H. Voelkerling & Kevin L. Stewart, From Sand To Papa: A History of the Wanganui County, Wanganui 1986, pp.151-188.

23 Wallace, p.271.

24 Wallace, pp.271-2.

25 Wallace, pp.239-41.

26 P.J. Gibbons, 'Some New Zealand Navvies. Co-operative Workers , 1891-1912', in The New Zealand Journal Of History, Vol 11 No 1, April, 1977, p.57.

27 Robertson, p.161: George, p.298. In Raetihi in the 1918 influenza epidemic, three temporary hospitals had dealt with 35 cases; seven had died. See R.E.Wright-StClair, Caring For People: A history of the Wanganui Hospital Board, Wanganui 1987, p.34.

28 The number of Roman Catholics in Waimarino County in 1906 was high. There were 662 Catholics - more than half the number of Church of England adherents, (1218), and more than all non-Anglican Protestant religionists (629). Only 109 Catholics were women, indicating the large proportion of unmarried Irish navvies employed on the railway. Census 1906, Table VII: Religions - Summary by Counties, pp.110-111.

29 Dorothea Joblin, Harvey Come Quick, Auckland 1963, pp.40-41.

30 Joblin, pp.41-43

31 Fairburn, The Ideal Society, p.12. It is notable that among the 'large cluster of traits and trends' that Fairburn attributes to atomization, is 'a powerful attachment to family life'. But such attachment surely created the extended families on the Wanganui frontier! Isolated families were co-operative and neighbourly in hay-making, shearing or building tasks. It is no coincidence that the later dairy factories were all set up on the co-operative system - a practice well-established in the pioneering days. Separation by terrain did not, neccessarily, create social atomisation.

32 Rollo Arnold, 'Community in Rural Victorian New Zealand', in New Zealand Journal of History Vol 24, No 1, April 1990, p.3.

33 The New Zealand Presbyterian (1879-1893), became The Christian Outlook (1894-99, and finally, The Outlook from (1899-1986). The final form combined the papers of Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists. It was, according to E.W. Hames, 'eminently respectable', and 'hot on morals'. Hames, p.135.

V: EDUCATION

The last three decades of the nineteenth century saw the rise of the yeoman farmer. This was especially the case in the North Island. There, government policies of land settlement and railway development encouraged New Zealand-born and immigrant settlers alike, to take up selections in the rugged and hitherto sparsely-settled hinterland. The late 1870's were also marked by government resolve to develop a free, compulsory and secular state education system. This was to solve a problem for the settlers, but pose one for the different religions.

The instilling of religious beliefs and morality through the control of childhood education, and a conviction that such education was properly the function of Christian churches, were principles held strongly by church leaders in a changing society. The Education Act of 1877, however, had virtually wrested that prerogative from the churches' control. The state now supervised the formative years of the child; and what seemed even more damaging, it had excluded the Bible and religion from the daily curriculum.[1] Subsidies to denominational schools were also removed. This was to prove a greater handicap - especially to Catholic settlers - than the secularisation of the "godless" state schools.[2]

By the end of the first decade of the new century, the Main Trunk and Waimarino townships were settling into permanence and order. The Protestant churches were making steady progress, with substantial buildings and supportive laities. For the Catholics, the road was much harder.

The open espousal of Irish nationalism by Bishop Moran of Dunedin, his aggressive anti-secularism and anger towards the government, had since 1871 incited inter-denominational

enmity in the Colony. Through the medium of the New Zealand Tablet newspaper, which he had established in 1873, Moran protested against government refusal to subsidise Catholic schools, and considered that Catholics, by being forced to finance their own schools while yet paying taxes, were being compelled to contribute to the '...free and godless education of other people's children.'[3]

Moran died nine years before the first Catholic church was opened in Taihape in 1904. Money collected from railway construction workers was used to finance the building loan.[4] The first parish priest was Fr Lacroix, a French Marist from the Jerusalem Maori Mission on the Whanganui River. But it was not until 1915 that the first Catholic School was opened, with Sisters of St Joseph from Wanganui providing the teaching staff.[5] For nineteen years - from the opening of the first state school in Taihape until 1915 - Catholic children had, perforce, to participate in the "godless" state system.

Taihape Anglicans, who opened their first church in 1902, did not provide their own school until 1917. This was because the Anglican Diocesan Synod did not approve an Act for the provision and regulation of Church Schools until 1917.[6] Other Protestant denominations, perhaps less handicapped by the need to provide an alternative to the state education system, were early builders of churches in Taihape. The Methodist church was opened in 1902, and the Presbyterian Church in 1904. The Salvation Army had also established a barracks in Taihape after transferring from Mangaweka in 1905.[7]

The question of primary childhood education was already settled before the first hinterland townships and villages came into being. The state would provide a free, compulsory and secular education, and supply the means. Religious education was left to the churches. Apart from the hour's

non-sectarian religious education permitted in the schools under the "Nelson System", there was no provision for the religious instruction of non-Catholic children other than Sunday School, or whatever was imparted by parents. In the latter case, the mothers of pioneer families had an important influence.

Alex Scarrow, a third-generation descendant of a pioneer (1893) Raetihi farm settler, described how his mother - a former Hunterville school teacher - attended to her eight children's religious education:

> On returning one evening to join father in the living room after giving her usual Bible story to each child that she fondly "tucked in" for the night, mother was confronted with this question. "Why, when you must be so tired at the end of the day, do you spend so long with your children when you could be resting?" Her reply was, "Well, if I don't tell them of Jesus, who will?"[8]

The question was a vexing one. For the very few children of secondary school age, there were Anglican and Catholic schools in Wanganui that were excused from the secular clause by the 1879 Education Act. But if the primary schools, as they were built and opened along the Main Trunk railway and in the hinterland valleys, were permitted only to teach non-sectarian religious subjects for one hour a day according to the "Nelson system",[9] who was to teach it? Ian Breward pointed out that keeping abreast of settlement expansion, as well as financing buildings and salaries, proved a struggle for the churches. 'Country districts were particularly ill-served and frequently no religious instruction was provided.'[10]

A former pupil of Orautoha school, just north of Raetihi, says that while he attended Sunday school in Ohakune, he received no further religious education after his family moved to Ruatiti in 1915, where he became a pupil at the Orautoha Valley School.[11] Schools 'further in' at Mangatiti and Upper Ruatiti, were certainly served

no better, and even had trouble keeping state teachers.[12]

Catherine Carpenter, who was sole teacher at Orautoha School three years later, has described how settlers created farms out of the virgin forest land; '...many reached only by a bridle track or simply a footpath through dense undergrowth.' The settlers were, Carpenter declared, mainly New Zealanders '..of English, Scots and German stock - all protestants - but..two or three Irish families of the Roman Catholic faith.'[13]

For the children of Catholic families isolation imposed the same secular curriculum as for the Protestants. The legal "loophole" of the "Nelson system" that gave religious teachers brief entry to the secular school-room, was of little use in covering even a portion of the hundreds of small, back-country schools in the New Zealand hinterland. Away from the townships, the numbers of priests and clergy were simply insufficient to provide any kind of religious education. The task fell to Catholic and Protestant parents alike.

For Anglican parents in the Wanganui hinterland, the possibility of religious instruction in the state primary schools was handicapped by the intransigent attitude toward the state education system displayed by their bishop, Octavius Hadfield. Until he resigned in 1893, Hadfield stubbornly rejected after-school religious instruction as implying acceptance of the "godless" state system.[14] The Bishop's diocese included all the Wanganui hinterland, but he made no move to found church schools. Sunday-school attendances were poor, and even this form of education was not offered in many parishes. 'The result was that members of his diocese had the worst of both worlds and had to rest content with the secular system...'[15]

This seemingly ambivalent attitude toward primary

education was not encouraging to hinterland settlers of non-conformist persuasions. They could also see Wanganui Collegiate developing from its industrial-school origins into an elitist Anglican secondary college. It must have seemed as though Anglicanism in the Wanganui Feldon plains was replicating an English socio-religious system that stood in haughty contrast with the egalitarianism of yeoman-farmer society in the hinterland Arden.[16]

While the Anglicans held a somewhat crabbed attitude toward a "godless" state system which they could not change, and Catholics firmly pursued their own educational path wherever possible,[17] a much different attitude toward religious education was held by the other protestant and non-conformist religions. As mentioned earlier, the Sunday school was regarded (by Methodists, at any rate), as a productive means of 'getting at' the parents through the child. Having come to terms with a state system that was proving resistant to all efforts to include religion as a curriculum subject,[18] these churches returned to the task of proselytizing the growing European population. Sunday schools were important adjuncts to their crusades.

A modicum of religious education was thus available to the children of the villages and townships. And because primary education was universal and free under the 1877 Education Act, and secondary school places also free after an 1879 act, (which permitted religious education at secondary level) the churches did not have to package religion with the 'three R's'. Sunday schools were thus freed to concentrate on religious subjects.

The 1901 census showed Sunday school attendance nationally at 118,410 - a more than four-fold increase over the 1871-1901 period.[19] But few of this large muster would have been found from the Wanganui rural hinterland. Again, isolation and distance was the primary handicap

in the lives of back-blocks families. Having the children gathered in one place at the school for five hours each week-day might have seemed an option for the churches to teach religion under the "Nelson system"; but the sheer numbers of small, single-teacher schools and the shortage of suitably qualified religious instructors, plainly negated this possibility. As it was, ministers found the task of covering those parts of their parishes reasonably close to the townships, a demanding one. Sundays especially, were much-travelled days.[20]

Another factor in the lives of hinterland children that made them poor prospects for after-school instruction, was their economic and labour value to their parents. This made their absence from home a handicap to farm operations. Many such children walked or rode long distances to and from school each day. Five miles or more was not unusual, and the horse paddock became a feature of country schools. Because many children were required to milk house-cows both before and after school, uneccessary school-house detention was not welcomed by parents who needed the child's labour contribution.[21]

It is easy to forget that even school life was hard for the Victorian or Edwardian child. It was not simply a joke for a settler to refer to a country teacher as "brat walloper".[22] The work was demanding and punishment frequent. A Presbyterian minister in Lyttelton who had failed in the early 1890's to instil religion in children in after-school classes, showed unusual sympathy and understanding when he later remarked that, "After the State has worn out the children by five hours work, they want to go home and play, and rightly so."[23] But country children often rode homeward with only the expectation of further work at the end of their day.

For the parents of the hinterland child, the decades

from 1880 to 1910 were years of promise and hard toil. Although roads improved but slowly, the opening of the Main Trunk Railway in 1909 boosted timber-milling and wool and dairy production. A society quite different from that of the 'Old Country' (or even from Canterbury or Rangitikei!) was evolving. The churches had certainly noticed the difference:

> Free and compulsory education was having an effect. The church had lost its near-monopoly of popular education. The working man was less likely to be found in church on Sunday, though his children usually went to Sunday School.[24]

David J. Berry described an interdenominational Sunday school being conducted at the family house near Raetihi from 1893 until 1918. He also recalled, '...about thirty children, some of them coming many miles to attend. A Sunday School picnic was held every year and it was regarded as the event of the year.'[25]

Nevertheless, although children might have come 'many miles' to the Berry homestead to Sunday school, it is significant that this farm was on the flatter land near Raetihi. Nearby, the later-named Ohura Highway plunged and twisted down into the Orautoha Valley, from where it spread into a web of muddy tracks to Ruatiti, Mangatiti, Murumuru, and a scatter of lonely farmsteads.[26] Sunday school attendance or family church-going were quite impractical activities for settlers living in such isolation. Apart from an occasional visit by a riding or tramping minister, religion in the 'back-blocks' was, like most other requirements, of a home-grown variety.

