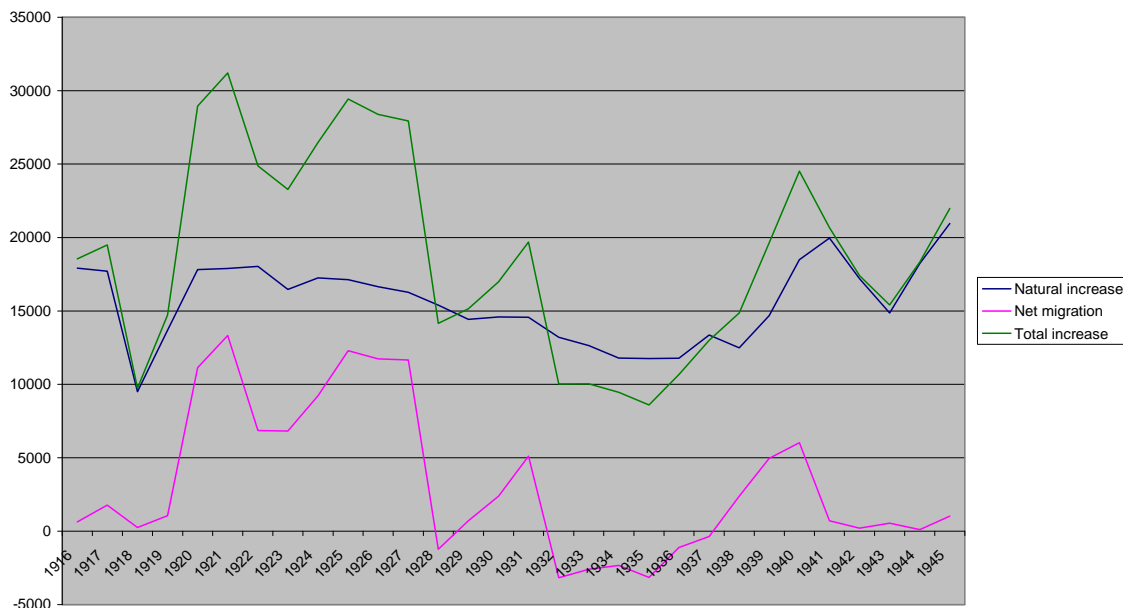


The interwar immigrants, 1916-1945

Context

The rising prosperity New Zealand enjoyed during and immediately after the Great War ended in a sharp recession in 1921-1922, the first of a number of economic fluctuations which culminated in the Depression of the 1930s. The Depression, in particular, saw a sharp fall in export prices and in New Zealand terms of trade, a fall of some 30 per cent in gross domestic product, and a decline in per capita incomes of between ten and 20 per cent.¹ The rate of growth of the non-Maori population fell from an average of 2.2 per cent per annum from 1916 to 1926 to 1.1 per cent, during the period 1926-1936, and then to 0.8 per cent in the years from 1936 to 1945. That decline reflected a fall in the number of births, a continuing contraction in completed family size, postponement of marriage and child-bearing with depression and then war, and fluctuations in net immigration. It also stimulated a great deal of debate about 'race suicide,' optimum population size, defence, the role of women, and the need for immigration.

Graph 1: Sources of increase of non-Maori population, 1916-45

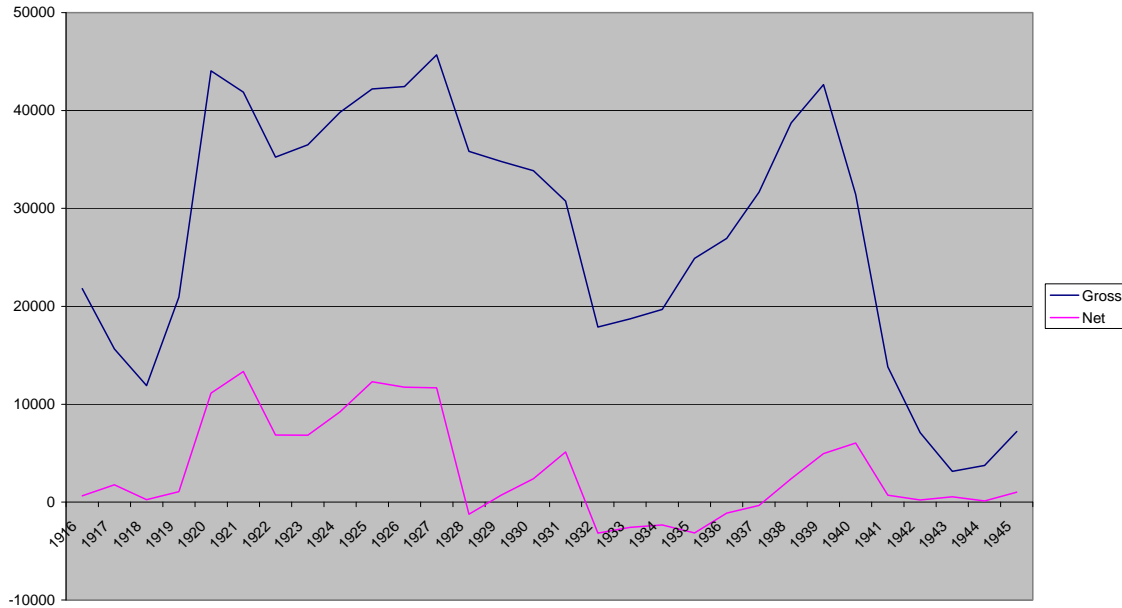


Graph 1 sets out, for the non-Maori population, the components of change and it is clear that natural increase accounted for most of the interwar growth of New Zealand's European population.

¹ G.R.Hawke, *The making of New Zealand: an economic history*. Cambridge, 1975, p.123.

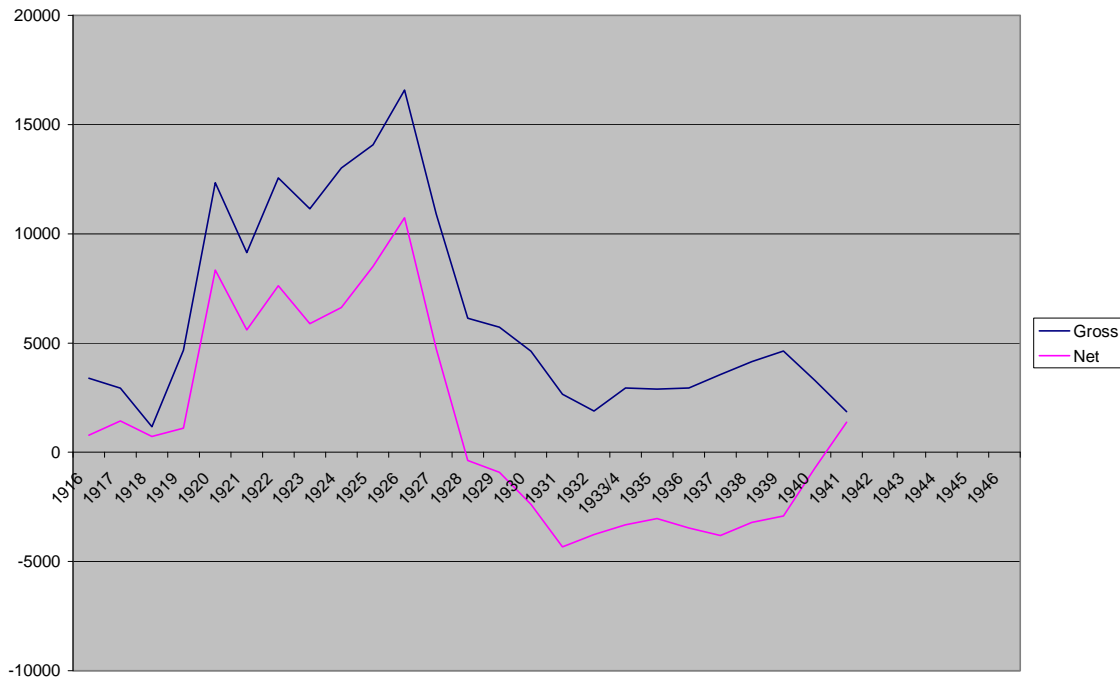
Immigration numbers

Graph 2: Immigration to New Zealand, 1916-45



Graph 2 suggests that immigration recovered rapidly in 1919, reaching a peak in 1926 before declining as the depression hit, and only recovering again towards the end of the thirties. The net figures emphasise even more strongly the contribution to New Zealand during the 1919-1926 period. Throughout these years both gross and net immigration from Australia were at low levels.

Graph 3: Immigration from the United Kingdom, 1916-46

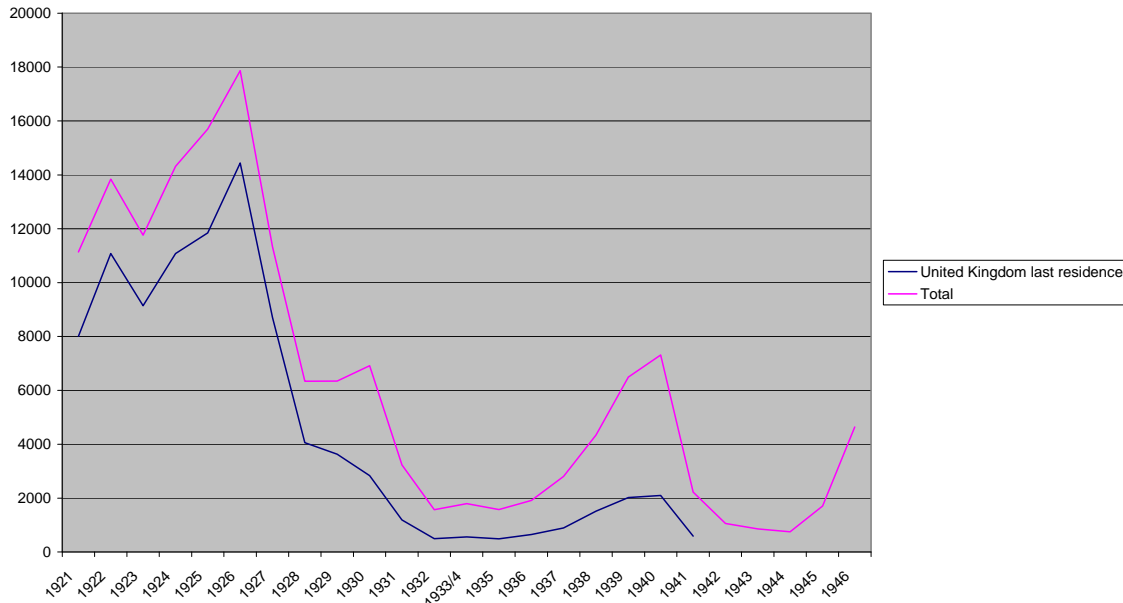


Graph 3 tells the story of immigration from the United Kingdom. Again this points up the importance for British and Northern Irish immigration of the early years of the 1920s until 1927. From that year until World War 2 there was actually a net loss to the United Kingdom.

From 1 April 1921, New Zealand adopted a new system of classifying arrivals and the analysis which follows thus focuses on the period 1921-1945.²

² It should be noted that in 1932 a change was made from a year ending on 31 December to a year ending on 31 March.

Graph 4: Immigrants intending permanent residence, 1921-46



Graph 4 sets out the total number of persons intending to reside permanently (that is, for more than one year) in New Zealand and for whom the United Kingdom was the last country of permanent residence.³ While those for whom the United Kingdom was the last country of permanent residence generally tracked the total number of arrivals intending to reside permanently in New Zealand, it is also apparent that they declined as a proportion of total arrivals intending permanent residence. In each of the years from 1921 to 1927 those from the United Kingdom made up over 70 per cent of total arrivals intending permanent residence, reaching a peak of 80.8 per cent in 1926. From 1928 the proportion declined rapidly, reaching just 31.1 per cent in the year ending 31 March 1935, before recovering to reach 43.3 per cent in the year ending 31 March 1946. From about the end of the 1920s, therefore, New Zealand drew an increasing proportion of those intending to reside permanently in the country from countries other than the United Kingdom.

