

**UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY**

**‘Whither Shall I Send My Son?’:  
Remittance Men in New Zealand**

**‘This dissertation is submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA Honours in History at the University of Canterbury. This dissertation is the result of my own work. Material from the published or unpublished work of other historians used in this dissertation is credited to the author in the footnote references. The dissertation is approximately 9,950 words in length.’**

**Category One**

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## ABSTRACT

This is the study of British gentlemen exiled by family to the colonies in the nineteenth century, known as Remittance Men. Despite being a small but consistent migrant type to British settler societies and the subject of popular mythology, Remittance Men are but footnotes in New Zealand historiography. No scholarly research has been conducted on Remittance Men in a New Zealand context – until now. The presence of Remittance Men in New Zealand raises several important questions and this dissertation adds to current understandings of New Zealand’s ‘founding stock’. First, it identifies the historic period of Remittance Men in the Australian, British, Canadian, and New Zealand press. Comparison of this period with Britain’s economic and social landscape reveals three key phases of their rise and fall. Profiles of Remittance Men in New Zealand have been created through statistical analysis of socio-demographic features retrieved from the New Zealand press and police records. These profiles emphasise their similarities and differences with contemporary colonial societal norms. Finally, research findings and additional sources within public records and archives have been synthesised into three in-depth biographies. These biographies demonstrate the extent to which the lives of Remittance Men can be retrieved.

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## INTRODUCTION

‘The thing about a Remittance Man... is that no one ever knows for sure whether or not he is a Remittance Man.’<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Barnes Birkett, youngest son of Reverend Thomas Birkett, a respected Cambridge-educated member of the clergy and temperance advocate, arrived in Wellington in 1892 on the *Jane*. Five years later he killed himself with carbolic acid in a stable near Napier in which he was boarding. The bankrupt great-grandson of the Earl of Shaftsbury, Stanlake Henry Batson, arrived in New Zealand with his low-born actress wife in 1894. Within a couple of years he was once again bankrupt despite regular payments from his family back home. Once a Captain in the 4<sup>th</sup> Dorset Territorial Battalion, Eton and Oxford educated John Nathaniel Williams, son of a prominent British MP, died at Gallipoli serving as a Private in the Auckland Regiment Sixth Battalion (the ‘Haurakis’). He had been exiled by family for his problem gambling. ‘Lay every blame on me’ wrote the son of a Liverpool shipping tycoon, George Henry Brocklehurst, in a note left in the Christchurch hotel room in which he shot himself in 1900. At age 61, William Montague Davenport Howes, the son of a Captain in the King’s Own Light Infantry Regiment of Militia, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for indecent assault on a male. It was not his first offence in the colony.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl F. Zeisler, “Mr Langhorne - a Prairie Sketch,” *Quarterly Review of the Michigan Alumnus* 65 (1959): 229.

These are some of New Zealand's Remittance men. Historically, the term Remittance Man referred to a gentleman emigrant exiled to a British colony by their wealthy British family, supported with regular remittances of money. It was not a label adopted by those to whom it was applied. Neither was it in general use within public records - hence Karl F. Zeisler's observation that 'no one ever knows for sure'.<sup>2</sup> Rather, the term Remittance Man came to describe a type of emigrant to the British colonies in the nineteenth century. In terms of official definition, a Remittance Man is 'an emigrant who lives abroad (esp. in a former British colony) supported by remittances of money from relatives at home; spec. one considered undesirable at home'.<sup>3</sup> Early emigration literature refers to the type but does not use the term Remittance Man. According to Charles Hursthouse 'One would scarcely imagine that such a "gent" would ever go to a colony - he does not *go*, he is *sent*.'<sup>4</sup> What was considered undesirable varied from 'an officer not paying his mess bills', 'getting a maid "into trouble"' or, in the case of a clergyman's son, a lack of piety.<sup>5</sup> Alternatively they may have been 'addicted to drink, or a gambler'.<sup>6</sup>

The receipt of regular, and often generous, remittances from family in Britain set Remittance Men apart from the 'rough and tough' colonial masculinities that survived on 'fifteen pounds of meat a week and no bed sheets'.<sup>7</sup> Paid in various instalment periods, remittance amounts

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<sup>2</sup> Zeisler, "Mr Langhorne - a Prairie Sketch,": 229.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, "*Remittance Man*," (Oxford: Oxford University Press, July 2018).

<sup>4</sup> Charles Hursthouse, *New Zealand, Or Zealandia, the Britain of the South: With Two Maps and Seven Coloured Views* (London: Stanford, 1857), 633.

<sup>5</sup> Jack Adam et al., *Rugged Determination: Historical Window on Swanson, 1854-2004* (Auckland, N.Z.: Swanson Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc, 2004), 52.