For Anglicans, it was ironic that Bishop Hadfield's refusal to allow 'unqualified' State teachers to interpret the Bible by giving lessons themselves,[27] resulted in children obtaining their religious instruction from even less 'qualified' parents. As the Protestant churches became increasingly engaged in the struggle to influence Government

in what became known as the "Bible in schools" controversy, the only religious education available to the back-blocks child was obtained within those families in which religious observance and piety was the practice.

The staunch Presbyterianism of many of the early settlers of Scottish origin who, by the 1870's had settled most of the lower Turakina and Whangaehu valley systems and their adjacent watersheds, has been well documented and remarked upon.[28] Bible reading at mealtimes is a practice still carried out by the descendants of such families.[29] Over the years, various families have provided ministers and missionaries to foreign lands. The McLeays of Turakina, the Berrys of Raetihi and the Haddows of Ngamatapouri, were each in their own faith, examples of such familial commitment.[30]

It seems obvious that the secular, state-funded primary education of the children of such families was complemented by a constant exposure to the morality and pietism of devoutly Christian homes. But there seems little evidence to indicate that this was other than occasional practice in yeoman-farming back-blocks society.

The debate between churches and Government concerning the secular clause of the 1877 Education Act, was entering its ninth year when the first survey pegs were hammered into the ground at Hunterville. Religious education in the Wanganui hinterland, developed thereafter as something of a reaction to what was perceived as a "Godless" state imposition. Yet, apart from the Catholics, none of the other denominations made any great efforts to build schools. They were, accordingly, spared the financial burden that fell upon Catholic parents, who were in effect subsidising the education of non-Catholic children. This is attested to by the fact that upon the opening of St Joseph's Convent School in Ohakune, in February 1918, 67 of the opening

roll of 90 pupils were transferees from the State School. And the school was the tenth such convent school opened outside Wanganui by the Sisters of St Joseph.[31]

Although Bishop Hadfield had told the Wellington Synod of 1877 that 'Sunday schools must be used to combat the Education Act (1877)',[32] the Church of England, thirty years later, had scarcely begun to match Catholic or non-conformist churches in the creation of Sunday schools, not withstanding such resolution.

Where there were Sunday schools in operation, the provision of 'edifying books for the young', was a commonly used method of reinforcing the religious and social morality propounded in both Sunday school class and pulpit.[33] Such books were widely used as class prizes in Catholic schools as well as Sunday schools operated by Anglican and non-conformist churches. Examples of such literature may still be found in secondhand bookshops.

A prize for 'writing' awarded at a Sacred Heart Parish School in Christchurch in 1889, is titled Light From The Lowly: Lives of Persons who sanctified themselves in humble positions (Dublin, 1886). A pupil of Jackeytown Sunday School, (Tiaikatahuna), was in 1904 awarded a book entitled Sowing The Good Seed, a tale of virtue written in, and about Canada, but printed in Britain. Kate's Ordeal, printed by the Sunday School Union of London, was a Standard One spelling prize awarded in Invercargill in 1906. The same pupil earned 3rd Prize in Standard 2 in Papanui in 1908. Her prize, Little Miss Muffet, is printed by The Religious Tract Society, London.[34]

The latter three tales are similar in their themes, illustrating how faith and humility triumph over adversity and grief, bringing the rewards of happiness and love. It is no coincidence that the main actors are young girls

and women. All the prize-winners were girls; and although none of these books was awarded in schools in the Wanganui district (Tiaikatahuna near Palmerston North is nearest), the character-moulding themes - whether fictitional stories or biographical lives of saints - are the same. Such books illustrate the reading matter distributed to children in this period, and most likely familiar to parish school pupils in Marton, Taihape or Ohakune. But they are unlikely to have been awarded as prizes in state public schools.

By the early years of the new century, the two major religious advocates of government funding for religious education were becoming locked into their mutually cancelling positions. Catholics resisted the political demands for official inclusion of religion in state schools with the 'Bible in Schools' scheme. They feared a gradual 'protestantising' of the education system. On the other hand, Anglicans opposed state aid to church schools, fearing the boost it would give to Catholicism and 'popery'.[35] Thus, religious instruction and the Bible remained largely at the hinterland kitchen table.

Perhaps the key to understanding the problems of religious education and practice in the Wanganui hinterland, is to comprehend first of all the great neccessity for adaptability in all things that was imposed upon settlers by their physical isolation. Although the steamship and telegraph were ameliorating the colony's oceanic remoteness, reducing it to something which Keith Sinclair regarded as 'a relatively minor factor',[36] one must take into account the social isolation as being equal to, or perhaps greater than, mileage as measured on a map. With the best will in the world, a handful of devoted pastors could not cover hundreds of square miles of difficult terrain with its web of roughly-formed tracks, on more than a few occasions each year. One had to adapt to the exigencies of the environment. Another historian describes such adaptation:

> Settlers removed from all possibility of attendance at formal worship had to adjust to a religious, though not a spiritual, isolation...Children too received instruction: mealtime graces and regular Bible readings were common in many a colonial household, and in more remote areas, parents played an active part in bringing their children to faith.[37]

The above-quoted, 'many a colonial household', cannot be quantified with regard to the Wanganui hinterland. There are no figures other than broad census statistics indicating national affiliations and church attendance. In 1874, 23.5 percent of Europeans attended church, with a high point of 29.8 percent in 1896. That figure had fallen to 23.3 percent by 1911.[38] Any application of such figures to the back-blocks population would be highly speculative, even though 94.1 percent of European New Zealanders declared affiliation to a Christian church in 1881.

To what degree every-day Christianity was proclaimed and practised along the winding roads of the hinterland, we can only guess. Secular education reached far into the wilderness, while religious education seems to have bogged down, once out of sight of the village church. But we can be sure that a leavening of devout and socially respected farm settlers of the calibre of Joseph Annabell of Ngamatapouri, mentioned earlier, ensured that the bare-footed back-blocks child did not grow completely godless, numbered though it may have been among the two thirds of New Zealanders who found other things to do on a Sunday, than attend church.

NOTES: Pages 51 to 61

V; EDUCATION

1 The term 'secular' meant the exclusion of religious observances and instruction. It did not, as its critics claimed, exclude 'the very name of God from the schools.' The phrase, "Bible in Schools" became the objective and catch-cry for activist groups opposed to secular education. See Colin McGeorge & Ivan Snook, Church, State, And New Zealand Education, Wellington, 1981. pp.9-10. See also Jeanine Graham, 'Settler Society' in The Oxford History Of New Zealand, Oxford U/P 1981, p.126.

2 The pejorative term, "Godless schools" originated with the Anglican Bishop Julius Hadfield He coined the phrase in his Presidential Address to the Wellington Diocesan Synod in 1877. See Andrew Sangster, The Anglican Reaction To The Secular Clause Of The 1877 Education Act, M.A. Thesis, Massey University 1884, p.64.

3 Hugh Laracy, 'Paranoid Popery: Bishop Moran and Catholic Education in New Zealand', in New Zealand Journal of History, Vol 10, No 1, (April 1976), pp.51-52.

4 Denis Robertson, "...Give me TAIHAPE on a Saturday night", Waikanae, 1995, p.72

5 Robertson, p.72.

6 Duncan Green & John McCaul, St. Margaret's Anglican Church Taihape: 75 Years 1902-1977, Taihape, 1979, p.87.

7 Robertson, pp.76-79.

8 Elizabeth C. Allen, In The Hills Of The Waimarino, pp.103-4.

9 The Education Act laid down that there were to be two consecutive hours school instruction morning and afternoon. In practice schools operated three hours each morning. This gave religious instructors (with the agreement of the School Committee), a legal entrance during the first morning hour. But even with this advantage, in 1913 only 16,060 children out of 167,000 were receiving any kind of religious instruction. New Zealand Methodist Times of 7 March 1914. See Breward, p.44.

10 Ian Breward, Godless Schools? a study of Protestant reactions to secular education in New Zealand, Christchurch, 1967, p.22.

11 L.B. Roberts: Personal recollections as related to writer.

12 Orautoha School 75th Jubilee Booklet, Raetihi 1983. Brief histories of a number of schools in the Orautoha and adjoining valleys are recorded in this booklet. A list of teachers at Ruatiti School shows seven teachers between 1913 and 1920. Two left in 1917 for Army service (p.20) Pukekaha School is likewise shown to have employed fourteen teachers from 1905-1920. The roll varied beteen 9-19 until 1910 (p.13).

13 Catherine Carpenter, 'King Country Bushfire', in Auckland Weekly News, (c. 1960). Undated typescript copy in possession of Margaret Slatter (nee Voelkerling), New Plymouth.

NOTES Pages 51 to 61 contd.

14 Breward, p.30.

15 Breward, p.30.

16 Sangster, p.67. As Sangster observes: 'The major schools with an Anglican foundation tended to become elitist and national.'

17 Laracy, p.56. Laracy declares that Bishop Moran was determined to lead Catholics into building a separate school system as early as 1864. Whatever Moran's paranoia about 'masonic conspiracy' against Catholicism, his basic conviction was that the state had no right to control education, which was a traditional function of the Church, (pp.54-55).

18 Coming to terms with reality did not, however, mean that the non-Catholic churches had given up the fight. By 1935, no less than forty-two bills seeking to modify the state secular education since its 1877 inception had been presented. All failed. See Laracy, p.86.

19 Sangster, p.66, quoting Census of New Zealand, 1901, p.287.

20 George, p. 333. On a typical winter Sunday in 1910, the Anglican Rev Oswald Stent would conduct morning services at Rangataua and Ohakune, afternoon services at Ohakune East and Lakes Road, and evening services at Raetihi and Ohakune. On alternate Sundays there were services at Orautoha, Valley Road, Horopito, Raetihi and Ohakune. This by horse transport.

21 As late as the 1950's children still rode seven miles to school at Orautoha. The writer, living and working at Ruatiti at that time, recalls one such family who rode, three on a horse, to school each day. The oldest girl milked before and after school.

22 In a footnote to a typescript of the Catherine Carpenter article mentioned above, (see note 13), Margaret Slatter (nee Voelkerling), declares that the term "brat walloper" was bestowed by her father on the young school teacher boarding with the family at Orautoha.

23 Bryan Gilling, (editor), Godly Schools? Some Approaches to Christian Education in New Zealand, Waikato Studies in Religion, Vol 4, Hamilton 1993, p.7.

24 E.W. Hames, Out Of The Common Way: The New Zealand Church in the Colonial Era 1840-1913, Auckland, 1972, p.99.

25 Allen, p.93.

26 Even today, the abrupt transition from the Waimarino plateau to the valley system of the Manganui-A-Te-Ao River and its tributaries is steep and alarming. In the 1890's it must have seemed like descent into a nether world. The hill would have posed a formidable climb for Sunday school pupils.

NOTES: Pages 48 to 57 Contd.