The years of growth from Britain and Ireland were in considerable part a reflection of the revival of assisted immigration. During the whole period 1916-45 almost 74,000 assisted migrants, all from the United Kingdom, reached New Zealand. During the years of peak

³ Note that for the period 1921-1932 the data are for years ending on 31 December; the data for 1933 –1934 cover the 15 months from 1 January 1933 to 31 March 1934; thereafter the data are for years ending 31 March.

inflow, that is, 1919-1930, assisted arrivals, who numbered almost 72,000, made up 59.3 per cent of gross arrivals from the United Kingdom. Assisted arrivals fell to very low levels during World War 1, but accelerated sharply in 1919 and reached, after a slight check in 1923, a peak in 1926. Thereafter the number of assisted arrivals fell sharply as assistance was reduced and finally suspended for all but a few categories.

Sources:

In order to establish a profile of all arrivals born in Great Britain and Ireland, both assisted and self-paying, a random sample of 2 571 individuals was drawn from the registers of deaths, and that sample forms the basis of the discussion which follows. With respect to year of arrival, a comparison between, on the one hand, the official statistics for arrivals for whom the United Kingdom was the last country of permanent residence and who intended to reside permanently in New Zealand, and, on the other for the sample – that is, persons born in the United Kingdom and who remained in New Zealand - reveals a close correlation. In both series arrivals were concentrated into the period 1921-1926, numbers then declining and contracting sharply from 1928 to reach and remaining at low levels from 1932 onwards, with a modest recovery in the late 1930s and again in 1945 after low levels during the war years.

National Origins

Table 1: National composition of the immigrant inflow from the United Kingdom (including Ireland), 1840-1945 (percentages)

Born in	1840-1852	1853-1870	1871-1890	1891-1915	1916-1945
England	64.3	46.6	54.6	65.0	60.1
Wales	1.1	1.1	0.8	1.1	2.1
Scotland	20.6	30.2	21.5	22.2	28.7
Ireland	13.5	21.4	21.7	10.9	8.6
Off-shore islands ¹	0.5	0.7	1.3	0.9	0.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n=	1 061	2 464	3 446	2 109	2 571

Source: Death registers

¹Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

Table 1 shows that during this period the English were an important part of the flow; but the interesting story is to be found among the two other nationalities. The Scots were represented in numbers not seen since the 1860s, while the Irish decline, first noted in the 1890s, became more pronounced. A comparison with the results of the British census in 1921 indicates that the English- and Welsh-born formed 79.5 per cent of the total native-born population of Great Britain and Ireland, so that the English-born were significantly under-represented in the immigrant flow. The Scots-born formed 10.5 per cent of the total native-born population in 1921 and were thus markedly over-represented. The corresponding proportion for the Irish was 10.0 per cent, so that the Irish were slightly under-represented in the flow to New Zealand.

The size of the Scots migration to New Zealand echoed the scale of their emigration generally which reached major proportions during the interwar years. The 392 000 who left Scotland during the 1920s exceeded the entire natural increase of the country's population, so that Scotland's population actually declined by 0.8 per cent.⁴ All regions with the sole exception of the Western Lowlands sustained an absolute decline in numbers. It was only with the onset of the worldwide depression and rising unemployment in the destination countries that emigration declined sharply and return migration began to increase. Harper linked the exodus directly with the United Kingdom's postwar depression, the effects of which were acutely felt in Scotland. 'Even before the war,' she noted, 'cracks had started to appear in Scotland's narrowly based, export-dependent economy and, after the artificial wartime boom and misplaced optimism of 1918-19, Scottish industries relapsed into deep-seated and long-term structural decline, plagued by foreign competition, unfavourable exchange rates, the growth of economic nationalism overseas, and obsolescence of products.'⁵

⁴ This section is based on Marjory Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?* Manchester, 1998.

⁵ Marjory Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?* Manchester, 1998, p.10.

The relatively low level of Irish migration to New Zealand was affected by the establishment of the Irish Free State and the partition of Ireland in 1921. The population of the area which became the Irish Free State fell by five per cent between 1911 and 1926, reflecting an exodus of Protestants, but by a much smaller 0.1 per cent between 1926 and 1936 as the Irish economy improved.⁶ Indeed, the population of Ireland stabilised for the first time since the Famine.⁷ Females aged 15 to 19, in particular, did continue to leave Ireland, but after 1919 most went to England and Scotland. Behind that outflow lay not only a search for work but also a low rate and late age of marriage, especially in rural areas, the latter experiencing high rates of emigration of farmers' daughters and, in fact, non-inheriting sons.⁸ Such details as are available with respect to emigration from Northern Ireland indicate that the numbers leaving rose sharply from an estimated 4 500 in 1922 to a peak of 11 557 in 1926. During the last five years of the decade of the 1920s, Northern Ireland lost over 48 000 through emigration, although in each year from 1930 to 1938 (the last for which data are available) it experienced a small net inflow.⁹ Northern Ireland was particularly hard hit by the economic difficulties of the interwar years, so much so that in the 20 years after 1921, unemployment rarely fell below 20 per cent per annum.¹⁰

Through the period quite marked changes occurred in the composition of the inflow, and this can be seen in two ways.

⁶ Cormac O Grada, *Ireland: a new economic history 1780-1939*. Oxford, 1994, p.214.

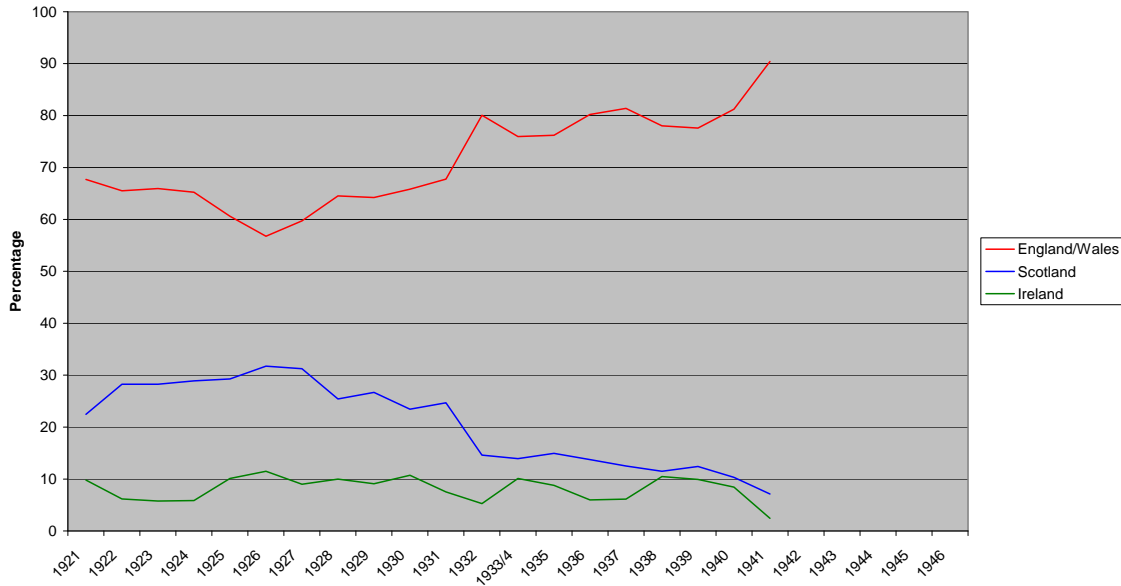
⁷ Patrick J.Blessing, 'Irish,' in Stephan Thernstrom, editor, *Harvard encyclopaedia of American ethnic groups*. Cambridge, Mass., 1980, pp. 524-545.

⁸ Pauric Travers, 'There was nothing for me there;' Irish female emigration, 1922-71,' in Patrick O'Sullivan, editor, *The Irish world wide: history, heritage, identity, Volume 4, Irish women and Irish migration*. London, 1995, pp.146-167.

⁹ See W.E.Vaughan and A.J.Fitzpatrick, editors, *Irish historical statistics: population, 1821-1971*. Dublin, 1978, p.57.

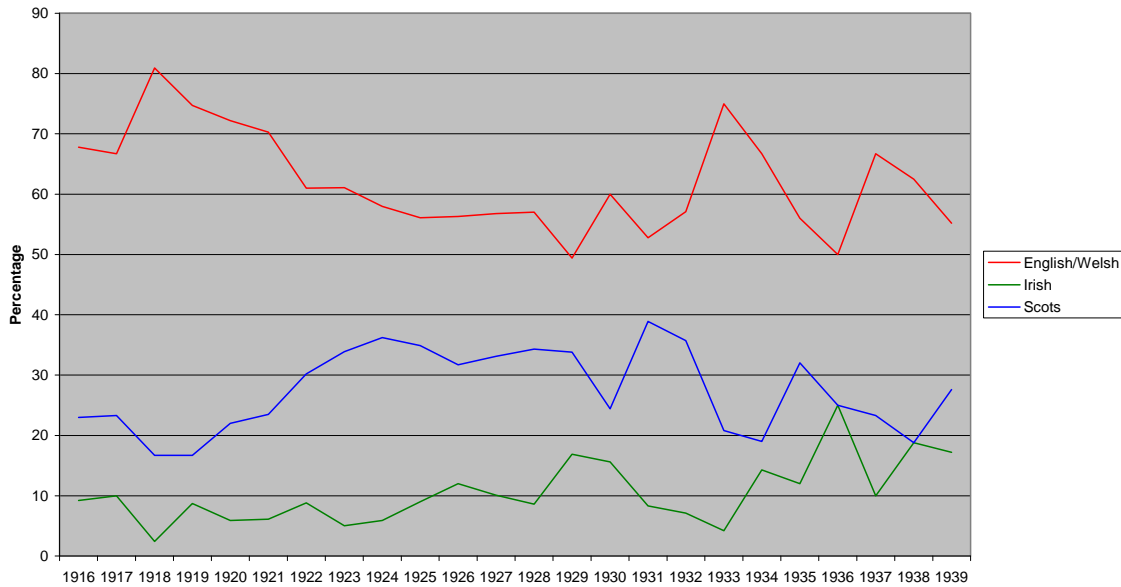
¹⁰ See D.S.Johnson, 'The Northern Ireland economy, 1914-1939,' in Liam Kennedy and Philip Ollerenshaw, editors, *An economic history of Ulster, 1820-1939*. Manchester, 1985, pp.184-223.

Graph 5: Country of Origin of UK immigrants, 1921-46
Source: Immigration records



Graph 5 is derived from official records based on arrivals and country of last residence.

Graph 6: Country of origin Immigrants from UK, 1916-39
(Death registers)



Graph 6 is based on our sample of death registers and reflects country of birth. Over the years from 1916 to 1922, the English/Welsh-born formed not less than 60 per cent of all arrivals, but as emigration gathered momentum, the English/Welsh-born formed a declining proportion. That share rose again as the total number of arrivals contracted and

then recovered somewhat during the 1930s, although the small total numbers arriving meant that the composition fluctuated considerably from year to year. Most of the Welsh-born arrived during the 1920s. Although Wales had the smallest population of any part of the United Kingdom, so that the number of Welsh emigrating overseas was correspondingly small, the Welsh were still under-represented in the flow to New Zealand.¹¹ A different picture emerges with respect to the Scots. From less than a quarter of the flow until 1921, the proportion of the Scots-born rose sharply to 30 per cent in 1922 and (with the sole exception of 1930) remained above that level until 1932. The Irish-born formed a small and fluctuating proportion of all arrivals.

A comparison, for the period 1928-1941, between country of birth and the country of last permanent residence of immigrants intending to reside permanently in New Zealand indicates that a number of those born in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, arrived in New Zealand from other than the United Kingdom. In general, although the numbers involved were comparatively small, comparatively more of those born in Scotland and Ireland arrived in New Zealand from countries other than those of their birth, continuing a trend which was apparent in the previous period 1891-1915. Of course, it is likely that some had been living in England prior to deciding to emigrate, thus accounting for the higher proportion who gave England as their country of last permanent residence.