<sup>6</sup> Monica Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West* (Connecticut, U.S.: Yale University Press, 2013), 77.

<sup>7</sup> James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland, NZ: Allen Lane, 1996), 429.

varied from £1 to £4 per week.<sup>8</sup> The top end of this income, £200 per annum, was considered sufficient to maintain a respectable standard of living for a family in New Zealand.<sup>9</sup>

Remittance Men were sent to British colonies, and it is within three of these colonies – Australia, Canada, and New Zealand – that this research is conducted.<sup>10</sup> Remittance Men came from privileged backgrounds and were educated at Britain's elite public schools and universities. They were archetypal Victorian gentlemen.<sup>11</sup> They dressed well, indulged in sports and socialising and, if work was to be considered, it was within professions suited to their status such as a military officer or a member of clergy.

The above traits would have made Remittance Men highly visible within colonial settler societies. They were sometimes given 'lordly' nicknames reflecting their status such as 'Dandy Jack' or 'The Marquis'.<sup>12</sup> From early in the settlement of British colonies Remittance Men were deemed unsuitable for colonial life and the antithesis of the desired settler demographic. James Buller referred to them as a 'a hopeless class of young men' from a background of 'idleness, luxury, and vanity', exiled by family.<sup>13</sup> Such a 'dandy' would show himself to be a 'ne'er-do-well' among settlers whose garb, while plain but of good quality, was more suited to colonial life.<sup>14</sup> John Hill Burton described such 'gents' as illustrating his

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<sup>8</sup> Remittance amounts as per Remittance Man Database. See Appendix A for a sample of the Remittance Man Database (2018), compiler Helen Leggatt.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Hursthouse, *Emigration: Where to Go and Who Should Go: New Zealand & Australia (as Emigration Fields) in Contrast with the United States & Canada: Canterbury and the Diggings* (London: Trelawney Saunders, 1852), 90.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Hursthouse, *New Zealand the Britain of the South: With a Chapter on the Native War and Our Future Native Policy* (London: Edward Stanford, 1861), 633.

<sup>11</sup> The definition of a British gentleman evolved during the nineteenth-century. The Remittance Men era came after Thomas Arnold's reforms of public school education (1828-1841) which immersed a the generation in new ideals of masculinity and meanings of gentlemanliness based first on morality followed by gentlemanly conduct and finally intellect. See William H. D. Rouse, *A History of Rugby School* (New York: Scribner, 1898), 222.

<sup>12</sup> Adam et al., *Rugged Determination: Historical Window on Swanson, 1854-2004*, 52.

<sup>13</sup> James Buller, *New Zealand, Past and Present* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1880), 93.

<sup>14</sup> George Butler Earp, *New Zealand: Its Emigration and Gold Fields* (London: George Routledge & Co., 1853), 226.

fourth category of ‘unfit emigrants’.<sup>15</sup> At an 1888 meeting in Melbourne the Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society bemoaned the practice of sending to Australia men he described as ‘the moral refuse of Great Britain and Ireland’.<sup>16</sup> A Canadian newspaper reported an emigration agent who described Remittance Men as ‘home failures who will be failures anywhere’.<sup>17</sup>

As well as being visible, Remittance Men were vulnerable in colonial society. They found themselves among a population that lacked the ‘plebeian deference’ from which a British gentlemen’s status was in part derived.<sup>18</sup> Neither were gentlemanly career paths open to them in the colonies. They were ‘far above work, and far beneath it’.<sup>19</sup> Regular remittances were deemed to contribute to a Remittance man’s ultimate vulnerability. On them they relied for their existence in lieu of a pioneering spirit, relevant skills, and inner strength to start anew. Writing of his experiences with Remittance Men, D. Wallace Duthie observed that regular remittances ‘relieves him of the need of finding employment’ or indeed ‘keeping it by his sobriety and good conduct’.<sup>20</sup>

Remittance Men were stereotyped within British colonies as idle good-for-nothings.

According to Mike Cardwell, stereotypes are a ‘fixed, often simplistic generalization about a

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<sup>15</sup> John Hill Burton, “Emigration and Its Practical Application to Individuals and Communities,” in *Emigration: Where to Go and Who Should Go*, ed. Charles Hursthouse (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1853), 24.

<sup>16</sup> “An Essay on Remittance Men,” *Mount Alexander Mail*, 24 December 1888, 3.

<sup>17</sup> “Winnipeg Is King Says Williamson,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 8 October 1907, 7.

<sup>18</sup> Jim McAloon, “Class in Colonial New Zealand: Towards a Historiographical Rehabilitation,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 38, no. 1 (2004): 6. See also Monica Rico, “Sir William Drummond Stewart: Aristocratic Masculinity in the American West,” *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 2 (2007): 167.