27 Breward, p.29.

28 See Rev M. Wilson, J.M. Annabell, on Presbyterian settlement of Turakina Valley.

29 Information given personally by J.A. McLeay, Turakina to writer.

30 Information from J.A. McLeay. See also Allen, p.104 and Laraine Sole, The European Settlement of the Waitotora Valley 1890-1930, re missionary Dr Phyllis Haddow. p.151.

31 George, p.314.

32 Sangster, p.63. Quoted from Bishop Hadfield's Presidential Address recorded in Wellington Synod Proceedings, 1877.

33 See Rev M. Wilson, p.33. The provision of such 'edifying books' by the Presbyterian Church at Turakina in the 1870's was noted earlier.

34 All the books quoted are in possession of writer.

35 M.D. Clark, The Roman Response To The Protestant Mission: (Bishop Cleary and Bible-in-Schools in the 1920's). M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1984, pp.1-2.

36 Keith Sinclair, (ed), 'Life in the Provinces', in Distance Looks Our Way: The Effects Of Remoteness On New Zealand, Auckland, 1961, pp.36-37.

37 Jeanine Graham, 'Settler Society', in The Oxford History of New Zealand, edited W.H. Oliver with B.R. Williams, Auckland 1988 (reprint), p.127.

38 Allan K. Davidson and Peter Lineham, Transplanted Christianity, Palmerston North, 1987, pp.182-3. Quoted figures from Department of Statistics, 'Census of Population and Dwellings' for listed years.

VI: THE CHANGING SOCIETY

The three decades from 1890 to 1920 was a period of rapid progress and social change for much of the Wanganui hinterland. In areas where the canoe had once been the only alternative to foot and horse travel, road and rail transport brought a new efficiency to the movement of people and produce. In some areas the telephone came to alleviate the frightening isolation of those still not well served by roading.

By 1876, all the main towns in both North and South Islands were connected by 3170 miles of telegraph lines. The Colony was also linked to the outside world by a cable connection to Sydney,[1] and by 1910 New Zealanders were using 29,681 telephones.[2] Two Government departments - the Post and Telegraph Department and New Zealand Government Railways - ensured the hinterland settler's isolation was greatly eased, but hardship, inconvenience and fear were still part and parcel of back-blocks settlement. Floods carried away bridges; slips buried roads, and roads fell into roaring gorges in the winter downpours. In summer, fires claimed property and lives.

From 1914 until 1920, the hinterland suffered tragic losses of human lives and resources. Hundreds of young men volunteered for military service in the early years of the Great War of 1914-18. Many who set out on that great adventure were never to return to the villages and farms of their youth. A poignant anecdote in a 1982 newspaper spells out the tragedy. In her recollections, Mrs Ida Thompson related how, at Christmas, 1914, five young men sat down to dinner with the Stafford family in the lower Mangatiti Valley, north-east of Raetihi. Within a year, all five had died in action, including Ida's brother, Charlie. He had left the valley in May 1915,

and was killed on Gallipoli in August, aged nineteen.[3] This tragic theme of youth is reiterated in the 1983 memories of Pukekaha School by one of its pupils, Mr W. Stevenson. He recalled his 1916 teacher, Mr W.K. (Bill) Harre as an eighteen year-old veteran of Gallipoli, having gone to war at sixteen![4] His employment as a teacher in an isolated school of a dozen or so pupils indicates the desperate staff shortage of the time.

The trauma of the Great War was further exacerbated for the settlers of the Waimarino, by the great King Country bush fire of March 1918. Homes, sawmills, businesses and farm buildings were destroyed. In Raetihi, the Anglican Vicarage and church as well as the Catholic church, were burned to the ground. Even the co-operative dairy factory in Raetihi was destroyed.[5]

That calamity, with its crippling losses of buildings and stock, was followed just a year later by the killing influenza pandemic of 1919. It must have seemed that God was inflicting punishment of Biblical severity upon the settlers of the Wanganui hinterland, with the Waimarino selected for the most examplary suffering. In Raetihi, three temporary hospitals were set up, but seven people died.[6] In Ohakune there were twenty-six deaths, most of them young mill workers and railway workers. Among the fatalities were the Mayor and a nurse from Rangataua.

The death rate for the King Country was the highest regional fatality rate in the colony, at 18.9 per thousand. The separate Maori death rate reached 24.4 per thousand. A ban was placed on all tangis in an attempt to stem the infection spread, although no ban seems to have been placed on European funeral services, which must have been a source of infection. Places of entertainment were ordered closed, as were schools.[7] In Taihape, the Sisters of St Joseph set up and staffed a temporary hospital with fifty patients.

Other sufferers had to be nursed in private houses using hospital-donated bedding, such was the overflow from the hospitals.[8]

Coming as it did, at the end of four years of world war, the great influenza epidemic must have tested the faith of the hinterland settlers. Once again it was the young, healthy adults being taken. Some of the victims were young veterans who had survived the trenches, only to fall tragically to the invisible killer.

It is doubtful if the religious propensities of the younger generation were much enhanced by their experiences of war. Numbers of these young survivors, however, were to eagerly take up land offered on easy terms by a properly grateful Government. In places like the Mangapurua Valley, a scattering of hopefuls with their young wives, would repeat the back-breaking and lonely task of breaking in new bushland - a task that had made such cruel demands on their parents' lives and pockets. Their rewards would be bitterly less. The Great Depression of the 1930's would destroy many dreams. And this time, there would be no eager, proselytizing churches to buoy them in their task. Times had changed greatly for everyone, including the churches.

Nevertheless, through fire and flood, illness and grief, religion had certainly formed an important part of many settlers' lives. For those able to avail themselves of the reasonable proximity of a church, Sunday services and weddings, baptisms, and funerals, were opportunities to meet one's neighbours, even though, as in the latter case, the occasion be duly solemn.

According to one informant, the monthly visit to church in Raetihi was regarded as Sunday relaxation. Those who could not fit in the buggy stayed home, 'to prepare the vast mid-day meal for returning church-goers [and] a large

number of guests and their children'. The two-hour meal was accompanied with much debate and conversation, while the hard-worked women tried to clear away the table-ware, 'from around the seated men...it was a man's world on Sundays.' Tea with plum cake followed. Then the guests would depart in gigs and carts or on horseback, 'the women riding side-saddle and looking very smart in their riding habits and bowler hats'.[9]

It is, perhaps, indicative of the changing morality of the new century that some women were beginning quite openly to defy the social mores of the steadily receding Victorian era. One lady in 1963 remembered the sensation in Raetihi when, 'two girls from Wanganui arrived on horseback astride in what is now considered most correct riding costume.' The same lady related how, when she wanted her wedding to be held in her parents' house in Raetihi, the vicar was unable to comply because of Anglican Church rules. A Presbyterian minister from Taumaranui happily travelled sixty miles to Raetihi to perform the ceremony.[10] Another historian records the criticism levelled at one Ngamatapouri woman for horse-riding in men's trousers, and for having her long hair cropped short![11] Nevertheless, Victorian socio-religious conventions were gradually being set aside to meet the exigencies of everyday life and work.

The rise of dairy-farming meant that Sabbatarianism, a loudly-proclaimed doctrine of the more proactive advocates of Christianity, steadily lost ground in the face of practicality. When the Okoia Dairy Factory on the fringe of the hill country near Wanganui was opened in 1884, butter and cheese exports had accounted for a mere 1.29 percent of the country's total exports.[12] Such was the 'religious rigour' of the times, that dairy factories did not work on Sundays. On those days, milk for cheese-making was kept at home for butter making.[13] By 1903, when the Raetihi Dairy Company's factory was opened, exports had climbed

to 10.11 percent of the total. When a cheese factory was opened in Ohakune in 1909, cheese and butter were earning almost three million pounds of export income, 13.9 percent of total receipts.[14]

This growth is indicative of the increasing number of small farmers who were turning to dairying to ensure a regular income. For them, the daily trip to the cheese factory or creamery with their milk, provided a socialising opportunity and a chance to exchange some news and gossip.[15] This situation, for as long as it remained, would have also provided a valuable daily forum for exchanging ideas of both political and religious import with farm neighbours waiting with their wagons in line for service. This regular socialisation for the men, and sometimes for their children, might also have substituted for the less frequent church functions and communion with neighbours and towns-people.

Such daily cartage of milk to cheese or butter factory in the early days, was the only alternative to the laborious and wasteful method of setting milk in large pans and hand-skimming the cream off after overnight standing. At the creamery, the milk was separated in large, powered separators, and the farmer was given the 'skim' milk to take home to feed pigs and calves. The development of hand-operated cream separators in the first decade of the new century meant that the task could be completed on the farm, frequently by the labour of women and children. The cream was uplifted at the farm gate by wagon, and after about 1910, by motor lorry. Although the work-load of the farm women might have eased somewhat, their menfolk had nevertheless lost a fraternising opportunity that would not be replaced by increased church-going. For commited church members, this must have spelt a loss of fraternal exchange and mutual encouragement of religious brethren.

The labour demands that dairying imposed upon children,

often impaired both secular and religious education. Hylton Farr was the son of a railway worker who had procured a 180-acre block close to the township of Utiku. Leaving the railway, the father developed an additional 40-acre block into a dairy farm. Hylton described how, as a young boy, he would rise with his father at 5.30 a.m., and while the elder was out in darkness bringing in the cows, the boy would light the stove to have a cup of tea ready when his father returned. The lad then assisted by milking four cows, and while his parents milked the balance of the herd, Hylton would turn the handle of the cream separator. By the time he got to school the child would already have worked three-and-a-half hours. After school, he was obliged to bring in the cows, and again assist with milking.[16]

The above first-hand description of child labour (which was by no means uncommon), suggests a reason why Sunday schools did not always flourish in the rural hinterland.[17] Although there were churches in Utiku for members of the Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian faiths, the attraction of any Sunday school for a hard-worked and tired farm child on a Sunday morning, would probably have been minimal. Nor does Mr Farr recall any religious periods in his time after 1917 at Utiku school. He does, however, point out that his wife, as a child of Catholic parents at Winiata, a mile or so south of Taihape, made the daily walk up over the hill to the Catholic School in Taihape. The difference between Catholic and Protestant education is patent. And the fact that Mr Farr - Anglican by birth from an Anglican/Catholic marriage - also married a Catholic girl, seemingly indicates a low level of sectarian animus in rural areas. Hinterland Utiku was a far cry from the Catholic suburbs of Bishop Moran's Dunedin, or Octavius Hadfield's Anglican Wellington.

Although religious education of the country child seemed neglected, religious activity in the rural towns

was by no means in abeyance. Protestant "Bible in Schools" activists, seemingly defeated at the beginning of the 20th Century, regrouped before once more entering the lists. In the Main Trunk townships the Salvation Army was likewise on the attack. This strange religious foreign army was becoming accepted - perhaps as much for its entertainment value with its bands and street singing, as for its religion. In a small village on a Saturday night the 'Sallies' provided a focal point for some generally good-natured raillery and laughter. The cornetists and tambourine-shakers were often known and respected locals. The hard animosity that had greeted the Army's earlier entry into New Zealand did not obtain on the Main Trunk.[18]

It had not always been that way. The Salvationists had earlier drawn some harsh criticism from the older, established denominations. Over on the Whanganui River, where both Anglican and Catholic churches worked among the Maori, Salvationist evangelism in the river communities had drawn an angry response from the Catholics.