Gender

The interwar influx was remarkably well balanced, females making up 47.6 per cent and males 52.4 per cent which is a sex ratio of 110.1. There were some variations among the national groups, so that while the large English/Welsh influx was almost perfectly balanced with sex ratio of 104.7 males for every 100 females, and the Scots were also well balanced with a ratio of 110.3, the small Irish inflow was dominated by males with a ratio of 165.8 males for every 100 females. (This was in striking contrast to the outflow from Ireland as a whole in which single females predominated). There were also some regional variations within the four contributing countries, with the flow from Lancashire,

¹¹ Alan Conway, 'Welsh emigration to the United States,' in Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, editors, *Perspectives in American history, Volume VII, 1973. Dislocation and emigration: the social background of American immigration*, pp.177-271. See p.265.

Warwickshire and Staffordshire, and the four counties of the South-east of England being dominated by females, and that from London by males. In Scotland, the small flow from the Far North was also dominated by males.

Table 2: Men and Women by nationality, 1916-45 (percentages)

Born in	Women	Men
England	62.1	58.3
Wales	2.1	2.1
Scotland	28.8	28.6
Ireland	6.5	10.4
Off-shore Isles	0.4	0.6
	100.0	100.0

Source: Death registers

Table 2 reinforces these findings. The unbalanced sex ratio among the Irish being reflected in the much higher proportion of Irish among the total male inflow.

While the general sex ratio for the entire period was well balanced, there were some significant variations: during the three years from 1919 to 1921, females were dominant with the ratio falling to 56.3 males per 100 females in 1919. This reflected the arrival of the wives, and children, and fiancées of New Zealand servicemen.¹² In the succeeding years to 1927 (with the exception of 1925), a balanced ratio was associated with the family migration which appears to have been encouraged and supported by the British Parliament's enactment of the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*. As the number of arrivals contracted from 1928 onwards, males outnumbered females, although the numbers were relatively evenly balanced during the early 1930s, in all probability a reflection of the fact that assistance continued to be extended to domestic servants until 1932.

When gender ratios of immigrants aged 20 or over are considered, the number of women is even more marked among all but the Irish, and indeed among the English and Welsh there was in fact a surplus of women with a sex ratio of 95.6. The Scots figure was 102.5. This probably followed from both the family character of immigration under the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922* and the efforts to recruit single female domestics. By

¹² Servicemen were not included in the immigration returns.

contrast the Irish adults had a strong male dominance (162.0), but this figure was still lower than when all ages are included. Interestingly the strong representation of women among the adults from England, Scotland and Wales was counter-balanced in part by a marked predominance of males in the age group 15-19 (181.9 males per 100 females) which probably reflected the recruitment of (especially English) juvenile males. Another interesting finding was a predominance of females from the age of 50 upwards (76.2 males per 100 females). This is less easy to explain, but may indicate the presence of a significant number of war widows in the inflow of the English.

Age

Table 3: Ages of Immigrants 1916-45 (percentages)

Ages	Eng/Welsh males	<i>Eng/Welsh females</i>	Scots males	<i>Scots females</i>	Irish males	<i>Irish females</i>
0-4	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	1.3	2.5
5-9	3.6	1.7	3.6	4.0	1.3	1.3
10-14	4.9	4.4	8.0	5.1	2.0	1.3
15-19	10.0	4.1	10.3	7.4	5.9	5.1
20-24	13.0	13.5	15.5	15.7	27.0	20.3
25-29	16.7	18.3	17.3	15.4	19.1	22.8
30-34	15.5	15.3	11.6	15.4	16.4	13.9
35-39	11.6	13.3	8.8	11.7	7.2	8.9
40-44	9.5	8.8	7.0	7.1	5.9	8.9
45-49	5.2	6.9	7.2	5.1	7.9	6.3
50+	7.3	10.9	7.8	10.5	5.9	8.9
n	822	777	387	351	152	79

Ages	Eng/Welsh males	<i>Eng/Welsh females</i>	Scots males	<i>Scots females</i>	Irish males	<i>Irish females</i>
0-14	11.3	8.9	14.5	11.7	4.6	5.1

15-24	23.0	17.6	25.8	23.1	32.9	25.3
25-34	32.1	33.6	28.9	30.8	35.5	36.7
35-44	21.0	22.0	15.8	18.8	13.2	17.7
45+	12.5	17.9	15.0	15.7	13.8	15.2
Ave.	30.0	32.0	29.0	30.6	29.7	31.8
n	822	777	387	351	152	79

Ages	All males	All females	All
0-14	11.5	9.4	10.5
15-24	24.9	19.7	22.5
25-34	31.6	33.0	32.2
35-44	18.7	20.8	19.7
45+	13.4	17.1	15.1
average	29.7	31.6	30.6
n	1361	1207	2568

Source: Death registers

Table 4: Ages of immigrants on arrival in New Zealand, 1840-1852, 1853-1870, 1871-1890, 1891-1915, 1916-45

Ages	1840-52	1853-70	1871-90	1891-1915	1916-45
0-14	32.2	18.8	24.8	11.1	10.5
15-24	25.3	34.0	29.3	26.3	22.5
25-34	26.3	28.7	25.4	33.8	32.2
35-44	12.7	12.5	12.7	17.6	19.7
45+	3.6	6.1	7.8	11.2	15.1
average	21.6	24.6	24.1	29.0	30.6
n	1057	2461	3446	2106	2568

Source: Death registers

Carrier and Jeffery suggested that a clear discontinuity emerged between the age structures of emigrants before and after the war. After 1918, they indicate, smaller proportions of both male and female emigrants were in the 18-30 age group, and much larger proportions were in the post-30s cohorts.¹³ In their view, the Great War 'halted for four years the normal march of migration. It is therefore not surprising to find in the immediate post-war period an increase in the average age of migrants as those whose intentions to migrate had been thwarted took up the threads of the interrupted pattern of

¹³ J.M.Winter, *The Great War and the British people*. Houndmills, 1986, pp.267-268.

their lives.’¹⁴ Tables 3 and 4 to some extent confirm this finding with a considerably higher proportion over 35 after 1915 than before. Indeed now over a third of the immigrants fell into this age group, while under a third were younger than 25. The average age of all immigrants was over thirty. This was a remarkable change from the predominantly young migration of the 19th century. But as table 4 shows, the trend towards older immigrants merely reinforced a development which had been underway before the war. Indeed the change from the first decades of the century to the 1920s was nothing like as great as the increase from the 1870s and 80s to the new century.

There was also an interesting change in age within the period. Whereas 18.7 per cent of all arrivals during the five years from 1926 to 1930 were aged up to 19 years, that proportion shrank to 8.1 per cent during the following five years and remained at about that level for the remainder of the period. On the other hand, the proportion over 50 years rose from 7.8 per cent to 20.8 per cent. Even within the age range 20 to 49 years there was a clear shift from the younger to older age groups. That marked change in age composition coincided with the decline in the number of arrivals (and especially assisted immigrants) from 1928 onwards. This pattern, based on the sample drawn from the registers of deaths, compares well with that revealed by British data relating to the ages of all emigrants departing from the United Kingdom for New Zealand over the period 1921-1938.

Looking at the ages within different nationalities one is struck by the large number of older women amongst Scots and even more among the English among whom almost two in five were 35 or over – these were presumably the war widows whom we have already noted. Among the Irish one notes the very low numbers of children, reflective in part of the unbalanced sex ratio, and also the clustering of men in the early twenties.

As in the previous period it is also worth noting the fact that women were almost two years older on average than men, and this was true of all nationalities.

¹⁴ N.H.Carrier and J.R.Jeffery, *External migration: a study of the available statistics 1815-1950*. London, 1953, p.53.

Marital Status

Table 5: Percentage married on arrival of UK Immigrants 1916-45 (with 1891-1915 in brackets)

	Eng/ Wales males	Scots males	Irish males	All males	Eng/ Wales females	Scots females	Irish females	All females	All
All	45.2 (36.3)	40.1 (38.0)	29.8 (30.6)	42.1 (36.0)	58.6 (52.4)	49.3 (54.5)	40.5 (45.7)	54.7 (52.4)	48.1 (42.6)
Aged 20+	57.2 (45.5)	53.3 (47.0)	33.6 (37.8)	53.4 (44.9)	67.3 (64.9)	60.2 (61.1)	45.1 (56.1)	63.9 (63.1)	58.5 (52.4)

Source: Death registers

The distinctive character of the inter-war migration is reflected in the table of marital status. The relatively low number of children in the immigrants was not a result of few married people coming to New Zealand. Rather the reverse. The inter-war migrants were much more likely to be married than earlier flows – almost half of the total and close to 60 per cent of those over 20. The fact that few children came despite the high level of marriage is in part the result of the demographic revolution – that is the reduction in the number of children which women in Britain were bearing by comparison with fifty years previously.

When we look at the breakdown by individual country, we note that the predominance of married people was especially the case for those coming from England and Wales with well over half the men aged 20 or over arriving as married and two thirds of the women. In part this reflected the number of war brides in the early 1920s. On the other hand there was a strikingly different pattern among the Irish. Only a third of the males aged 20 and over were married and well under half the women. The numbers of course were small, and this suggests that in the absence of the British government assistance after 1921, Irish married couples no longer considered moving to New Zealand. Those who came were a small number of single persons.

There were some marked variations through the period, notably in the case of those born in England: from 1916 to 1918, single persons dominated the inflow of the English-born, but a sharp reversal followed in 1919 and continued until 1926 during which period married persons predominated in every year and especially in 1919 and 1920. From 1927 onwards, single persons again dominated in most years until 1945. The years 1919 to 1926 coincided, of course, with the inflow of the wives and children of New Zealand servicemen and the inflow under the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*. In the case of the Scots the ratio was generally evenly balanced over the years from 1919 to 1926, while in the case of the Irish-born single persons dominated throughout the interwar period. The termination of assistance in 1928 and the marked contraction in the size of the flow during the 1930s revealed a migrant stream with rather different age and marital characteristics.

Table 6: Country of marriage of immigrants married prior to arrival in New Zealand, 1891-1915 and 1916-45 (percentages)

Country of marriage	English/Welsh	Scots	Irish	All
1891-1915				
Australia	11.5	8.9	16.0	11.3
England	85.4	8.0	18.5	60.9
Wales	-	-	-	0.5
Scotland	1.2	79.8	6.2	20.3
Ireland	0.3	0.5	59.3	5.7
Others	1.7	2.8	-	1.8
n=	602	213	81	896
1916-45				
Australia	3.1	3.8	1.2	2.7
England	90.5	26.9	7.6	26.0
Wales	1.2	65.4	0.0	1.4
Scotland	1.9	0.0	87.8	6.8
Ireland	0.2	0.0	0.9	61.6
Others	3.0	3.8	2.4	1.4
n=	804	26	327	73

Source: Death registers

Table 6 shows that most of those who had married prior to arrival in New Zealand had done so in their country of birth, and this was especially for the Scots and English by comparison with the earlier period. However that proportion was considerably lower in the case of the Welsh and the Irish. It is worthwhile noting that after the creation of the Irish Free State, the major stream of Irish emigration shifted to England and Scotland, while unemployment in Wales resulted in a substantial movement from that country to the midlands and to south-east England. For the Welsh and, in particular, the Irish, migration to New Zealand appears to have been at least a two-step process involving an earlier movement to England. The striking difference from the pre-war period was the clear decline in the number of migrants who had first married in Australia before coming across the Tasman. The total dropped from 11.3 per cent to 2.6 per cent, and the decline was even greater among the Irish. This in large part was a consequence of a general decline in the flow from Australia of all people, including Australians in the post-war years. Such data as are available relating to the year of marriage of those who married prior to arrival in New Zealand indicate that over half had been married for over ten years. In the case of the Scots-born, the proportion reached a very high 68.5 per cent. Further, in each case the proportion who had embarked upon family formation reached almost 70 per cent. The data suggest that the family component of the interwar inflow included well-established families, those in the middle stages of the family life-cycle, thus differentiating it from previous influxes which tended to be dominated by married couples without children or in the early stages of the family life cycle.