In a letter to his former pupils at Montlucon, France, dated 25 August 1889, Fr Celestin Cognet of the Jerusalem mission refers to the 'stupid Salvation Army' coming to Jerusalem to gain converts: '...some scatterbrains enlisted for shelter, food, clothing.' He states his resolution to '...oust in disgrace followers of this sect'.[19] Such was the animosity that the brother of one of the Salvation Army converts threatened that:

> If the Army attempted to hold a meeting the following Sunday...the drum would be cut to pieces; Horowe [Ernest Holdaway, the Army missionary] and his helpers would be bundled into a canoe, with their hands tied, and sent off down the river to gaol in Wanganui.[20]

Such outspoken rivalry and alienation perhaps reflected Cognet's resentment at the inroads being made by this upstart religion in an area wherein Catholicism had toiled

so long. The alienation spurred by Bishop Moran and The Tablet, and the on-going struggle by the major religions to re-establish their positions in Maori life so badly damaged by the land wars, seemingly combined to generate unusual intolerance on the river. Nevertheless, in the rest of the Wanganui hinterland of the new century sectarian and Maori-Pakeha relationships appeared generally good.[21]

It seems something of a contradiction that religious rivalry was not more evident in the Wanganui hinterland in the post nineteen-hundred decades. Certainly, there was much to fan the fires of controversy and dislike. One source of friction was the on-going Prohibition campaign, with the perceived Catholic sabotaging of Protestant efforts by the Roman Church's refusal to support Protestant political initiatives toward national prohibition. Numerous pronouncements by Catholic bishops critical of Prohibition had served to weaken public support for the cause.[22]

From the Catholic standpoint it must have seemed that a Calvinistic morality campaign was being conducted by Protestants in general, and the pro-active churches in particular. Anti sly-grogging editorials in the Wanganui newspapers were moralistic in tone; yet, the same editorial-writers opposed prohibition! One thundered that prohibitionists were, '...bigots, fanatics and traducers... affected with a form of spiritual rabies.'[23] It is not easy to gauge the extent to which prohibitionism influenced religious thought in the Wanganui hinterland.

There is no doubt that many settlers practised home brewing. Some were not averse to trading in illegal liquor, whether home-brewed or imported across the borders of the 'dry' licensing areaa.[24] The penalties were severe on those who were caught, especially in supplying liquor to Maori. In 1897, James Mulvay of Karioi had been fined £101-8-3 for supplying a Maori with a twelve-and-sixpenny bottle

of whiskey.[25] Considering that an annual wage for a school teacher was about one hundred pounds, the measure of the fine seems draconian. The year before, David Creech of Mangaweka had been gaoled in Wanganui with six months hard labour for 'sly-grogging'. His wife narrowly escaped the same fate; and this was in a 'wet' district![26]

It seems that although isolation was still a major handicap to many back-blocks areas, the influences of the outside world were certainly not unmarked. In the religious context Sabbatarianism and Prohibition were campaigns that would surely have attracted interest; for while the Sabbath observance campaign probably drew little support from the seven-days-a-week farmer, Prohibition came nearer to home.

Although teetotalism had been propounded by Wesleyans at Hokianga as early as 1842, it was not until the 1860's that temperance societies became popular. The New Zealand Independent Order of Rechabites, a benefit society for abstainers, and the Band of Hope Union, were both formed in Auckland in 1863 to combat the widespread drunkenness common in contemporary pioneer society. The International Order of Good Templars was another abstainers' society formed about this time, followed at a later stage by the Women's Christian Temperance Union.[27] The opening of the Wanganui hinterland coincided with the rise of these pro-active temperance organisations.

Hugh McLeod, in his study of working-class religion in nineteenth-century Britain, declares that temperance was seen as '...the supreme embodiment of 'respectability', the word that summed up the ideal of good living held by many working-class Christians in the late nineteenth century.'[28] It is, therefore, not surprising that the very working-class migrants who had fled the rigid conformity of Establishment Britain, should nevertheless, in their new colonial freeland, lean again toward sectarian

conformity in their search for that respectability. For, as McLeod has it, '...sectarian allegiance was to rank next to class as the most important source of social identity'.[29] It was one idea that had been held to by the immigrants. And, if nothing else, the hinterland pioneers sought peer respect along with property, income, and education for their children.

Such allegience seemed very strong in the Rangitikei of the 1870's, and was displayed not just in church-going, but also in the activities of temperance groups encouraged by the Protestant churches. A Marton newspaper reported in October 1876, the 'respectable figure' of eighty juvenile good Templars in Marton.[30] A year later, the same journal reported a juvenile fete with one hundred youngsters, who were lectured by Rev Mr Stewart, and then pledged to abstain from 'intoxicating drink, tobacco, and swearing'.[31] By 1880, a Temperance Hall was built in High Street,[32] and Hunterville also, by 1897, listed its own "Go Ahead Lodge I.O.G.T." Other lodges were formed as settlement moved further into the hinterland.

The 1896 Census had shown an average literacy rate above 90 percent, and the new century had been marked by the introduction of penny postage throughout the colony and Empire. In one year, mail handled rose to 13 million letters, representing 62 letters per head of population.[33] The ubiquitous country store was frequently the local Post and Telegraph Office, and regular rural mail services helped ease the sense of isolation for hinterland dwellers.

The first generation of children educated under the free, compulsory and secular education system, also had grown to full adulthood. Thousands had travelled overseas, a great many of them wearing their country's uniform. Their new liberality of thought was underlined when the soldiers' votes ensured defeat for Prohibition in the 1919 national

referendum. And although prohibitionist influence would linger, entrenched in the King Country 'dry' areas for another generation, its 1919 high point also marked the high water of hinterland religion. Thereafter the tide for both, gradually but steadily receded.

Although the environment had been harsh, and the decade of the 1880's one of economic depression, the occupation and taming of the Wanganui hinterland was remarkable for both its speed and its change.

In 1880, apart from a handful of entrepreneurial settlers at Karioi, and the sprinkling of early Scottish settlers in the lower Turakina and Whangaehu Valleys, the wilderness of the Wanganui hinterland was traversed only by the itinerant Maori journeying between the scattered kaingas along the rivers. The horse and the canoe were the only alternatives to foot travel. Yet, within forty years, trains and motor cars were travelling the rails and roads of the hinterland. It is perhaps a mark of the rapidity of change, that by 1917 the first Maori pilot had graduated from a New Zealand flying school![34]

With the completion of the Main Trunk railway in 1908, the village pattern of the hinterland was in place. Spaced regularly along the rails were the crossing stations so neccessary to a single track rail system. Around them were clustered the houses of station staff and track maintenance workers. Adjacent to the larger stations, dairy factories arose to service the small dairy farms along the main and branching valleys. Numerous timber mills were connected to the railway by wooden 'tramways' extending from the surrounding bush. Supporting these populations were, in turn, stores, schools and churches.

Away from the ribbon of rail, however, there was virtually no church and village development in the Arden.

With the notable exceptions of Mangamahu in the mid-Whangaehu Valley, and the isolated church, store and library that comprised the community centre for the settlers of Ngamatapouri, European settlers built no villages or churches along the branching hinterland roads.

On the easier and increasingly more populous lowlands, an isolated church such as St John's Anglican church at Matarawa, or the Presbyterian and Methodist churches along Jefferson's Line north of Marton, had been able to attract congregations from the older-settled and well-roaded Feldon areas about them. The hinterland churches, however, depended heavily upon the village and township populations for their support; and this would eventually ensure their survival in many cases. Where roads became surfaced to take the developing motor-cars however, isolated churches tended to fall into disuse. Parishioners drove to the larger centres to worship on a Sunday. A number of rural churches were, eventually, jacked up onto wagons and moved to serve other functions and parishes.[35] In some cases, this was because denominational membership shrank over the years, and upkeep of a building became a burden. Again, the motor car solved the problem for the remaining membership.

For the more isolated hinterland families, improvements in roading encouraged longer and more frequent excursions to attend church worship and functions. It had also the effect of easing the sense of isolation long suffered by those most loyal of religion's upholders - the back-country women. Where the Sunday expedition to church perhaps once a month, had been the only, desultory and weather-dependent opportunity for farm women to meet other town and country women, greater opportunities now arose for other social gatherings. With good transport, 'cockies day' - perhaps a Tuesday or Thursday in the local township - became an outing that more frequently replaced the church meeting as a social interchange. For a woman, a day in town, with

shops open and available for browsing while her husband fraternised with near and distant neighbours at the nearby sale-yards, must have provided a welcome escape from the unrelieved monotony of the back-country farm. But it was not helpful to rural religion. For many, the mid-week outing would eventually replace the monthly visit to town and church.

In the decline of the Sunday social meetings, there was also lost some of the socio-religious interchange that former rites-of-passage gatherings such as christenings, weddings, confirmations and fetes had provided. The sidelong glances and coy smiles that had once marked the parentally-approved marriage mart of the church function, would soon be replaced - for many of the young, at any rate - by the frenetic Charleston at dance parties held far from home. Thus, progress, ushering in the new automobile age of the nineteen-twenties, would not deal kindly with the hinterland churches.

NOTES: Pages 65-77

VI: THE CHANGING SOCIETY

1 Erik Olssen & Marcia Stenson, A Century Of Change: New Zealand 1800-1900, Auckland, 1989, p.254.

2 Illustrated history, 'The Telephone', in New Zealand's Heritage, Vol 4 Part 48, Wellington, 1972, p.1330. The Yoeman of 17 February 1900 also reports completion of the Pipiriki-Raetihi telephone line.

3 Ida Thompson, 'Birth, boom and death of Mangatiti Valley is recalled', Wanganui Chronicle, 16 January 1982, p.7.

4 W. Stevenson, 'Memories of Pukekaha School', in Oroutaha School 75th Jubileee, Commemorative booklet, Raetihi, 1983, p.14.

5 The great fire was widely reported. See Wanganui Herald, March 19-22 1918; also, George, Ohakune, pp.287-289.

6 R.E. Wright St-Clair, Caring For People: A history of the Wanganui Hospital Board 1885-1985, Wanganui, 1987, p.34.

7 George, pp.300-301.

8 Wright St-Clair, p.70.

9 Allen, In The Hills, pp.215-6.

10 Dorothy Voelkerling, 'A long way up the River', in Weekly News, 14 September 1963.

11 Valerie Cowan, Pigs And Me: Tales of the Bygone Bush, Cape Catley, 1997, pp.20-23.

12 H.G Philpott, A History of the New Zealand Dairy Industry 1840-1935, Wellington, 1937, p.375.

13 Philpott, p.52.

14 Philpott, p.376.

15 The significance of the socialising while farmers waited in line to have their milk separated, has been noted as an important daily ritual by James Watson on p.117 of Study Guide Two in the Massey University course, 48.108, "New Zealand Rural History: an Introduction", Massey University, Palmerston North, 1991.

16 From personal discussion with Hylton Farr of Turakina Beach, November 1997.

17 Colin McGeorge, 'School Attendance and Child Labour 1890-1914', in Historical News, No 40, May 1983. McGeorge quotes a Wanganui district report of children as young as six rising at 4 a.m. to milk cows, (p.18). See also Jeanine Graham, 'Child Employment In New Zealand', in New Zealand Journal of History, Vol 21, No 1, 1987.

Notes: Pages 65 to 77 Contd.