Occupational backgrounds

Table 7: Occupational backgrounds of all arrivals aged 20 and over, 1840-1852, 1853-1870, 1871-1890, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945 (per cent)

Occupations	1840-1852	1853-1870	1871-1890	1891-1915	1916-1945
<i>Agriculture</i>					
Farmers	28.4	34.1	29.2	19.0	12.4
Agricultural labourers	4.6	5.0	5.4	5.3	5.3
Total agriculture	33.0	39.1	34.7	24.4	17.6
<i>Labourers (N.O.S.)</i>	7.5	5.9	10.2	5.7	5.8

<i>Servants</i>	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3
<i>Occupations with relatively little technical change</i>					
Building	6.8	7.4	8.3	10.1	9.6
Mining	1.5	2.6	3.4	4.8	7.4
Transport (traditional)	1.8	1.1	1.6	1.9	2.5
Other pre-industrial	16.9	19.2	17.3	21.8	19.6
Total pre-industrial	27.0	30.4	30.5	38.6	39.0
<i>Occupations with relatively great technical change</i>					
Total industrial	6.8	5.1	6.6	11.0	15.4
<i>White collar</i>	19.6	13.0	11.2	14.3	14.1
<i>Other occupations</i>					
Soldiers	2.0	1.4	1.4	0.9	1.9
Seamen	2.2	3.8	4.0	3.5	3.7
Other occupations	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.2	2.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Not stated (number)	149	360	427	216	229
n=	604	1 691	2 157	1 702	2 095

Source: Death registers

Table 7 sets out the occupational backgrounds of all those born in Great Britain and Ireland and who arrived in New Zealand during the period 1916-1945 and in all previous periods. During the interwar period, the decline in the proportion drawn from agricultural backgrounds continued, just 17.6 per cent compared to 24.4 per cent in 1891-1915.

Table 8: Occupational backgrounds of immigrants aged 20 and over, 1916-45 (per cent)

Occupations	English/ Welsh	Scots	Irish	Total
<i>Agriculture</i>				
Farmers	7.4	10.1	52.0	12.4
Agricultural labourers	5.1	7.2	0.6	5.3
Total agriculture	12.5	17.3	52.5	17.6
<i>Labourers (N.O.S.)</i>	5.8	6.1	5.6	5.8
<i>Servants</i>	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.3
<i>Occupations with relatively little technical change</i>				
Building	9.9	9.9	6.8	9.6
Miners	6.7	11.2	0.6	7.4
Transport (traditional)	2.6	2.9	0.6	2.5
Other pre-industrial occupations	22.5	16.5	9.0	19.6

Total pre-industrial	41.7	40.5	16.9	39.0
<i>Occupations with relatively great technical change</i>				
Total industrial	16.0	16.5	7.9	15.4
<i>White collar</i>	16.9	9.1	10.7	14.1
<i>Other occupations</i>				
Soldiers	2.3	0.8	2.3	1.9
Seamen	2.5	7.0	1.7	3.7
Others	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Not stated (number)	162	49	18	229
n=	1 325	575	195	2 095

Source: Death registers

Table 8 shows that the decline was across all nationalities with a 10 per cent drop among the Scots from the previous period. The Irish remained overwhelmingly drawn from families with a farming background. Those whose fathers had been engaged in pre-industrial occupations remained steady overall, although among the English/Welsh and Scots those drawn from mining backgrounds increased substantially. Those drawn from industrial backgrounds also increased substantially, and this was true of all three nationalities.

With respect to England/Wales, those whose fathers had been employed in agriculture were drawn in particular from the South-east and the South-west, while those from mining backgrounds were drawn largely from the North-east, with a smaller contribution from Lancashire-Cheshire. In Scotland, the Far North, the Highlands, and the North-east contributed large shares of those whose fathers had been engaged in agriculture, the Western Lowlands most of those whose fathers had been miners, while the Western Lowlands also contributed large shares of those drawn from both industrial and white collar backgrounds. We note too the number of seamen and fishermen from Scotland most of whom were drawn from the Far North (mostly Shetland) and the North-east (in particular Aberdeen). The evidence thus indicates that the interwar stream drew upon particular communities – agricultural, mining, industrial – in particular regions, communities and regions adversely affected by postwar economic instability and adjustment.

Some information on the occupations of the immigrants (as distinct from that of their fathers which the death registers provide) can be extracted from other sources, both New Zealand and British. The annual *Statistical Reports on the External Migration of New Zealand* published between 1922 and 1932 offer for *all arrivals intending to reside permanently in New Zealand*, a detailed classification, for the calendar year, by age and gender, but not by country of birth. On the other hand, for the years ended 31 March from 1 April 1922 to 31 March 1932, the annual reports of the Department of Immigration offer a list of occupations ‘by boat.’ A comparison between the two latter sets of data suggests that the category ‘by boat’ included all immigrants arriving from the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, they do not explicitly and consistently separate males and females. Despite their limitations, the data are presented in Table 9, and relate very largely to males.

Table 9: Occupations of all arrivals from the United Kingdom, 1922-1932 (percentages)

Year to 31 March	Agric-- -ulture	Labs	Building	Miners	Skilled trades	Comm/ Prof	Miscell- aneous	n =
1923	21.6	5.2	4.4	16.1	20.7	3.7	28.3	2 460
1924	23.7	5.4	7.1	11.3	26.1	3.5	22.9	2 459
1925	29.7	6.0	7.0	8.1	26.0	5.1	18.2	3 334
1926	31.2	5.3	4.8	10.3	24.8	6.3	17.3	2 873
1927	24.6	5.6	4.6	12.6	24.1	5.4	23.2	4 286
1928	21.2	3.6	2.7	9.4	29.0	9.4	24.8	1 083
1929	17.7	4.4	3.3	7.4	27.7	15.7	23.8	458
1930	12.1	5.9	2.5	9.8	34.8	9.4	25.6	489
1931	26.2	2.3	1.2	7.8	33.2	8.2	21.1	256
1932	20.0	3.8	5.0	10.0	25.0	12.5	23.8	80

Source: AJHR, D9, 1924-1933. ‘Miscellaneous’ as given.

It is interesting to compare these figures with those of the immigrants father’s occupations (while recognising that the occupational categories are slightly different). What emerges is that the occupational background in fact over-estimates the decline of rural workers among New Zealand’s immigrants. These figures show that especially in the mid 1920s the numbers of farmers and farm labourers coming to New Zealand was

still high, and this in part reflected the preferences of the assistance schemes. The figures also reveal the significant number of miners who came out from Britain.

British data, on the other hand, published in the British *Board of Trade Journal* offered details for all persons of British nationality over 18 years emigrating from the United Kingdom and intending to reside permanently in New Zealand by gender and by country of last permanent residence, that is, England/Wales, Scotland, and *Northern* Ireland. Female occupations were classified into six groups, including wives. For English/Welsh and Scots females, those engaged in domestic service formed a consistently high proportion during the 1920s, their share contracting sharply from 1932 onwards, coinciding with the ending of assistance for domestic servants. Those engaged in commerce/finance/insurance and the clothing trades consistently made up small proportions. On the other hand, the data suggest that those engaged in the professions, in all other occupations, and as housewives increased from about 1932 onwards. The occupational character of the female flow thus changed quite sharply as the volume contracted and as assistance was terminated.

The British data relating to males confirms the continuing significance of farm workers and also marked changes through the period. Among the males, the proportion of those for whom England and Wales were the last countries of permanent residence and who were engaged in agriculture rose, during the 1920s, to reach 26.1 per cent in 1928, thereafter declining to reach just 10.8 per cent in 1935. The proportion engaged in mining/quarrying rose to a peak of 10.3 per cent in 1926, then contracted sharply to form less than two per cent per annum during the 1930s. The proportion engaged in metal/engineering also fell from 1928 onwards, though less dramatically, generally contributing between five and ten per cent per annum. Those engaged in the building trades made up through the entire period a small proportion. As a result, even taking 'Other skilled trades' into account, the proportion made up by those engaged in the skilled trades, declined quite sharply from 1928 onwards. On the other hand, the

proportions engaged in commerce/finance/insurance, in the professions, and ‘all other occupations’ rose from 1928 onwards. The data thus indicate that the composition began to change once the volume of migration to New Zealand contracted, a contraction in turn associated with the termination of assistance. That change involved a movement away from those engaged in agriculture and the skilled trades towards those engaged in commerce/finance/insurance, the professions, and all other occupations.

Among those males for whom Scotland was their last country of permanent residence, those engaged in agriculture, other skilled, transport/communications, and labouring generally formed a slightly higher proportion than in the case of English/Welsh males, while those engaged in mining/quarrying formed a significantly higher proportion, their share reaching as high as 21.6 per cent in 1922 and 19.9 per cent in 1926. English and Scots miners were, of course, engaged in a protracted strike in 1926. Those engaged in commerce/finance/insurance, in the professions, and in all other occupations formed generally lower proportions. Otherwise, the distribution of Scottish male occupations underwent changes similar to those of their English /Welsh counterparts, with a shift from 1928 away from agriculture and mining/quarrying towards commerce/finance/insurance, the professions, and all other occupations.

Regional origins: the English/Welsh

Table 10: Regions of Birth, English and Welsh Immigrants, 1871-90, 1891-1915, 1916-45 (per cent)

Born in	1871-90	1891-1915	1916-45	UK Census 1911	Representation Index
London-Middlesex	16.8	19.5	21.3	15.1	141
South-east	13.8	11.2	11.8	8.4	141
East	7.0	6.1	7.0	8.9	79
South-west	17.8	10.2	6.3	6.6	95
Midlands					
East	3.4	4.6	4.4	6.0	73
Central	6.2	5.5	5.0	7.1	70
West	6.3	4.1	2.8	5.1	55
South	6.0	3.0	2.2	3.7	59
Yorkshire	6.6	11.2	9.4	10.9	86

Lancs-Cheshire	7.3	14.6	16.8	14.8	114
North-east	4.0	4.9	7.7	5.5	140
North-west	1.2	1.9	1.5	1.1	136
Off-shore Islands	2.4	1.4	0.8	0.1	800
North Wales	0.5	1.1	0.6	2.3	26
South Wales	0.7	0.7	2.3	4.1	56
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Not stated	76	73	54		
N=	1956	1411	1612		

Source: Death registers

Table 10 shows that two traditional sources of migrants to New Zealand, London and the home counties of the South-east remained important during the interwar period.

However the third traditional area, the South-west had now dwindled in importance so that the area contributed fewer than its proportion in the English population. The Channel Islands, once a relatively important source, also fell into insignificance, at least in part because of the limitation of nomination to those born in Guernsey. The other areas of real significance were in the north, the North-east and North-west, Lancashire and to a slightly less extent Yorkshire. The proportion from these areas rose from 19.1 per cent in 1871-90, to 32.5 per cent in 1891-1915, and then somewhat more slowly to 35.8 per cent in this period. This is a little unexpected. After the economic boom which followed the Great War, mass unemployment emerged in Britain. The industries most adversely affected were the old-established staples of textiles, mining, and shipbuilding, industries which were concentrated in Yorkshire, Lancashire, the north-east, and South Wales. While for the United Kingdom as a whole average unemployment ranged from 10.6 to 12.7 per cent of the insured labour force (about two thirds of the total labour force) over the years from 1923 to 1929, rates in the old industries were very much higher: in coal mining it rose to 23.6 per cent, in cotton textiles to 18.3 per cent, in wool textiles to 14.4 per cent, in shipbuilding to 39.5 per cent, and in iron and steel to 40.4 per cent. One might have expected therefore that the numbers from these areas would have been even larger than they in fact were. A belief that unemployment would prove to be temporary, the costs of re-location, loss of job status, the uncertainty of work even in the expanding areas of the Midlands, London and the south-east, modest wage differentials, and changes in the social security system acted to discourage people from leaving close-

knit working class communities and strong family connections.¹⁵ The impact of unemployment and strike action in the mining industry is perhaps reflected in the considerable numbers from the North-east, especially Durham, which were noticeably high in 1926-30 following the coal strike.

Table 11: County of origin, Immigrants from England and Wales, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945 (per cent), and representation indices for 1916-1945

Regions and Counties	1891-1915	1916-1945	Representation Indices, 1931
London-Middlesex			
London	17.6	19.6	179
Middlesex	2.0	1.7	41
South East			
Hampshire	2.0	3.3	121
Kent	4.6	4.1	133
Surrey	2.6	2.6	87
Sussex	2.2	1.9	97
East			
Cambridgeshire	0.7	0.9	163
Essex	1.9	2.4	56
Huntingdonshire	0.1	0.2	136
Lincolnshire	1.8	1.5	99
Norfolk	0.7	1.4	107
Rutlandshire	0.1	0.1	306
Suffolk	1.0	0.5	45
South West			
Cornwall	3.1	1.5	193
Devonshire	2.8	1.6	88
Dorsetshire	0.6	0.5	85
Somersetshire	2.2	2.1	175
Wiltshire	1.2	0.6	76
Midlands East			
Derbyshire	1.3	1.4	72
Leicestershire	1.4	0.9	66
Northamptonshire	0.7	0.6	64
Nottinghamshire	1.2	1.6	90
Midlands Centre			
Staffordshire	1.9	2.1	59

¹⁵ Sean Glynn and John Oxborrow, *Interwar Britain: a social and economic history*. London, 1976, p.153.

Warwickshire	3.7	2.9	75
Midlands West			
Gloucestershire	2.0	1.0	48
Herefordshire	0.6	0.3	93
Shropshire	0.7	0.6	105
Worcestershire	0.7	1.0	91
Midlands South			
Bedfordshire	0.7	0.1	11
Berkshire	0.7	0.8	107
Buckinghamshire	0.4	0.3	38
Hertfordshire	0.3	0.6	58
Oxfordshire	0.7	0.5	86
Lancashire/Cheshire			
Cheshire	2.5	2.0	73
Lancashire	12.1	14.8	118
Yorkshire	11.2	9.4	85
North East			
Durham	3.1	4.4	117
Northumberland	1.9	3.3	162
North West			
Cumberland	1.4	1.2	185
Westmorland	0.4	0.5	160
Offshore Islands			
Channel Islands	0.7	0.4	-
Isle of Man	0.6	0.4	-
North Wales			
Anglesey	0.1	0.0	-
Carnarvonshire	0.1	0.1	43
Denbighshire	0.3	0.3	81
Flintshire	0.1	0.1	21
Merionethshire	0.1	0.0	-
Montgomeryshire	0.1	0.1	50
Pembrokeshire	0.1	0.0	-
Radnorshire	0.1	0.0	-
South Wales			
Brecknockshire	0.1	0.1	41
Carmathenshire	0.1	0.1	29
Glamorganshire	0.4	1.4	44
Monmouthshire	0.1	0.8	71
Total England & Wales	100	100	

Sources: Death registers, and Census of England and Wales, 1931

Table 11 is consistent with the regional findings, but the continued significance of Kent and the new importance of the mining counties of Durham and Northumberland are worth noting.

Regional origins : Scottish immigrants

Table 12: Regional origins of Scots immigrants, 1871-1890, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945 (per cent)

Born in	1871-90	1891-1915	1916-45	Representation index 1916-45
Far North	10.6	3.8	5.2	226
Highlands	9.9	8.7	7.1	101
North-east	11.4	8.7	10.4	90
Eastern Lowlands	26.9	34.3	33.2	99
Western Lowlands	33.2	38.3	39.4	101
Borders	7.9	6.3	4.8	74
	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Not stated	47	43	45	
N=	742	469	738	

Source: Registers of deaths, census of Scotland 1911

Table 12 indicates that the patterns of regional origin of the Scots did not change dramatically over this period. With the exception of the strong over-representation of the Far North and the slight under-representation of Borders, the distribution of those who migrated from Scotland approximated very closely the distribution of the Scots population as a whole. Consequently the Lowlands continued to provide almost three-quarters (72.5 per cent) of New Zealand's Scots.

Table 13: Counties of origin, Scottish immigrants, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945 (per cent), and representation indices for 1916-1945

Regions and Counties	1891-1915	1916-1945	Representation Indices, 1931
Far North			
Caithness	1.2	1.3	242

Orkney	1.2	0.9	192
Shetland	1.4	3.0	699
Highlands			
Argyll	2.1	1.4	111
Bute	1.6	1.2	293
Inverness	0.9	2.0	119
Ross	3.5	2.0	115
Sutherland	0.5	0.4	130
North-east			
Aberdeen	6.8	8.4	135
Banff	0.5	1.4	127
Moray	0.9	0.6	69
Nairn	0.5	0.0	-
Eastern Lowlands			
Angus	7.0	6.6	119
Clackmannan	0.0	0.3	44
Dunbarton	2.6	1.7	57
East Lothian	0.5	0.4	44
Fife	4.9	6.3	111
Kincardine	1.9	0.6	69
Kinross	0.2	0.1	97
Midlothian	10.6	10.2	94
Perth	1.9	1.9	75
Stirling	3.3	2.9	84
West Lothian	1.4	2.0	121
Western Lowlands			
Ayr	4.5	5.9	100
Lanark	29.3	30.2	92
Renfrew	4.5	3.3	56
Borders			
Berwick	1.4	0.3	52
Dumfries	2.6	1.3	84
Kirkcudbright	1.2	0.7	94
Peebles	0.5	0.7	232
Roxburgh	0.7	0.3	31
Selkirk	0.0	1.0	213
Wigtown	0.0	0.4	72
Total Scotland	100.0	100.0	

Sources: Death registers, and Census of Scotland, 1931.

Two-thirds of all Scots arrivals of the interwar period had been born in just six counties, although in no case were they markedly over-represented (Table 13). Those six counties were also the most consistent contributors throughout the period 1916-1945. The native-born of six other counties – Shetland, Orkney, Caithness, Bute, Peebles and Selkirk – were also strongly over-represented, but while Shetland contributed 3.0 per cent, that contributed by each of the remaining counties was substantially less. Table 13 also includes the principal county contributors in the previous period, and it will be seen that the same six – Aberdeen, Angus, Fife, Midlothian, Ayr, and Lanark – were consistently principal contributors.

Regional origins: Irish Immigrants

Table 14: Provincial origins of New Zealand’s Irish immigrants, 1871-1890, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945

Born in	1871-90	1891-1915	1916-45	Representation index 1916-45
Connacht	6.4	6.8	6.3	43
Leinster	14.9	16.0	12.7	49
Munster	35.2	26.2	19.0	74
Ulster	43.5	51.0	62.0	185
	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Not stated	42	23	15	
N=	748	229	220	

Source: Death registers; United Kingdom census 1911

The emigration statistics for Ireland published annually in the *British Parliamentary Papers* indicate that, over the period 1916 -1920, just over 91 per cent of the small number of emigrants who departed from Ireland for New Zealand were drawn from Ulster, notably Counties Antrim, Down and Londonderry. Analysis of the sample data drawn from the registers of deaths presented in Table 14 indicates that, for the inter-war period as a whole, the pattern apparent for the period 1916 -1920 did not persist.¹⁶ Although a majority of all of New Zealand’s Irish-born immigrants who arrived during the period 1916-1945 – that is, including those who proceeded from other countries as

¹⁶ It is worth noting that after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921 the United Kingdom area of Northern Ireland included only seven of the original nine Ulster counties.

well as Ireland itself – had been born in Ulster, almost a fifth had been born in Munster, and over a tenth in Leinster. Connacht continued to make only a small contribution, on the same level, in fact, as it had done so through the previous four periods. Most of those born in Connacht, Leinster, and Munster arrived in the first half of the 1920s, while the Ulster-born continued to arrive in substantial numbers during the latter half of the 1920s and to trickle in during the 1930s. The postwar revival of immigration from the three southern provinces of Ireland was thus modest and short-lived, and that from Ulster larger and more sustained. In part, the Ulster migration appears to have originated in unease over continuing political turmoil in Ireland.¹⁷ The small flows from Leinster and Connacht were dominated by single persons, while those from Munster and Ulster included larger proportions of married persons. The inter-war Irish flow originated largely in Ulster and was dominated by those of Protestant allegiance of both English and Scottish ancestry.

Table 15: Counties of origin, Irish immigrants, 1891-1915, and 1916-1945 (per cent), and representation indices for 1916-1945

Regions and Counties	1891-1915	1916-1945	Representation Indices, 1936
Connacht			
Galway	3.4	4.0	91
Leitrim	0.0	0.5	38
Mayo	1.9	0.5	12
Roscommon	0.5	1.0	49
Sligo	1.0	0.5	28
Leinster			
Carlow	0.0	0.5	56
Dublin	6.8	4.5	29
Kildare	1.0	1.0	66
Kilkenny	1.5	2.5	138
King's Country	0.5	0.5	37
Longford	0.0	0.5	50

¹⁷ See, for example, Alex Tate, *Our Irish origins: the McKee family history, 1774-1987*. Invercargill, [1987]. William John McKee, of County Londonderry, arrived in Auckland in 1864 and was followed by siblings in 1880 and 1883, one of whom – Thomas McKee and his wife and two children also in 1880; Sarah, Nancy, and Elizabeth McKee in 1883 – Elizabeth with her husband, William McClelland. In 1920 James McKee returned to Ireland returning with the three sons of his brother David McKee. The rest of that family – David McKee, wife Elizabeth, and six more children followed in 1923.

Louth	0.0	1.0	60
Meath	0.0	0.5	31
Queen's Country	1.5	0.0	-
Westmeath	0.5	0.5	35
Wexford	2.5	0.0	-
Wicklow	2.5	1.5	97
Munster			
Clare	3.9	3.0	127
Cork	9.2	8.5	91
Kerry	4.4	4.0	109
Limerick	2.4	2.0	54
Tipperary	2.9	1.5	41
Waterford	2.9	0.5	24
Ulster			
Antrim	21.4	27.5	532
Armagh	3.4	6.0	210
Cavan	1.5	1.0	49
Donegal	1.9	1.5	40
Down	6.3	9.5	172
Fermanagh	0.5	0.5	35
Londonderry	8.7	7.5	200
Monaghan	1.0	2.0	125
Tyrone	4.4	5.5	164
Not stated	23	19	
Total	229	219	
Total Ireland	100.0	100.0	

Sources: Death registers, and Census of Ireland, 1936, Census of Northern Ireland 1936.

Two points should be noted about Table 15. First within the Irish Free State Kerry and Cork, the two areas of traditional migration to New Zealand, remained well represented, probably an indication of the importance of family-based chain migration. Second, in Ulster the counties around Belfast and Antrim in particular became increasingly dominant as a source of migrants to New Zealand.

Place of death

Table 16: Place of death of immigrants 1916-45 (percentages of place of birth)

Region	England/Wales	Scotland	Ireland	All
Northland	2.2	1.8	1.8	2.1
Auckland	31.6	22.4	31.2	28.9

Waikato/Coro.	8.1	6.6	8.3	7.7
Bay of Plenty	4.1	2.3	6.0	3.8
Gisborne	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.4
Taranaki	2.5	3.0	4.6	2.8
Hawkes Bay	4.6	3.9	4.6	4.4
Manawatu/Wang	6.5	3.9	8.3	5.9
Wairarapa	0.5	1.1	1.8	0.8
Wellington	14.4	15.9	12.8	14.7
Nelson	1.6	1.5	0.5	1.5
Marlborough	0.5	0.7	0.9	0.6
Canterbury	14.7	16.4	12.8	15.0
West Coast	1.8	2.8	0.5	2.0
Otago	3.7	12.9	4.6	6.4
Southland	1.3	4.1	0.5	2.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
unknown	0	0	0	0
Number	1622	738	218	2578

Source: Death registers

Table 17 : Place of death of immigrants 1916-45 (percentages of place of death)

Region	England/Wales	Scotland	Ireland	Number
Northland	67.9	24.5	7.5	53
Auckland	68.8	22.1	9.1	746
Waikato/Coro.	66.3	24.6	9.0	199
Bay of Plenty	69.1	17.5	13.4	199
Gisborne	77.8	16.7	5.6	36
Taranaki	56.2	30.1	13.7	73
Hawkes Bay	65.5	25.7	8.8	113
Manawatu/Wang	69.1	19.1	11.8	152
Wairarapa	42.9	38.1	19.0	27
Wellington	61.6	31.0	7.4	378
Nelson	68.4	28.9	2.6	38
Marlborough	56.3	31.3	12.5	16
Canterbury	61.5	31.3	7.2	387
West Coast	57.7	40.4	1.9	52
Otago	36.4	57.6	6.1	165
Southland	40.4	57.7	1.9	52
ALL	62.9	28.6	8.5	
unknown	0	0	0	0
Number	1622	738	218	2578

Source: Death registers

Tables 16 and 17 suggest that many of the trends first obvious at the turn of the century continued in the interwar years. Not surprisingly Auckland and indeed the Waikato and Bay of Plenty increasingly attracted the immigrants and the three areas together were the death-place of over two fifths of all the UK immigrants. As previously the English were disproportionately attracted to the north, while Canterbury and Wellington, once very 'English' Wakefield colonies, both attracted a lower proportion of English than New Zealand as a whole (Table 17). Over half the Scots continued to come to the growing cities – Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and in both Wellington and Canterbury provinces they were over-represented among all UK immigrants. Of those UK immigrants dying in Otago and Southland the Scots were still well-represented, but they constituted only 17 per cent of the total flow. The Irish followed the general flow to Auckland, but interestingly in the southern provinces, especially Wellington, Canterbury and the West Coast they were comparatively under-represented. The West Coast figure – of under 2 per cent of UK immigrants to the region coming from Ireland – is especially remarkable given the Irish flows there of the 1860s and 70s.