18 Denis Robertson, Give me TAIHAPE, p.79. Robertson quotes from The War Cry of 4 April 1905, describing the 'afternoon attack' on a railway workers' camp at Taihape, where, '...we opened fire by playing our cornets on a hill overlooking the camp.' Also quoted, the November 1905 War Cry describes 'a casual visit' to the Mataroa tunnel works as netting six pounds. The 'Sallies' were obviously well tolerated.

19 Fr Celestin Cognet, transcript of letter held in Whanganui Regional Museum, Wanganui. Original in Marist Archives, Wellington. Translated 1990 by J.P. McCann, S.M.

20 Ivy Cresswell, 'Canoe On The River', the life story of Brigadier Ernest Holdaway, in The War Cry, 15 May 1971, p.5.

21 Rex H. Voelkerling, Race Relations in the Waimarino 1880-1911, M.A. Thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North, 1970.

22 M.D. Clark, The Roman Response To The Protestant Mission: (Bishop Cleary and Bible-in-schools in the 1920's), M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1984. p.3.

23 Editorial, Yeoman, 5 June 1897.

24 George's Ohakune (pp.307-8) relates numerous stories of sly-grogging and home brewing. One tale as reported in the Waimarino County Call of 3 April 1908, describes hop beer as being analysed at 19 percent above the maximum allowable alcohol content!

25 Yeoman, 6 March 1897, p.12.

26 Yeoman, 22 February 1896, p.13.

27 Howard Robinson, A History of the Post Office in New Zealand, Government Printer, Wellington 1964, pp.168-70.

28 Hugh McLeod, Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain, London, 1984, p.34.

29 McLeod, p.36.

30 Rangitikei Advocate, 5 October 1876.

31 Advocate, 6 November 1876.

32 Advocate, 8 July 1880.

33 Howard Robinson, A History of the Post Office in New Zealand, Wellington 1964, pp.168-70.

34 Ross Ewing & Ross McPherson, The History Of New Zealand Aviation, Auckland 1986, p.58. This was Taniwha-Matarewha Sutherland, who trained in Christchurch and served with the Royal Flying Corps. He was still flying in the 1940's with the Ruapehu Aero Club.

35 Galpin, Tutaenui, p.17, describes and illustrates the shifting in 1936 of the Jefferson's Line Methoist Church (1871), near Marton. It became a farm sleep-out and games room.

VII: THE SETTLED LAND

As noted in the previous chapter, the Wanganui hinterland after the mid-1880's rapidly gained a string of villages along the Main Trunk railway. Rollo Arnold has declared New Zealand's origins to be 'village', with the village outlook '...sustained and reinforced by the country's geography.'[1] Arnold further claims that in New Zealand, the typical colonial village '...was invigorated by the mixing of blood, ideas and customs drawn from all parts of Britain.[2] This is certainly supported by the lists of settlers' origins and trades as set out in the Appendices.[3] But often, up to half the villagers were New Zealand-born, or immigrants from other British colonies.

With the exception of the Waitotara settlers, little has been discovered about the origins of the hundreds of farming settlers in the hinterland. Unlike Rollo Arnold's well-documented immigrant flow into Taranaki, Wairarapa and Hawkes Bay in the decade of the 'seventies, the Wanganui back-blocks settlers have bequeathed us sparse information. Farm settlement selection lists, rural rating lists and postal directories, tell us of the (generally) masculine 'who' of the hinterland; but away from the villages, it is not easy to discover the 'what' of these people regarding their religious thought. Election returns provide some indications of their political thought, as do letters to newspaper editors; one is, however, inevitably turned back to the salient facts of isolation, secular education and scattered settlement. These facts seemed to make the highland yeomen families religiously different, or perhaps even indifferent, when compared to the Arden villagers or the conservative inhabitants of the Feldon lowlands.

Nevertheless, none of this neccessarily predicates

atheism or even agnosticism in the hinterland. One writer comments that, '...in a community rooted in land, much of the spirituality most obviously withheld from the religious focus...stems from a sense of wonder in the scale and power of nature.[4] The Arden settler, straightening his back from the post-hole he was digging, must surely have pondered the allusive statement in the colossal presence of Ruapehu, towering over the Waimarino plateau. Perhaps, from the whispered message of the deep gorges, or from the overpowering image of jagged and bush-clad ridges marching into distance before his gaze, he would have been reminded of the sheer immensity of his task, and the briefness of his human existence wherein to accomplish it; for certainly, isolation is most conducive to contemplation.[5]

So, perhaps religion along the bush tracks turned inward. The infrequency of religious contact, the priorities of what was initially subsistence farming, and a secular education system (where it was available), would have relegated religion to the kitchen table and the educational care of farm women. Priorities were land, income and children's education. The 'Bible in the baggage'[6] had now become simply the remaining religious vestige of the hierarchical and patriarchal rural societies that many had left behind in Victorian Britain. Egalitarianism and freedom of choice were the philosophies of the farmers of this raw land. Formal religion was not an imperative.

In the fast-developing villages of the Main Trunk and Waimarino, however, the decade of 1908-1918 was one of steady religious expansion and progress. The quarterly meeting of the Waimarino Methodist Circuit of 23 January 1908, for instance, heard that Sabbath schools in Raetihi and Ohakune were 'in healthy condition', with work among the young considered to be 'encouraging'. Also discussed at the same meeting was, 'the possible appointment of a

"saddle-bag missionary"...to include in his work the spiritual oversight of the Maori residents of Waimarino'.[7] In November the same year, the Rev Father O'Connell S.M. of the Roman Catholic Church, who had been conducting missions in the various towns and districts along the Main Trunk Line, was reported as conducting a successful meeting in 'St Pat's Church' [sic], in Raetihi. This was to be followed by a three-day mission in the Town Hall, Ohakune.[8] The following year the Salvation Army was reported to have moved into Ohakune, 'for the more efficient working of the Waimarino District.'[9]

By mid-1910, Anglican Sunday services were being conducted morning and evening in Raetihi; at Ohakune in the evening; at Orautoha at 10.30 a.m.; at Valley Road at 2.30 p.m. and Horopito at 4 p.m.[10] The Orautoha service, which was probably held in the public hall, was the only service held off the Waimarino plateau. Access in 1910 would have been marginal in winter, and like Horopito, Orautoha was never to have its own church.

Active though the churches may have been, it seems that there were still some outside the ambit of their social assistance. The minute book of the Waimarino County Council in 1910, indicates that councils were still being regarded as sources of charitable aid. On 9 July that year, one G.C. Davis of Rangataua, wrote to the Council asking for aid because of his inability to obtain work.[11] We do not know if Davis' plea met with success. We do know however, the Council's response to a Salvation Army request for use of the Council Chambers for meetings. The request was 'not entertained'.[12] As seen earlier from the Rangitikei County Council Minutes, the councils would go only so far in meeting requests for money or facilities for what they probably regarded as the rightful business of the churches.

Although some people applied to councils for support,

the old maxim that 'God helps those who help themselves', was practically applied in many ways. The building of the Baptist church in Ohakune provided an excellent example of such self help. A party of men of the Baptist Bible Class Union from Petone, Dunedin, Wellington, Feilding and Hamilton, gathered in Ohakune in late December 1909, intent on building a church. Mostly amateurs, with a leavening of tradesmen, the enthusiasts completed their task in just two weeks. The Wesleyan Church was also made available during this time to hold a concert.[13] The Baptist future looked promising.

The resident Baptist minister, Rev. G. Thornton, covered a 60-kilometre radius from Horopito to Tangiwai by horseback, holding services generally at bush mill stations. Yet the church returns for 1910 showed a mere 18 members and 97 Sunday scholars, with a high-point of 28 adherents in 1915. By 1917 there was no longer a Baptist minister in Ohakune, and the church was not listed in the year book. The church building was later used as a Methodist church.[14]

The Baptist story perhaps illustrates something other than self help. It underlines Arnold's theory that mixed Scottish, Irish and English 'nationalism', by stimulating division between Anglicanism and Nonconformity in religion, encouraged the typical mixed country community to have four or more churches, making the countryside, 'an area for denominational competition'.[15] In the case of the Ohakune Baptist church, however, the rivalry could not be sustained. Their comparatively large number of Sabbath school members did not translate into an increasing church membership over time. The numbers probably relate more to the size of the Edwardian family and its social mobility, than to religious trends. Although the Baptists returned to Raetihi at a later date, they were never again able to build a church, and used instead the Salvation Army Hall.

ABOVE: Over the Christmas holiday period of 1909-10, eleven young men of the Baptist Bible Class Union from Dunedin, Petone, Feilding, Hamilton and Auckland, gave up their holidays to help erect a Baptist Church in Ohakune. This photograph shows the group on the first or second day. Alexander Turnbull Library. 96463 1/2

BELOW: The same church in 1998. Although Baptist membership reached a high point in 1913 of 28 members and 85 Sunday scholars, a second minister left by 1915 and was not replaced. The church was later used by Methodists. The first public meeting in the church was in support of the anti-liquor "No License" stand. Today, as the photo shows, the old church serves as a wine shop and restaurant! Photo, B.T. Attwell

The Baptist failure stands in sad contrast with Presbyterian success in Ohakune. In 1917, Presbyterians claimed a membership of 75, with an average of 43 at the Quarterly Communion. A Young Women's Bible Group met weekly with 18 members, while the Boy's Club also had 18 members. The Ohakune Sunday School had a roll of 29, with three teachers. A contract had been let for the building of a church.[16]

The relatively strong position of the Presbyterians Church in Ohakune, as one of the "big three" along with the Anglican and Catholic churches, could be attributed to excellent earlier foundation work. A parish was set up in Raetihi in 1906, and a church built there in 1908. A student minister, Mr Lennox, was appointed to work the railway construction camps.[17] Although this appointee moved on with the completion of the Main Trunk in November 1908, his two-year ministry on the railway must have later proven of great value to the Church. Ohakune was first and foremost a railway town, with numerous town and country settlers who were either currently employed by the Railways, or who had in the past been employed by, or contracted to, the Department. It is possible that their exposure to Presbyterian evangelism bore fruit in the consolidation period, when the hitherto mobile society set down permanent roots. This ensured that when their church was finally opened in 1917, Ohakune Presbyterians could count on a steady congregation, and one no doubt stiffened by a good leavening of Scottish nationalist conviction.

By 1916, the long chain of Main Trunk townships was well provided with churches, schools, Sunday schools, lodges and friendly societies. In Hunterville, for instance, the Anglican Ladies' Guild in 1912 operated branches at Mangaonoho, Pukiore, Rata and Silverhope.[18] Their diligence was probably of vital importance in fund-raising for the Church. That year, the Vicarage debt stood at 250 pounds,

some twenty-four years after the Anglicans had been first to build a church in Hunterville![19] Two years later, a group of ladies formed the Whare Koa Ladies Club. The name means "Place of Rest", and the Club's premises in a tearoom included a limited amount of accommodation for women and children unable to get home when slips blocked roads. The Club's rules stated that only members living fifteen or more miles from the Post Office could use the Club's facilities.[20] This was an excellent example of the self-help initiatives by frontier women.