The assisted immigrants, 1916-1935

Numbers

The inter-war period saw a major revival of assisted immigration to New Zealand. This followed both renewed support from the New Zealand Government, and even more important a new interest in assisting emigration by the British Government. Throughout the nineteenth century, the imperial government had left the ebb and flow of emigration very largely to 'market forces,' although private emigration societies assisted many to emigrate, but the postwar period saw a major change in policy, beginning with a free passage scheme for British ex-service personnel and their dependants and culminating in the empire development and emigration schemes initiated under the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*.

Almost 74 000 assisted immigrants – all from the United Kingdom – arrived during the period 1916-1945. During the years of peak inflow, that is, 1919-1930, assisted arrivals, who numbered almost 72 000, made up 59.3 per cent of gross arrivals from the United

Kingdom. Assisted arrivals fell to very low levels during World War 1, but accelerated sharply in 1919 and reached, after a slight check in 1923, a peak in 1926. Thereafter the number of assisted arrivals fell sharply as assistance was reduced and finally suspended for all but domestic and single women, boys and girls under the Flock House, Church of England, and Salvation Army schemes, and the wives and families of immigrants already in New Zealand.

Different flows of assisted immigrants

The assisted inflow fell into four reasonably distinct periods: the first from 1916 to 1920, the second was centred on 1921, the third embraced the years from 1922 to 1927, and the fourth extended from 1928 to 1935. Each phase was marked by the arrival of distinct groups of assisted immigrants.

Servicemen's wives and families, 1916-1920: Most of the assisted arrivals of this first phase were the wives, families, and fiancées of New Zealand servicemen. The inflow was thus dominated by females, while the child: adult female ratio reached low levels.

In August 1916 the New Zealand Cabinet decided that assisted passages would not be granted to the wives of New Zealand soldiers who proceeded abroad. On the other hand, free passages to New Zealand were available for the wives and families of deceased soldiers, and subsidised passages in the case of those who married abroad provided the wife was not resident in the Dominion after the outbreak of the war. The assistance was furnished through the War Expenses Account and the Immigration Vote. As the war came to an end, the issue raised considerable debate, and it was eventually decided that New Zealand women, that is, wives who had proceeded abroad during the war and women who had proceeded abroad and married New Zealand soldiers after the war had begun, would be offered assistance through the Immigration Vote. A similar subsidy was offered through the War Expenses Account to those 'non-New Zealand' women who had married New Zealand soldiers in the United Kingdom. Unfortunately the lists of those servicemen who had wives and dependants and who required repatriation do not distinguish between those women who had proceeded originally from New Zealand and

those of British birth who had married New Zealand servicemen and were seeking assistance to emigrate to this country.

Before the Great War ended, the New Zealand Government was thus granting assistance to the wives and children of New Zealand soldiers, while in 1918 the same arrangements were extended to the fiancées of returning servicemen.¹⁸ These special concessions to members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force remained in force for some time and provided a large number of nominations and, indeed, until 1920, as Table 16 indicates, practically the only assisted immigrants arriving in New Zealand were the wives and families of members of the armed forces. The *SS Mahana*, on its voyage to New Zealand in 1920, was known as the ‘Brides’ Boat,’ the ship carrying many English girls on their way to New Zealand to marry New Zealand soldiers or to rejoin husbands whom they had married during the Great War.¹⁹ Data published in the annual reports of the Department of Immigration from 1922/23 onwards indicate that ‘fiancées’ continued to arrive in New Zealand, 61 in the year ended 31 March 1923, and 62 in the following three years.

Table 18: New Zealand, separated relatives among assisted arrivals, 1916-1920 (numbers)

Year to 31 March	Men	Women	Children	Total	Total assisted	Males per 100 females	Children per 100 females
1916	85	325	402	812	1 103	26.2	123.7
1917	33	276	199	508	638	12.0	72.1
1918	4	128	39	171	171	3.1	30.5
1919	2	729	175	906	906	0.3	24.0
1920	130	2 922	758	3 810	3 811	4.4	25.9

Source: AJHR, D9, 1916-1920.

¹⁸ AJHR B6, 1919, p.xx, and D9, 1919, p.1.

¹⁹ See Susan Price and Robin Allardyce, *Charles and Annie Aller and their six daughters*. Wellington, 2000, p.22. The Aller family lived in Hornchurch, the site of a New Zealand convalescent hospital from 1916. Three of the Aller daughters married New Zealand soldiers. Payne noted that Norman and Richard Carne, whose family had originally emigrated from Newlyn, Cornwall, and who saw action at Passchendaele, married in England. See Doreen S. Payne, *Carne of Cornwall & Wales*. Auckland, 1993, p.80.

Two Archives New Zealand files offer lists of New Zealand servicemen who, on behalf of wives and children and, occasionally, other relatives, sought assistance.²⁰ The lists often include the 'address of wife.' While for some it seems clear that the address offered is that of parents and may be interpreted as last place of residence if not place of birth, for many the address offered is at best last place of residence. Of 788 wives, 87.8 per cent gave an address in England, 1.5 per cent in Wales, 8.3 per cent in Scotland, and 1.6 per cent in Ireland, with the balance of 0.6 per cent giving an address in France. Of those who gave an address in England, a very large proportion (36.0 per cent) nominated south-east England – London (23.5 per cent), Essex (12.0 per cent), Hampshire (12.4 per cent), and Surrey (8.6 per cent), while smaller numbers nominated Sussex (1.1 per cent) and Kent (1.7 per cent). A significant proportion cited addresses in the south-west of England, notably Wiltshire (10.0 per cent), with smaller proportions citing Devon (1.7 per cent) and Cornwall (1.4 per cent). Within these counties, a small number of towns and villages stood pre-eminent, among them, Romford in Essex; Codford and Durrington in Wiltshire; Brockenhurst, Bournemouth, Hornchurch, and Christchurch in Hampshire; and Walton-on-Thames in Surrey. Grantham in Lincolnshire and Brocton and Stafford in Staffordshire were two other quite important centres. All reflected the location of the main New Zealand military hospitals, at Brockenhurst (Hampshire), Walton-on-Thames (Surrey), and Codford (Wiltshire), and supply and training camps, at Sling, (Wiltshire), Ewshot (Hampshire), Brocton (Staffordshire), Belton Park (Lincolnshire), and Boscombe (Dorset). After marriage many wives sought accommodation close to their husbands.

At the time these lists were prepared (November 1918), 217 of these military families had children, 179 (82.4 per cent) having just one child and the balance two or more. Further, half (50.5 per cent) of these children were under 12 months of age, but 14.9 per cent were aged from one to two years, 9.7 per cent from two to five years, and the balance (24.7 per cent) five years and over. That distribution of ages suggests that some wives and families had followed husbands and fathers (in particular, medical staff) to the United Kingdom, some soldiers appear to have married widows with children, while at least one proposed returning to New Zealand with his widowed sister-in-law and four children aged four,

²⁰ Archives New Zealand AD1 58/121 and AD 1 58/121/1.

five, seven, and nine (then living in Edinburgh), her husband (of the 5th Royal Scots) having been killed at Gallipoli. It should also be noted that a small number of soldiers proposed returning with dependent relatives other than wives and children, usually mothers, an indication of emigration to New Zealand as young men from about 1900 onwards.

British ex-service personnel, 1920-1922:

An abrupt change occurred in the character of the assisted inflow in 1921. The number of arrivals increased sharply, while both the number of males per 100 females and the number of children per 100 adult females also increased markedly. Most of the new arrivals were in fact British ex-service personnel and their families, known as the 'overseas settlement immigrants.'

Although the uncertain prospects which confronted the 1.5 million women who had been drawn into the wartime labour force and the 180 000 recruited into the various women's auxiliary services raised concern in postwar Britain,²¹ it was the capacity of the British labour market to absorb some four million demobilised men which generated much greater alarm. Amid predictions of widespread unemployment as industry adjusted to peacetime conditions, the imperial government sought to cooperate with dominion governments in schemes of land settlement for ex-service personnel. As the numbers of unemployed ex-servicemen rose to exceed 300 000 in March 1919, a scheme of free third class passages for ex-service men and women and their dependants was announced. Initially approved for one year, successful applicants were eventually given until 31 March 1923 to emigrate. Although New Zealand insisted that it would not accept any British ex-servicemen until all New Zealand troops had been repatriated,²² it discerned an

²¹ D. Kennedy, 'Empire migration in post-war reconstruction: the role of the OSC, 1919-1922,' *Albion* 20, 1988, pp.407 and 410. See also Gail Braybon, *Women workers in the First World War*. London, 1981.

²² Public Record Office, Colonial Office 721/5/f, New Zealand Government to New Zealand High Commissioner 13 March 1919, tabled at a meeting of the OSC advisory committee 14 March 1919, quoted in Kent Fedorowich, 'The assisted emigration of British ex-servicemen to the dominions, 1914-1922,' in Stephen Constantine, editor, *Emigrants and empire: British settlement in the dominions between the wars*. Manchester, 1990, pp.45-71. Massey had made that position clear in 1916. See H.R.Haggard, *The after-war settlement and employment of ex-servicemen in the overseas dominions*. London, 1916, pp.22-23. See also C.H.Turnor, *Land settlement for ex-servicemen in the oversea dominions. A report to the Royal Colonial*

opportunity to secure immigrants, and in particular, agricultural workers, almost entirely at the cost of the British Government, while it retained control over selection.²³

Although the imperial government originally envisaged assisting 450 000 individuals to emigrate, in fact just 133 301 applications involving 269 696 individuals were lodged by the end of March 1923, while less than a third received final approval. In all, 12 668 ‘overseas settlement immigrants’ arrived in New Zealand four years ending 31 March 1924 (Table 19).²⁴ Although this particular group was dominated by males, and presumably single males, it also included a significant number of family units. The ratio of children to females was higher than in the case of the ‘separated relatives’ of New Zealand servicemen, a difference probably related to the elapse of time since the end of the Great War and thus the likely longer marriages of this second group.

Table 19: New Zealand, ‘Overseas settlement immigrants,’ 1921-1924

Year to 31 March	Men	Women	Children	Total	Males per 100 females	Children per 100 females
1921	2 630	1 264	1 392	5 286	208.1	110.1
1922	1 431	1 092	1 329	3 852	131.0	121.7
1923	1 266	881	1 335	3 482	143.7	151.5
1924	8	15	25	48	53.3	166.7
Total	5 335	3 252	4 081	12 668	164.1	125.5

Source: AJHR, D9.

The ‘empire’ migrants, 1922-1927:

The period 1922-1927 saw the arrival of the bulk of the ‘empire’ emigrants. The number of assisted arrivals exceeded 6 000 in each year except 1927 when 5 899 arrived. The adult gender ratio attained a reasonable balance, while the number of children per adult female remained at a relatively high level.

Institute. London, 1920, pp.30-31. See also Massey’s statement in the Financial Statement for 1919, AJHR B6, 1919, p.xx.

²³ National Archives, L1/1614, pt.1, High Commissioner to Prime Minister 5 March 1919, reply 13 March 1919; High Commissioner’s cable 11 April 1919, reply 29 April 1919. For operation of the scheme see L1, 1920/533, High Commissioner to Prime Minister and subsequent correspondence.

²⁴ *The Report of the Oversea Settlement Committee for 1922*, BPP 1923.Cmd.1804.xii.Part 2,217 gives a slightly higher total number, namely, 12 890.

The proximate origins of the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922* lay in the abrupt collapse of the postwar economic boom in 1920, the United Kingdom entering a protracted period of economic dislocation and change, unemployment, social unrest, and political change. The act was part of a wider imperial strategy which aimed at security, prosperity, welfare and social order within a mutually supportive imperial economic system in which trade, capital and labour flows would encourage empire development and self-sufficiency and sustain the defence of the empire.²⁵ Emigration to the countries of the Empire, and especially from those regions most adversely affected by serious economic dislocation and unemployment, thus became a key element of a strategy intended to resolve, on the one hand, Britain's pressing economic and social problems, and, on the other, the dominion's needs for women to sustain population growth and skilled labour to support their growing manufacturing sectors. Further, emigration would strengthen the ties of race, family, and imperial sentiment.'²⁶

Towards the end of 1918, the Colonial Office established what became, in April 1919, the Oversea Settlement Committee with responsibility for advising the government on emigration policy and it was this committee which offered Lord Milner (appointed Colonial Secretary in January 1919, and president of the committee) and L.S. Amery (Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, and chairman of the committee) an opportunity to implement their 'prospectus for social engineering and imperial renewal.'²⁷

Accelerating unemployment in the United Kingdom towards the end of 1920 helped transform what had been intended originally as a transitional measure, that is, the free passage scheme for ex-service personnel, into a more permanent programme for empire migration and settlement.²⁸ Although the British Treasury was reluctant to be drawn into funding, directly or indirectly, land development schemes in the dominions, the Imperial Parliament, in a 'haze of imperial sentiment and worry about over-population,' passed the

²⁵ Stephen Constantine, 'Introduction: empire migration and imperial harmony,' in Stephen Constantine, editor, *Emigrants and empire: British settlement in the dominions between the wars*. Manchester, 1990, pp.1-21

²⁶ See, for example, J.A.R.Marriott, *Empire settlement*. London, 1927, p.90.

²⁷ D.Kennedy, 'Empire migration in post-war reconstruction: the role of the OSC, 1919-1922,' *Albion* 20, 1988, p.404. See also Michael Roe, *Australia, Britain and migration, 1915-1940: a study of desperate hopes*. Cambridge, 1995, p.14.

²⁸ See I.M.Drummond, *British economic policy and the empire, 1919-1939*. London, 1972, pp.166-168.

*Empire Settlement Act, 1922.*²⁹ The Act empowered the Secretary of State to cooperate with any dominion government or with public authorities or public or private organisations in the United Kingdom or in the dominions ‘to formulate and cooperate in carrying out agreed schemes for affording joint assistance to suitable persons in the United Kingdom who intend to settle in any part of His Majesty’s Oversea Dominions.’

Meanwhile after considerable debate in New Zealand over the resumption of assisted immigration, in 1920 the New Zealand government had decided to accept 10 000 assisted immigrants per annum.³⁰ Prior to the war New Zealand residents could nominate ‘near relatives by blood or marriage’ in the United Kingdom for assisted passages, while domestic servants and farm labourers could be nominated by New Zealand residents irrespective of the relationship between nominator and nominee, or could themselves apply for assisted passages. New regulations issued in 1921 provided that permanent residents of New Zealand and *bona fide* New Zealanders visiting the United Kingdom could nominate, observing certain conditions and requirements, *any* persons residing in the United Kingdom for an assisted passage to New Zealand. Nominators were required to ensure that nominees had employment waiting for them, to guarantee that they remain in New Zealand for at least five years, and to provide for maintenance immediately after arrival. These new regulations represented a major change of policy. While pre-war governments had declined to permit industrial employers recruit labour, in 1919 Massey acknowledged that the secondary industries were of growing national importance, that they had specific labour requirements, and that as a result the new immigrants ‘would not all be farm labourers.’³¹ The immigration regulations also allowed domestic servants

²⁹ Brinley Thomas, *Migration and economic growth: a study of Great Britain and the Atlantic economy*. Cambridge, 1954, 1973, p.210.

³⁰ See Stephen Constantine, ‘Immigration and the making of New Zealand, 1918-1939,’ in Stephen Constantine, editor, *Emigrants and empire: British settlement in the dominions between the wars*. Manchester, 1990, pp.121-149. See also Otago Trades and Labour Council, *The immigration fraud*. Dunedin, 1913; *Report of the British oversea settlement delegation to New Zealand, 1923*, BPP 1924 Cmd.2167.xi.765 (also published in AJHR A7, 1924); Dominion Settlement Association, *New Zealand for the Britisher: a vital empire question: proceedings of a dominion conference on immigration*. Wellington, 1925; G.W. Russell, *New Zealand today*. Christchurch, 1919, pp.170 and 286-287.

³¹ *New Zealand Times* 6 December 1919, p.5, quoted in Stephen Constantine, ‘Immigration and the making of New Zealand, 1918-1939,’ in Stephen Constantine, editor, *Emigrants and empire: British settlement in the dominions between the wars*. Manchester, 1990, p.136. The introduction of open nomination in fact followed a survey undertaken in October 1919 by the Department of Labour of New Zealand’s 12 703

aged 18 to 40 years to apply for free passages to New Zealand.³² Similarly, farm labourers under 45 years could apply for assisted passages.

Now keen to minimise its own financial commitment to assisted immigration, New Zealand took the opportunity of the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922* to negotiate a joint assisted passage scheme. Residents of the Irish Free State and the Channel Islands, with the exception of Guernsey, were not eligible. In addition, New Zealand also concluded several juvenile immigration schemes under the Act. Whereas the British Government envisaged that 10 000 persons would emigrate to New Zealand each year, in fact, it was only in 1926 that that number of 'empire' migrants reaching New Zealand exceeded 10 000, almost 11 000 arriving in that year.

New Zealand's post-war boom did not last. As economic conditions began to deteriorate and unemployment to rise, the number granted assistance was reduced, at first temporarily during the winter months of 1927, and then more permanently from 1928. British pressure to restore the number of nominations accepted each year to the pre-1928 previous levels was resisted.³³ The previous policy of open nomination was replaced by one of assistance for a limited range of groups, namely, domestic servants, single women, juvenile immigrants (under the Flock House, Salvation Army, and Church of England schemes), and the wives and dependants of immigrants who had already arrived in New Zealand.³⁴ Further, the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1931* empowered the government to restrict immigration during periods of adverse economic or financial or other conditions.

Debate over immigration did resume in New Zealand as the economic depression lifted,³⁵ but a renewed inflow of self-paying arrivals from 1935 onwards and the outbreak of war

registered factories which had revealed a total labour shortage in excess of 12 000 of persons. See National Archives L9, unnumbered files, box 2, return of shortage of labour, 1919.

³² See Lyn B. David, An examination of the New Zealand government's scheme of assisted immigration for domestic servants in the 1920s. Research essay, University of Auckland, 1973.

³³ *Industrial transference board report*, BPP 1928 Cmd.3156.x.783.

³⁴ AJHR, D9, 1927, p.2, and AJHR D9, 1928, p.1.

³⁵ See, for example, A.Fraser, *A case for immigration*. Wellington, 1936; A.E.Mander, *To alarm New Zealand*. Wellington, 1936; and A.H.Tocker, 'New Zealand's immigrant absorption capacity,' in W.G.K.Duncan and C.V.Janes, editors, *The future of immigration into Australia and New Zealand*. Sydney, 1937, pp.241-256.

in 1939 saw all proposals for expanding empire migration and settlement postponed indefinitely.³⁶

Of the almost 87 000 persons who arrived in New Zealand over the period 1921 -1932 and for whom Great Britain and Ireland had been the last countries of permanent residence and who intended to reside permanently in New Zealand, two thirds were assisted under the provisions of the British *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*. Over the whole period 1922-1935, a total of 405 059 British migrants were assisted and of that number 44 745 - or 11.0 per cent - emigrated to New Zealand.

The nominated ‘Empire’ immigrants: For the period 1916-1933, official statistics distinguish among those who applied in London for assistance to New Zealand, those who were nominated in New Zealand, and (for 1921-1923) those who classified as ‘overseas settlement immigrants’. The importance of nomination from New Zealand is clearly apparent (Table 20), and, indeed by 1920 the flow of migrants to New Zealand was regulated largely by the nomination system. That all assisted arrivals of the years 1918, 1919, and 1920 were nominated reflects the inflow of the spouses, children, and fiancées of New Zealand service personnel.

Table 20: Assisted immigrants, arrivals in New Zealand 1916-1933

Year to 31 March	Applied in London	Nominated from New Zealand	Total	Percentage nominated
1916	229	874	1 103	79.2
1917	123	515	638	80.7
1918	-	171	171	100.0
1919	-	906	906	100.0
1920	-	3 811	3 811	100.0
1921	1 151	3 670	4 821	76.1
1922	1 132	2 021	3 153	64.1
1923	706	2 549	3 255	78.3
1924	758	5 946	6 704	88.7

³⁶ *Migration within the British Commonwealth: Statement by His Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom, BPP 1944-1945 Cmd.6658.x.293.*

1925	937	7 987	8 924	89.5
1926	861	6 824	7 685	88.8
1927	1 105	10 134	11 239	90.2
1928	357	3 465	3 822	90.7
1929	214	1 754	1 968	89.1
1930	164	1 626	1 790	90.8
1931	155	1 078	1 233	87.4
1932	32	258	290	89.0
1933	-	56	56	100.0

Source: AJHR, D9. Note that this table does not include the 'overseas settlement immigrants', that is, British ex-service personnel and their families.

It could be expected that the nomination system would tend to reinforce established patterns of regional origins, since one would expect people already in New Zealand would be very important nominators.. Unfortunately, few details relating to the details of those nominated appear to have survived. One set of returns includes some information relating to those nominated during two periods, January-March and October-December 1923.³⁷ The returns include 482 people who were the 'prime' nominees; 212 spouses of these nominees, for whom age is given for just over a third; and children for whom details of age were frequently not given. The following analysis thus deals largely with the 'prime' nominees: whether they were representative of all nominees is not known, nor whether they finally arrived in New Zealand. With respect to what is presumed to be last country of permanent residence, if not birth, 60.3 per cent of the 'prime' nominees lived in England, 3.2 per cent in Wales, 34.5 per cent in Scotland, and just 2.1 per cent in Ireland. Of all British assisted arrivals in 1924, 65.2 per cent gave England and Wales as their last country of permanent residence, 28.9 per cent gave Scotland, and 5.8 per cent gave Ireland. In other words, the two distributions were not greatly dissimilar.

Of the prime nominees, 29.2 per cent were females and 70.7 per cent were males. Some interesting contrasts between the genders emerge with respect to marital status. Of the 141 females, 14.2 per cent were married, 67.4 per cent were single, and 18.4 per cent were widowed, while for the 341 males the corresponding proportions were 58.4, 39.6, and 2.1 per cent. Most of those females listed as widows were aged over 30 years, and

³⁷ Archives New Zealand Box 127, Schedule of nominated immigrants, 1923.

thus appear to have included a significant number who had lost husbands during the Great War. Almost a quarter of both females (26.1 per cent) and males (22.9 per cent) fell into the age group 20-24, and most of the balance in each case into the age range of 25 to 39 years. Of 195 families which had children, over a third (36.9 per cent) had just one child, a further third had two children, and the balance three and more children. What is very clear is that New Zealand residents, both immediate and extended family members, took advantage of the nomination system to nominate family members, and, indeed, the returns suggest that a large part of the inflow – certainly in 1923 and 1924 – represented family re-unification. The returns disclose few details about the nominators themselves, but it is at least possible that many of them were British ex-servicemen who had arrived on the free passage scheme between 1919 and 1922 and who had managed to find farms, jobs, and homes. Just over a quarter (27.8 per cent) were nominated by non-relatives, while another 1.1 per cent were nominated by ‘intended husbands.’