A different kind of frontier woman was the ubiquitous Sister of St Joseph. Housed in convent houses in Mangaweka, Taihape and Ohakune, the Sisters drew in Catholic children to their convent schools. Railways and improving roads enabled children to travel daily to the schools - from Raetihi to Ohakune, for instance. And there were occasions when Protestant children received their education from the Sisters; as in the early 1920's when the State Public School at Mangaweka was damaged by fire, so that the Sisters of the Convent School, (opened 1918), found themselves with a school roll topping one hundred.[21] It seems that the State gave childhood education a high enough priority to risk any religious contagion of its secular system.

In the flush of the post war years of the early 1920's, additional soldiers' land settlements were begun in the Mangapurua and Mangatiti valleys north-west of Raetihi, and in the Te Tuhi and Paparangi watershed areas between the Whanganui River and the Waitotara headwaters. The critical handicaps of economic depression and inadequate roading in such broken and heavily-bushed back-country areas, ensured the collapse of the new settlements by 1940.[22] But for many earlier settlers of the hinterland, the 'miracle' of the bulldozer and dump truck was bringing all-weather roading to their front gates, even as the nation braced itself for another war.

Another generation of rural and village youth was also on hand to take the Oath of Allegiance. Whatever the shortcomings in their religious education, many back-blocks children had at least received primary education up to the Proficiency Certificate level. This was the legacy of a dedicated and generally underpaid army of back-blocks teachers, and the Correspondence School with its radio service to isolated schools and pupils. And when some of the earlier settlers gave up their years of struggle and moved 'out' with their families, the survivors enlarged their holdings. Most turned again to sheep and cattle farming. Their sons and daughters, being no longer required to assist in milking sheds, were increasingly able to go on to secondary education, either at boarding schools, or by school buses or trains to the District High Schools, opened in Taihape in 1909 and Ohakune in 1921.

An inevitable result of improved high country roading was the gradual decline in numbers of both clergy and school teachers. The motor car enabled a minister to cover a wider area, while the numbers of back blocks schools declined markedly, owing mainly to the increased use of modern motor transport.[23] There was also a growing reluctance by clergy to take up rural appointments.

At Darfield in 1984, an inter-church discussion was held between Australian and New Zealand churches on the subject of rural ministry. A commentary on the conference raised points about church attitudes which apply as well to the 1920's as to modern times. One critic declared that over the years the European church, 'shipped out with the pioneers', has displayed little positive awareness of the 'socio-economic shape of rural community.'[24] A further criticism warned against considering rural communities narrowly from a perspective of '...European cultural involvement in land in general and ownership of land in particular.' Furthermore, churches would have to consider,

'...those dislocated from their own ethnic cultures and unable to find a foundation for self esteem in rural community dominated by "white middle-class" assumptions.'[25] The comment seems pertinent when considering hinterland religious notions in the period, 1910-1935.

Lineham has shown from the 1921 census, that unusually high numbers of Brethren religionists were engaged in shopkeeping, banking, and various commercial activities. There were few in labouring and unskilled trades, but above average numbers were engaged in farming and were employers of labour. Only Lutherans and those declining to declare a religion were more numerous among the self-employed.[26] And although Brethren numbers were never high in the Arden, their earnestly-preached message was compatible with that propounded by other non-conformist religionists, such as Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians. Their simple social dictum of hard work, honesty, integrity and trust in God, when put into practice, led often to upward social mobility in a land of opportunity.

The strong entrepreneurial character of the traders of the hinterland village High Street, may have translated into upward mobility, exclusiveness, and sodality in clubs and clanship; it failed however, to produce exclusive church schools like the Rangitikei-Wanganui Feldon. In 1920, there were four church schools in Marton and one in Turakina.[27] There were numerous exclusive church schools in Wanganui, of which Wanganui Collegiate secondary school for boys was already highly renowned. But, apart from the Anglican St Margaret's Parish school opened in 1919 in Taihape, church education in the hinterland was left to the three Catholic convent schools in Mangaweka, Taihape and Ohakune.

Distance and terrain were undoubtedly major factors in the assessment of pupil numbers for projected Protestant schools. But the persistent hope that some day the State

might be persuaded to restore the Bible to primary education must have loomed large in the vision of the planners. In the event, a reluctance by parishioners to pay fees, coupled with a general satisfaction with the state school system, were probably considerations that ensured the failure of St Margaret's school in Taihape after barely ten years. It closed in 1929, to reopen as a Sunday school in 1930.[28]

Maori, along the lower reaches of the Whanganui River, were adequately served by churches at Pipiriki, Koroniti, Jerusalem and Ranana. Outside Wanganui there were numerous other functioning 'Maori' churches; at Wheriko in the lower Rangitikei; at Kauangaroa near Fordell; at Para Para on Field's track, as well as in Ohakune and Raetihi. Government also subsidised churches to run Maori schools.[29] These older, established churches, were frequently of missionary origin. Churches in the archipelago of villages curving up the eastern flank of the Wanganui hinterland, were, however, quite European in character. So, while a handful of Europeans attended services in Maori churches, Maori attendance at European churches was hardly higher. Cultural diffidence certainly played a part.

The Catholic church appears to have fared best in holding Maori adult allegience.[30] The part played by convent schools in Maori education was probably significant in this case. Nevertheless, although Maori-Pakeha relations in the hinterland seemed good, there was an 'apartness' in religious matters, further encouraged by the development of Maori religions such as Ringatu and Ratana, the latter making deep inroads into the Maori Anglican and Methodist churches in particular.[31]

The earliest Chinese pioneers in the hinterland fared rather badly from creedism and racism.[32] The xenophobia that was fanned by politicians such as Richard John Seddon, ensured suspicion and marginalisation of the industrious

Chinese. Their honesty and lack of pretension, and their closeness to the soil (many began as market gardeners on the roughest areas of ground), eventually won the respect of the egalitarian settlers. But although over the years they merged well into hinterland society, with some marrying Maori women, the Chinese did not easily convert to Christianity. Their beautifully-kept family groups of graves in their own section of the Lakes Road cemetery near Ohakune, are indicative both of their acceptance into European society, yet conversely, their eternal ethnic separateness.

While the years between 1910 and 1920 were years of consolidation for the competing churches in the hinterland, society itself did not remain static. The erstwhile yoeman farmer became over time the representative of a new middle class as his political and financial power grew. The Arden townships - reduced by 1930 to only five worthy of the title,[33] were themselves miniatures of Wanganui or Marton, with picture theatres, medical services, sports grounds and a host of associations and clubs. Sundays still cast a somnolent pall over the towns, but those who sought other amusements would scarcely have felt guilty about being absent from church. Sabbatarianism, along with Prohibition, was fast losing ground.

For those who felt the need for formal religion, the small townships provided adequate church associations and facilities. In the 1930's the new 'wireless' also brought church and Sunday school services to the back country. But their influence seems to have been superficial. When Rev Hutson opened the new Presbyterian church at Mangamahu in 1909, he declared that it would remind passers-by that they were in a 'Christian country.' Applied to the Wanganui hinterland with its yeoman settlers, the term is subjective, and certainly debatable. Nominally Christians they certainly were; but the extent of their religiosity remains elusive.

NOTES: Pages 80-89

VII: THE SETTLED LAND

1 Rollo Arnold, 'The Village And the Globe: Aspects of the Social Origins of Schooling in Victorian New Zealand.' Australia and New Zealand History of Education Society Journal, Spring 1976, p.2.

2 Arnold (1976), p.3.

3 Appendix 1 (Ngamatapouri) and Appendix 2, (Main Trunk villages).

4 Fred Waine,'The Rural Church Perplexed: Reflections Following an Australian-New Zealand Consultation On Rural Ministry, Darfield, New Zealand, October 1948,' Edited Boyd Wilson and Fred Waine, Studies In Rural Change No. 12, Rural Ministry Unit, Canterbury, 1985, p.10.

5 The writer, having worked in the Ruatiti back country, can attest to the almost hypnotic effects from the whisper of distant water amid the silent bush hills. The dreamy reverie so induced can be a spiritual experience, where one's solitude breathes unity with nature.

6 Peter J. Lineham, 'A Bible In The Baggage', in Comment Vol 13, pp.23-27, June 1981.

7 Waimarino County Call, 24 January 1908.

8 W.C.C., 6 November 1908.

9 W.C.C., 15 June 1910.

10 W.C.C., 8 June 1910.

11 Waimarino County Council Minutes, 9 July 1910. Letter from G.C. Davis.

12 Waimarino County Council Minutes, 10 September 1910.

13 George, Opening, pp.328-9.

14 George, pp.328-9.

15 R.D Arnold, The Opening of the Great Bush - 1869-1881: A Social History of the Bush Settlements of Taranaki, Hawkes Bay and Wellington, Ph.D. Thesis, Victoria University, Wellington 1971, pp.194-5.

16 Ohakune Times, 11 August 1917.

17 George, p.328-9.

18 D.M. Laing, Hunterville, p.40.

19 D.M. Laing, p.34. To be fair to the Anglican Church in Hunterville, it had replaced a church (1907), and built a vicarage in its twenty-four years. Laing, p.7.

NOTES: Pages 80-89 Contd.

20 D.M. Laing, pp.48-49.

21 Dorrian, p.73.

22 Arthur P. Bates, The Bridge To Nowhere: The ill-Fated Mangaparua Settlement, (3rd edition), Wanganui, 1983. Bates gives an excellent, well-illustrated account of this ill-conceived government soldiers' settlement scheme.

23 In 1921 there were 1,448 one-teacher schools in New Zealand. By 1962 the number was 451. The school bus played a major part in the reduction. An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, Vol 1, A.H. McLintock (ed), Wellington 1966, p.540.

24 Wilson & Waine, pp.2-3.

25 Wilson & Waine, p.10.

26 Lineham, 1977, pp.160-61.

27 Paul Melody, They Called It Marton; The Life and Times of Marton, 1866-1979, Palmerston North 1979, pp.137-143.

28 Duncan Green & John McCaul, St Margaret's Anglican Church TAIHAPE: 75 Years 1902-1977, Taihape 1977, pp.87-8.

29 Ian Breward, Godless Schools? a study of Protestant reaction to secular education in New Zealand, Christchurch 1967, p.61.

30 George, pp.311-322. George writes at length on the development of Catholicism in Ohakune, and devotes several pages, (316-19) to a Maori form of the Katorika (Catholic) religion that developed with its own chapel at Maungarongo, near Ohakune, inspired by a visit by Hori Mareikura to a prophetess at Parewanui near the mouth of the Rangitikei about 1918. It is interesting that this prophetess, Mere Rikiriki, the holder of maramatanga, (light), gave this light to Wiremu Ratana as well as Mareikura. Both took it back to their own peoples.

31 George, pp.324-326. Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana had a Methodist and Anglican background. The Maori Methodist church in Raetihi was opened in 1912 by the prohetess, Mere Rikiriki. This remarkable woman was also an aunt of Ratana, and an inspiration to him. The Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist divisions of Maoridom had always been somewhat blurred, and many Waimarino Maori joined the Ratana church. In 1928 it was decided to give the Raetihi Methodist church to the Ratana movement.

32 Premier Seddon was well-known for his dislike of 'Asiatics', and was active in bringing down legislation to restrict their entry. The Chinese who came initially to the gold fields were single men. The law forbade their bringing in wives. Any natural interest in women as prospective partners no doubt fuelled moralist and racist opinion which decried their 'sexual depravity'.