The returns included details of place of residence. For those in England and Wales, the details are set out in Table 21. Two regions stand out, namely, London-Middlesex and Lancashire-Cheshire, with the South-east and the South-west each making a modest contribution. Most of the places within each region were urban centres: London itself; Gateshead and Newcastle in the North-east; Bolton, Burnley, Dawen, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, and Wigan in Lancashire-Cheshire; Birmingham, Walsall, and Wolverhampton in Midlands Central; Bradford, Hull, Leeds, and Sheffield in Yorkshire; and Cardiff and Swansea in South Wales. Just over half (50.3 per cent) of those for whom Scotland was their country of residence lived in the Western Lowlands (principally Glasgow, Greenock, Hamilton, and Paisley), with the Eastern Lowlands (principally Dundee, Edinburgh, and Leith) contributing a further 38.5 per cent. Of the other four regions in Scotland, only the contribution of the North-east (principally Aberdeen) reached five per cent. All of those for whom Ireland was the last country of residence lived, as expected given the restriction in the immigration regulations, in Ulster. Table 21 also includes the regions of birth according to the sample drawn from the registers of deaths and the rankings. A reasonably close correlation between them is apparent, the five major regional sources indicated by the nominees also being the five major sources

revealed by the sample based on the registers of deaths. The result strongly suggests that the inflow of the interwar period, through the mechanism of nomination, built upon the pattern of regional origins established in previous period, 1891-1915.

Table 21: Regions of residence in England and Wales, nominees, 1923

Place of residence	Nominated	Death register sample	Nominated rankings	Sample rankings
London-Middlesex	21.4	21.3	1	1
South-east	9.4	11.8	3	3
East	3.3	7.0	9	6
South-west	6.4	6.3	6=	7
Midlands				
East	2.7	4.4	11	9
Central	6.4	5.0	6=	8
West	1.3	2.8	12	10
South	3.0	2.2	10	12
Yorkshire	8.7	9.4	4	4
Lancashire-Cheshire	22.7	16.8	2	2
North-east	7.0	7.7	5	5
North-west	2.3	1.5	12	13
Offshore Islands	0.3	0.8	13	15
North Wales	0.0	0.6	14	14
South Wales	5.0	2.3	8	11
n=	300	1 558		

SourceS: Archives New Zealand, Box 127, Schedule of nominated immigrants, 1923; Death registers

Juvenile immigrants

Influencing the composition and character of the ‘empire’ migrant arrivals was a significant number of assisted juvenile arrivals brought to New Zealand under a variety of schemes concluded under the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*. Those under 17 years made up about one sixth of the total number of males who departed from Britain for Canada, Australia, and New Zealand during the period 1921-1929.

During the nineteenth century, observed Bean and Melville, ‘child migrants were shipped off for ostensibly philanthropic reasons, to protect them from the evils of their environment in Britain. But,’ they added, ‘in the twentieth century, philanthropy took

second place to unadulterated imperialism. Child migrants were thought of as “Bricks for Empire Building.”³⁸ The origins of the change lay in the Boer War and the perceived need to populate the empire with British stock. Among the most active promoters of empire juvenile migration were Thomas Sedgwick who, in 1924, proclaimed that ‘Juvenile immigration is a direct response to what humanity pleads, patriotism wants and Christianity demands – giving the younger generation a chance. It is an imperial back-to-the-land movement,’³⁹ Lying behind the movement was a growing concern in Britain that many young males were being caught up in what were termed ‘blind alley occupations,’ were failing to secure long term skills, and were thus swelling the ranks of the long-term unemployed. To such concerns and the related issues of physical fitness and the moral and cultural values of working class youth, emigration was widely regarded as an important solution.⁴⁰

Following the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922* and the provision of reduced or free passages, training for farm work was offered through training farms in England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland and the dominions, and through a system of apprenticeship with dominion farmers.⁴¹ Child and juvenile migration to New Zealand took place on a much smaller scale than in the case of Australia and Canada, but there were several distinctive schemes. In 1923 the New Zealand Government entered into a scheme involving the New Zealand Farmers’ Union and the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce under which a limited number of boys from public schools would proceed to New Zealand to be trained in farm-work with a view to subsequent settlement on the land. To be eligible, the boys had to be aged 16 to 20 years, of British birth, good character and physique, and students

³⁸ Philip Bean and Joy Melville, *Lost children of the empire*. London, 1989, p.78.

³⁹ T.E.Sedgwick. *British town lads on imperial farms*. London, 1924.

⁴⁰ On juvenile unemployment in Britain, see Daniel K. Benjamin and Levis A.Kochin, ‘What went right with juvenile unemployment policy between the wars: a comment,’ *Economic history review* 32, 4, 1979, pp.523-528; W.R.Garside, ‘Juvenile unemployment between the wars: a rejoinder,’ *Economic history review* 32, 4, 1979, pp.529 – 532; and Barry Eichengreen, ‘Juvenile unemployment in twentieth century Britain: the emergence of a problem,’ *Social research* 54, 2, 1987, pp.273-301. On the emigration of children and juveniles see, for example, A.G.Scholes, *Education for empire settlement: a study of juvenile migration*. London, 1932; Joy Parr, *Labouring children: British immigrants apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924*. London,1980; Gillian Wagner, *Children of the empire*. London, 1982; and Philip Bean and Joy Melville, *Lost children of the empire*. London, 1989.

⁴¹ A.G.Scholes, *Education for empire settlement: a study of juvenile emigration*. London, 1932, p.76.

of a public or secondary school.⁴² The first parties under this scheme began arriving in 1924. The government also extended assisted passages to the New Zealand Sheepowners' Acknowledgment of Debt to British Seamen Fund. The Flock House scheme, funded by a small proportion of the dominion's sheep farmers, was established to train as farmers the sons and (from 1925) daughters of British seamen killed or wounded during the Great War. Most of the trainees (over 80 per cent) were drawn from England – from sea-faring families in the ports of South Shields, Hull, Devonport, Grimsby, Lowestoft, London, and Portsmouth – and the balance from Scotland, notably Glasgow and Aberdeen.⁴³

By the end of March 1927, 1 400 juveniles had emigrated to New Zealand under a variety of land schemes, among them the public and secondary school boys' scheme (630), the Salvation Army scheme involving a training farm for boys at Putaruru (403),⁴⁴ Flock House (266 males and 26 females), the Fellowship of British Empire Exhibition Scholarship at Ruakura State Farm (12), and the Church of England (53). (See also Table 22). Their presence among the assisted immigrants was apparent in the dominance of males in the 15-20 age group. By the end of March 1927, too, several of those who had emigrated under the public and secondary school boys' scheme had purchased farms of their own, while several parents and families had followed their sons to take up permanent residence in New Zealand.⁴⁵ In 1927, Marriott noted that the more than 500 boys had emigrated to New Zealand and had been placed with farmers since inauguration of the scheme in 1924 and that they represented 121 schools, including Charterhouse, Wellington, Marlborough, Cheltenham, and Fettes, with Christ's Hospital making the largest contribution.⁴⁶ Among the Scottish juvenile emigration schemes was that run by Glasgow philanthropist Dr George Cossar who, on a farm at Craigiellin near Paisley,

⁴² AJHR D9, 1924, p.2.

⁴³ See V.C.Goodall, '*Flockhouse: a history of the New Zealand Sheepowners' Acknowledgment of Debt to British Seamen Fund*. Palmerston North, 1962, pp.26-35. The scheme was represented in Scotland by the Marquis of Graham, Brodick Castle, Arran who made regular use of the press to promote and explain it. See Marjory Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?* Manchester, 1998, p.161.

⁴⁴ By 1914 the Salvation Army was described as 'the world's largest emigration agency.' See Marjory Harper, 'Emigration and the Salvation Army,' *Bulletin of the Scottish Institute of Missionary Studies*, n.s. 3-4, 1985-87, pp.22-29.

⁴⁵ AJHR D9, 1927, p.3.

⁴⁶ J.A.R.Marriott, *Empire settlement*, London, 1927, pp.86-87.

trained juveniles, ‘mainly city boys of the poorer classes,’ aged 14 to 18. While most of the boys trained went to Canada and Australia, some Cossar boys arrived in New Zealand. Also from Scotland New Zealand received a few children from the Orphan Homes of Scotland, a charity established in 1871 to rescue destitute children from the streets of Glasgow.⁴⁷ The number of juveniles arriving in New Zealand under these various schemes declined from 1928 onwards, those who did so thereafter doing so largely under the auspices of the Church of England Council of Empire Settlement and Flock House.⁴⁸ The Boy Scouts’ Association also appears to have been involved in settling boys in New Zealand. It should be noted that Scholes, on the basis of data supplied by the Oversea Settlement Department of the Dominions Office, indicated that up to December 1927, 24 496 males and 3 533 females aged from 12 to 18 years were assisted to emigrate under the *Empire Settlement Act, 1922*, by far the greater number emigrating to Australia, but 2 705 males (11.0 per cent of all males), and 795 females (22.5 per cent of all females) had emigrated New Zealand.⁴⁹

Table 22: New Zealand, juvenile arrivals, 1922-1932

Year to 31 March	Public school boys	Church of England boys	Fellowship of the Empire Exhibition	Flock House boys	Flock House girls	Salvation Army boys	Totals
1923	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1924	8	-	-	-	-	-	8
1925	208	-	-	-	-	-	208
1926	177	-	-	-	-	186	363
1927	235	52	12	61	36	138	534
1928	16	97	-	94	33	100	340
1929	15	149	-	66	24	88	342
1930	6	100	-	89	19	52	266
1931	-	96	-	89	9	-	194
1932	-	-	-	24	-	-	24

Source: AJHR, D9, 1924-1933

Adult women immigrants, 1928-1932:

⁴⁷ See Marjory Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?* Manchester, 1998, pp.173-177.

⁴⁸ *Report of the Oversea Settlement Committee for the year ended 31 December 1929*, BPP 1929-30.Cmd.3589.xvi.631; and *Report of the Oversea Settlement Committee for the period 1 January 1930 to 31 March 1931*, BPP 1930-31.Cmd.3887.xvi.417.

⁴⁹ A.G.Scholes, *Education for empire settlement: a study of juvenile emigration*. London, 1932, p.83.

During these years the number of arrivals fell, and the flow of assisted was dominated by adult women who came out as domestic servants. Since 1922 New Zealand, no less than Australia and Canada, had been keen to secure domestic servants and hence made particular provision for assistance, while dispatching special representatives to the United Kingdom in an effort to recruit applicants.⁵⁰ Their activities elicited some criticism, one correspondent of the *Scottish Farmer* complaining about the practice of enticing inexperienced girls to New Zealand farms which were nothing more than uncomfortable wood shacks served by virtually non-existent transport facilities.⁵¹ The numbers arriving in New Zealand fell far short of what were regarded as the country's needs. A shortage of domestic servants in the United Kingdom, family opposition to emigration of young women, the rigours of rural life in interwar New Zealand, and a growing antipathy to domestic service were all cited as reasons for the comparatively small numbers recruited. Table 23 sets out the numbers of domestic servants assisted to New Zealand over the period to the end of March 1932. The final party, of 20, arrived in New Zealand on 25 June 1931. The continuing effort to recruit these women while restrictions were imposed generally on assisted immigration meant that, among the assisted immigrants the ratio of males to females fell quite sharply from 1927, and in fact reached just 35.1 males per 100 females in 1932.

Table 23: Nominated and applied domestics arriving in New Zealand, 1922 –1932

Year to 31 March	Nominated	Applied	Total
1922	107	548	655
1923	126	424	550
1924	-	-	649
1925	181	436	617
1926	104	400	504
1927	124	465	589

⁵⁰ See Janice Gothard, "'The healthy, wholesome, British domestic girl: single female migration and the Empire Settlement Act, 1922-1930,' in Stephen Constantine, editor, *Emigrants and empire: British settlement in the dominions between the wars*. Manchester, 1990, pp.72-95. For female emigration to Australia, see Margrette Kleinig, 'Independent women – South Australia's assisted immigrants, 1872-1939,' in Eric Richards, editor, *Visible women: female immigrants in colonial Australia*. Canberra, 1995, pp.112-144.

⁵¹ Marjory Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?* Manchester 1998, pp.147 and 150. The letter in the *Scottish farmer* appeared in the issue of 2 October 1920, p.1115.

1928	-	-	338
1929	-	-	232
1930	-	-	180
1931	-	-	155
1932	-	-	34
Total			4 503

Source: AJHR, D9, 1923-1933.