33 These were: Hunterville, Mangaweka, Taihape, Ohakune and Raetihi. Others such as Rata, Utiku, Mataroa, Rangataua and Horopito, had begun their steady decline into today's decaying relics of failed futures. Mangaweka has since joined them. In 1997 the Presbyterian church there was closed. Worshippers now share the Catholic Church.

SUMMARY

The mission of the Christian churches seeking to take their religion to the settlers and railway builders in the rugged Wanganui hinterland in the 1880's, was to be no sinecure. In 1881, census figures for the whole Colony revealed a mere 24.0 percent of Europeans attending church. This would rise to 28.4 in 1886,[1] but such figures, while presenting a challenge to the churches, were, for the time being, quite academic. For the hinterland churches, great difficulties often arose in even getting to their people.

The inability of the churches to maintain close contact with back-blocks settlers resulted from a combination of factors. All the churches suffered from a lack of funds for their work. Difficulties in the recruitment, housing and paying of clergy were only partly relieved by the wide adoption of lay preaching. The very penurious nature of early rural settlement meant difficulty in raising funds for church-building. Initially, Protestant churches often shared their buildings with other, non-Catholic faiths. Yet, conversely, sectarian competition ensured that the smallest of villages eventually had two, three or more churches serving a population of only a few hundred. Such competition was costly, and in the long run, damaging.[2]

Because of the terrible, muddy and primitive roading, attendance fell in direct relation to the distance from a church. The fact that many European-born settlers had seemingly inherited dissenting and non-conformist ideas abroad in Britain in the nineteenth century, did not help recruitment.[3] In the villages the domesticity and fellowship of dissenting chapel community life could be replicated by British immigrants; but along the back roads, population was too scattered to renew associations. Dissenting convictions could also have meant that religious practice would eventually be modified to accommodate new priorities of farming and land-ownership.

Whatever their antecedents, the relationship of the Arden settlers with their churches was somewhat modified by Government policies. The purchase and settlement of the Wanganui hinterland was primarily a Government-initiated and directed act of political expedience. Completion of the railway through the central highland was of vital importance in both military and economic senses. Government direction of the lives of the settlers was, accordingly, quite pervasive. The Government bought the land from the Maori, offered it for tender, and extended easy purchase terms to would-be settlers. It also imposed new educational laws and strict burial codes upon churches and population.

The major handicap for the churches was their exclusion from the education of the young by the 1877 Education Act. Only the Roman Catholic Church grasped the financial nettle and set out to build and staff schools in the region. The poor leadership of the Anglican hierarchy over both primary education and Sunday schools, was not helped by the on-going political contention of a Bible-in-Schools campaign that diverted much effort and finance. The Nonconformist churches adjusted to the reality of secular education, pressing ahead with their evangelism and church-building in the developing townships. Although this often meant privation and poverty for the early evangelists, they were aided by the waves of revivalism which periodically swept the Central-Western area of the North Island. But while there was encouraging success in the townships, the back-blocks story was less heartening. Unlike the lowland Feldon, the hinterland Arden greatly hampered religious encounter.

Although many yeoman farmers along the winding bush tracks may have been of promising religious identity, they were often beyond the reach of their churches because of the problems of access. Village clergy, apart from their daily religious duties, were frequently committed to rounds of fund-raising and other social tasks. They also conducted

regular services at nearby railway construction camps, bush mills, and population sites along the railway. There was little time for visits to their back-blocks parishioners on more than a few occasions each year. They certainly were seldom able to take advantage of the "Nelson" system to visit the many single-teacher schools along the lonely roads. Childhood religious education depended mostly on inculcation within the individual families, often on the initiative of the farm women; that, at any rate, is the historical view.[4] Little supportive evidence of such teaching was to be found. And although personal example sometimes encouraged much emulative enthusiasm as was motivated by the Annabells in Ngamatapouri, or the Berrys and Scarrows in Raetihi, the population sparseness and spread precluded the valuable religious osmosis that came about from regular meetings - as in the daily dairy factory assemblies or the social interaction of village life. Thus, hinterland religion mostly adhered to the string of Main Trunk villages. Eventually, these became over-supplied with churches after the railway builders moved on.

Little has been discovered to substantiate claims that the pioneers were especially God-fearing people. The prohibitionist prescripts of the evangelical Protestant churches probably created more diffidence than devotion. King Country temperance was more a political imposition than a religious edict. Home brewing, 'Grog trains' and grog shops all proclaimed a mockery of Temperance ideology. The whole attitude might be summed up in a reported call from a railway station to a draper; "Sir there is a consignment of drapery for you, and it is leaking.!"[5]

The years 1913-1925 were, for the hinterland, years of war and of growing prosperity. They were also the years of the Ulster Presbyterian Premier, William Massey. A small farmer himself, Massey was the champion of the yeomen and a conservative with whom they felt safe. A hater of the

'landlordism' of his own Irish birthplace, Massey perhaps epitomised the ultimate in political dissent from the old establishment world of land and church. The hinterland pioneers had embraced the one, and marginalised the other.

Hardship and struggle were inescapable realities of life in the high Wanganui hinterland. Success came from adaptation and ingenuity - especially on the part of the back-blocks women. There are unfortunately, few contemporary reports of frontier life from a woman's viewpoint, that approach the quality of Doris Walker's perceptive and compassionate autobiography of pioneering life on the Parapara Road after 1913.[5]

The third-generation survivors mentioned earlier have indicated, to the writer that their families managed without formal religion, just as they managed and improvised in many other areas. Given the opportunities, they were happy enough to participate in religious services and rites-of-passage. But away from the villages and easier country, religion became marginalised by the quagmire mud of the bush tracks.

If, as Vine Deloria claims,[6] land determines the shape of religion, then the Wanganui hinterland modified religious practice even beyond the mix of establishment and dissent that had shaped the railway villages. While the villages became 'civilised', back-blocks nature was still not under control. Sundays suitable for bush-felling, burning-off or shearing, relegated religion to the family Bible and rites-of-passage events. The yeoman farmers' struggle was with the land, not with conscience. Theirs was a religion of escape, one without squire or priest or moral suasion. If the land resulted in their being 'church-forsaken' they could yet delight in new grass, spring lambs, or turn to the mountain to feel they were not entirely 'God-forsaken'. Therein lies the captivity of the Wanganui hinterland.

NOTES: Pages 92-95

SUMMARY

1 Reconstructed figures as given in Allan K. Davidson and Peter Lineham, Transplanted Christianity, Palmerston North, 1987. p.183. Figures from Department of Statistics, Census of Population and Dwellings for listed years.

2 Figures from the 1906 Census show Waimarino County as having 1218 Anglicans, 663 Roman Catholics, and 367 Presbyterians. Methodists were 175 of all kinds, but Baptists were a mere 27, while Lutherans numbered 28. Yet, three years later, with only one more member, the Baptists built a church in Ohakune! Figures from Department of Statistics, April 1906, Religions: Summary By Counties, Table VII, pp.110-11. The Methodists built churches in Ohakune (1897), Raetihi (1899), and a minister's house in Ohakune. The Waimarino Methodist Circuit was in debt by 1910. Later it took over the failed Baptist church. Methodist and Baptist information from Merrilyn George, Ohakune: Opening To A New World, Wanganui, 1990. pp324-29

3 Rollo Arnold, The Farthest Promised Land (1980), and P.J. Lineham, 'A Bible in the Baggage', in Comment, Vol 13, June 1981, are two authors who provide much information on Nonconformist church tradition amongst nineteenth-century immigrants.

4 Jeanine Graham, 'Settler Society' in The Oxford History of New Zealand, p.127. Bernard Annabell, Ngamatapouri: An account of the early settlers of the Upper Waitotara Valley, Wanganui, 1984, p.30, provides a rare first-hand description of such teaching in the earliest settlement days. It must have happened, but its history is poorly documented.

5 George, Ohakune, p.365.

6 Wallace, Doris. The Generation Gap: Unimportant People And The Parapara, Ashford Kent, Tauranga, 1973.

7 Vine Deloria Jnr, God Is Red, New York, 1973. Deloria writes of the North American Indians' philosophy and its emphasis on sacred space.

APPENDIX 1

ORIGINS & PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF NGAMATAPOURI SETTLERS

NAME	OCCUPATION	BIRTHPLACE/ORIGIN	DATES
Allen L.G.	Plumber	Lower Hutt	1885-1953
Annabell J.R.	Surveyor	Hawke's Bay	1856-1924
Armstrong J.J.		Ireland	1858-1948
Braithwaite G.	Surveyor		1885-
Bretherton J.B.	Farmer	England (?)	1858-1923
Browne F.	Sawyer	Karori	1861-1944
Browne F.	Sawyer	Tahiti	1865
Cave N,,K.,& B.	Farmers	Co. Durham	1870-74-79
Chesswass J.	Carpenter	U.K.	1861-1916
Cowan W.J.	Farmer	Awakino (?)	1871-1959
Crawshaw J.J.	Surveyor	Aramoho (?)	1868-1955
Duffy C.A.	G/Silversmith	East London	1887-
Haddow J.G.	Sub-editor	Bristol	1866-1956
James C.J.	Lawyer	U.K. (Harrow?)	1869-
Jones A.	Butcher	Bendigo	1879-1955
Larsen J.	Farmer	Morrinsville	1894-1959
Leahy R.,P. & E.	Farmers	Taihape	
Leith A.	Farm Worker	Scotland	1869-1951
Liffiton E.F.	Farmer	Wanganui (?)	
McKnight W.G.		Ireland	1885-1965
Menefy C.	G/Silversmith	Hampshire	-1939
Ross F.M.	Hotelier	Wellington	1870-1968
Smith J.S.	Farmer		1834-1905
Thomas J.P.	Teamster		1890-1918
Van Asch W.		Manchester	1867-
Washington J.	Bushman	Kaikoura	1884-1850

NOTE: Virtually all the above settlers became farmers by occupation once settled in the Waitotara Valley. The list does not, of course, account for the past occupations of women-folk, most of whom were vitally important to hinterland religion, especially through their operation of Sunday schools. The list is primarily to illustrate the fact that, apart from a couple of sawyers and a farm worker, Ngamatapouri settlers would seem generally to have been those possessed of entrepreneurial skills that place them on a scale rather higher than even the steady and industrious farm labourers of the 1870's Vogel recruitment. About 40% were New Zealand born.

Source: Laraine Sole, The European Settlement of the Waitotara Valley, 1890-1900. Wanganui 1984.

APPENDIX 2

MAIN TRUNK VILLAGERS' OCCUPATIONS & ORIGINS 1897

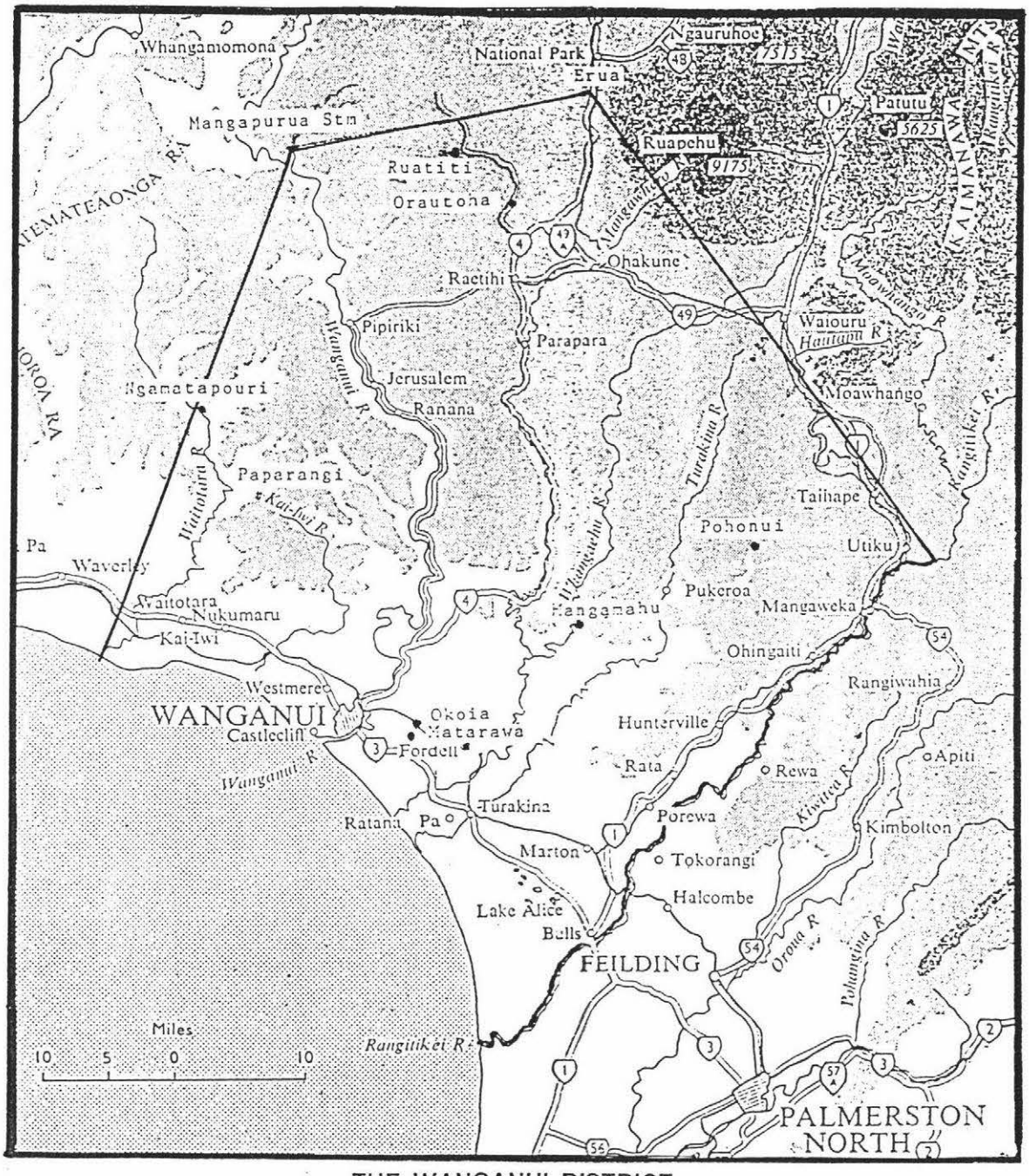
NAME	OCCUPATION	BIRTHPLACE	ARRIVAL NZ
RATA			
Cuff J.	Solicitor	London	1853
Hammond J.	Farmer	Rangitikei 1857	
Potaka U.	Farmer	Rangitikei 1836	
Pybus J.B.	Storekeeper	London	1877
Rhodes C.H.	Farmer	Hawkes Bay	
SILVERHOPE			
McLean A.	Farmer	Scotland	1864
Roach P.H.	Teacher	Rangitikei	
HUNTERVILLE			
Ashcroft A.E.	Surveyor	New South Wales	
Bowick W.H.	Bootmaker	New Zealand	
Coltman R.W.	Tinsmith	England	1887
Crozier A.A.	Policeman	Ireland	1868
Devenish Rev J.	Priest	New Plymouth	
Dudding C.	Baker	England	1858
Dudding W.C.	Stableman	New Zealand	
Insoll T.B.	Teacher	London	
Meldrum W.	Solicitor	New Zealand	
Mitchell J.	Hotelier	London	1856
Morris G.W.D.	Cabinet-maker	New Zealand	
OHINGAITI			
Brooks J.H.	Headmaster	Yorkshire 1853	
Connon T.	Cordial Mfr.	Aberdeen	Post-1864
Coyle J.	Police/hotelier	Auckland	
Crump W.	Builder	Lyttelton 1869	
Davenport H.	Physician	Derbyshire	Post-1885
Ellis W.	Farmer	Suffolk	1859
Floyd W.A.	Overseer	Wellington	1881
Ind-Carver R.W.	Chemist/farmer	Madras 1838	1853
Hammond W.	Farmer	Kaiwarra N.Z.	
Wells -	Baker/hotelier	Sussex	1874
MANGAWEKA			
Casselberg E.	Storekeeper	Bristol	1874
Gordon T.	Blacksmith	Ireland	?
Levy E.F.	Druggist	Brixton	1882
McCann P.J.	Coach/Stable	Ireland	1879
Munro T.	Storekeeper	Scotland	c 1870
Officer W.A.	Storekeeper	Belfast	1892
Tomkins E.W.	Teacher	Wellington	

APPENDIX 2 Contd.

NAME	OCCUPATION	BIRTHPLACE	ARRIVAL NZ
		OHAKUNE	
Bowater W.T.	Farmer	Worcester	1866
Manson G.S.	Storekeeper	Orkney	post-1853
		RAETIHI	
Brass P.	Farmer	Orkney	1866
Fletcher J.A.	Storekeeper	Collingwood NZ	
Garner T.	Manager	Wanganui	
Hird W.	Teacher	Nelson	
Leggins A.E.	Farmer	Dunedin	
Pike G.E.	Hotelier		
Scarrow C.D.	Farmer	Hutt NZ	
Smith P.G.	Farmer	London	1855
Soufflot A.L.	Roads Inspector	Paris	1874
Webberly J.A.H.	Tobacconist	England	c 1890
		PIPIRIKI	
Cowie H.T.	Postmaster	London	1880
Luxford M.L.	Manager	Wellington	
Manson G.	Farmer	London 1880	

NOTE: Above information taken fron Cyclopaedia Of New Zealand, Vol 1 1897, pp.1281-1300, and pp.1458-1463. Because the cyclopaedia was a business initiative, entrants paid for inclusion of their names and information. The lists, being obviously self-selective, cannot be regarded as an accurate cross-section of the population of the hinterland. There are no labourers on this list, and few on the list for Ngamatapouri. The lists do, however, give a fair indication of the wide geographical origins mainly within the British Isles and New Zealand. Given that a number of birthplaces are unknown, and the obviously high numbers of those unlisted, the proportion of the New Zealand-born among the hinterland settlers can only be guessed at as somewhere between thirty and forty percent. Taihape, Utiku and Karioi are omitted as being sparsely populated in 1897.

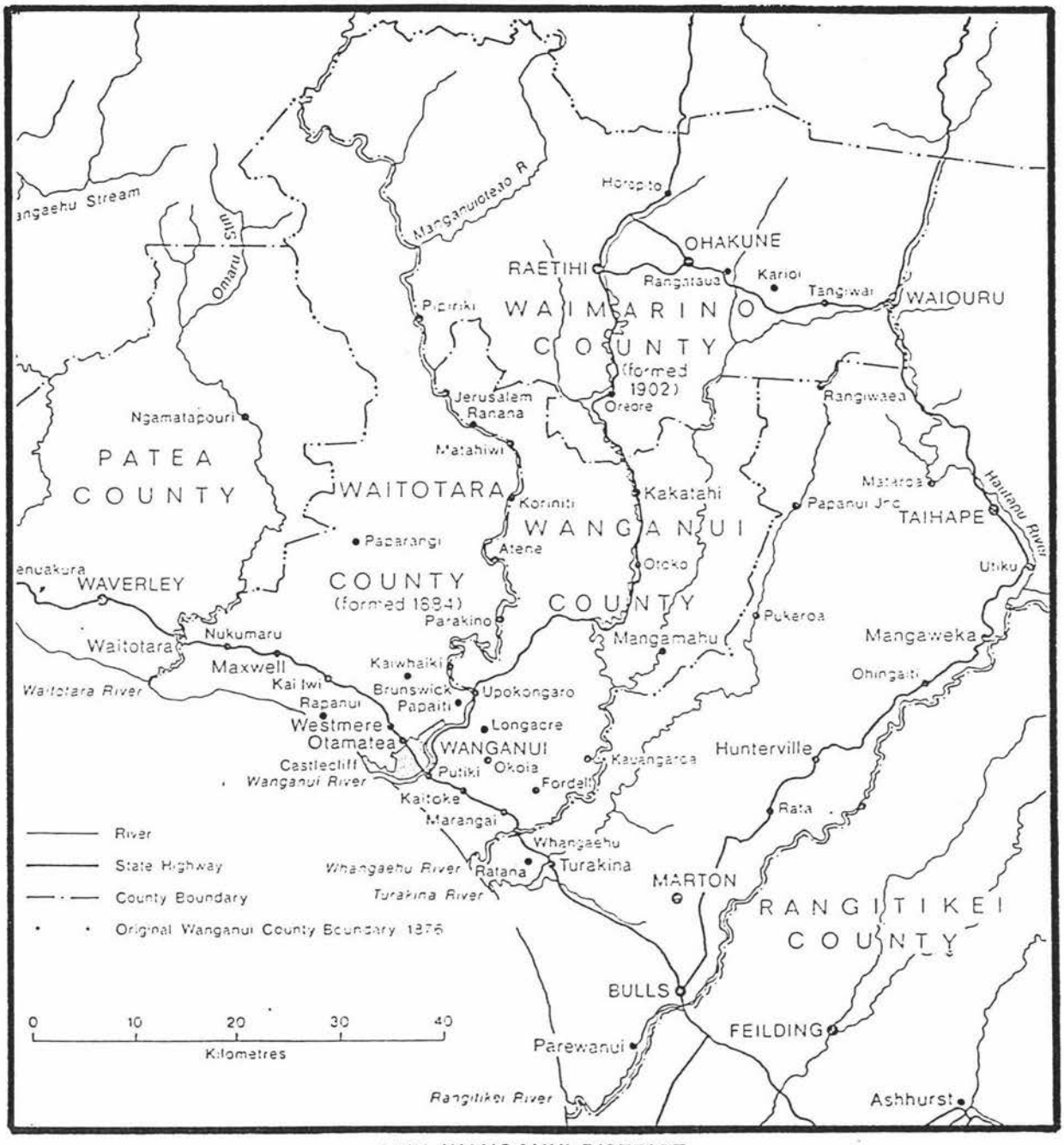
MAP 1



THE WANGANUI DISTRICT

Map showing boundaries of Wanganui District as defined for purposes of this thesis. Note that Rangitikei River forms the South-Eastern boundary. Map (modified) courtesy G.P. Print Ltd., Wellington.

MAP 2



THE WANGANUI DISTRICT

Map showing County boundaries in the Wanganui District. The Waimarino area was part of the Wanganui County until 1902, when growing dissatisfaction with the perceived neglect of the district by Wanganui, culminated in the Waimarino settlers forming their own county. Original map courtesy Rex Voelkerling.

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