<sup>19</sup> Hursthouse, *New Zealand the Britain of the South: With a Chapter on the Native War and Our Future Native Policy*, 400.

<sup>20</sup> D. Wallace Duthie, “The Remittance Man,” *Nineteenth Century* 46 (1899): 828.



particular group or class of people' which are more often than not 'negative and unflattering, and may underly *prejudice* and *discrimination*' (emphasis in original).<sup>21</sup> Part of that prejudice and discrimination originated from their presence within communities constructed by lower ranks of British society who felt oppressed by Britain's upper classes.<sup>22</sup> Remittance Men's social status and backgrounds of idleness or unprincipled behaviour challenged ideals of morality and prosperity on which New Zealand's 'Arcadian society' was based.<sup>23</sup> Cardwell asserts that stereotypes are based on some elements of truth. The outward appearance and behaviour of Remittance Men fuelled such stereotyping.

The emergence of Remittance Men in New Zealand, and in other British colonies, raises several important questions. Firstly, when and for what period are individuals identified as Remittance Men visible in New Zealand compared to the wider British Imperial world? Secondly, what external factors contributed to the creation of this social type? Thirdly, how were Remittance Men portrayed in New Zealand's press? Finally, to what extent is it possible to retrieve the lives of these men?

Such questions have not been considered within New Zealand colonial historiography. Until relatively recently, both historians and New Zealanders alike have suffered what Jock Philips and Terry Hearn describe as a 'collective amnesia' regarding the backgrounds of settler ancestors. This indifference to knowing their genealogy beyond the ship on which their ancestors arrived might, Philips and Hearn speculate, be the result of a desire to forget

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<sup>21</sup> Mike Cardwell, *Dictionary of Psychology* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 226.

<sup>22</sup> Patrick A. Dunne, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier* (Vancouver, B.C.: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981), 128.

<sup>23</sup> Jennifer Kain, "The Ne'er-Do-Well: Representing the Dysfunctional Migrant Mind, New Zealand 1850-1910," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 48, no. 1 (2015): 78.

unhappy or regrettable pasts or ancestors that were ‘thrown out of their families after a youthful misdemeanour’.<sup>24</sup> Driven by increased public interest in genealogy, the historiography of New Zealand settlement has, in recent years, seen a greater focus on settlers’ pre-emigration biographies to better understand their New Zealand experiences.<sup>25</sup>

A solitary book is dedicated to the topic of Remittance Men in New Zealand – *Colonial Outcasts: A Search for the Remittance Men* by Nell Hartley.<sup>26</sup> Hartley penned the book specifically to counter negative stereotypes commonly ascribed Remittance Men, ‘a myth which did not include the positive aspects in the lives of many of these men.’<sup>27</sup> Hartley’s research is founded on requests for information distributed in New Zealand and Australia via newspapers, journals, historical society publications, and the New Zealand Society of Genealogists. Hartley synthesised personal correspondence from descendants of Remittance Men along with published and unpublished personal papers, journals, local histories from regional Historical Societies, published and unpublished biographies, and local history publications. Hartley tells the stories of fourteen known Remittance Men who made a success of exile. Few of Hartley’s references are sourced from newspapers. Largely based on biography and storytelling, Hartley’s research was conducted before the digitisation of newspapers and public record archives. This restricted large-scale interrogation of data to uncover a wider universe of Remittance Men, but that was not her intention. Instead, Hartley hoped her research would form ‘a base for social historians to build on’.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* (Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press, 2013), 3.

<sup>25</sup> Anne-Marie Kramer, “Mediatizing Memory: History, Affect and Identity in Who Do You Think You Are?,” *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 14, no. 4 (2011): 428.

<sup>26</sup> Nell Hartley, *Colonial Outcasts: A Search for the Remittance Men* (Morrinsville, N.Z: Arrow, 1993).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

In the wider historiography of New Zealand settlement, discussion of Remittance Men is scant. They are background titbits lost amid a larger narrative. Some local history publications mention Remittance Men.<sup>29</sup> Philip Hart discusses social relations among men in the mining town to Te Aroha.<sup>30</sup> He writes of ‘high-spirited young men sent to the colonies by their exasperated fathers and paid a regular sum to remain there.’<sup>31</sup> An unpublished transcript of a talk by Rollo Arnold refers to the ‘remittance type’ which, he asserts, ‘were a more important element in our founding stock than is commonly realised’.<sup>32</sup> A social historian that focused on emigration patterns of both individuals and the masses, Arnold uncovered perhaps the earliest mention of New Zealand’s ‘remittance type’ among shipboard diaries of the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>33</sup> ‘Some of these enforced emigrants made good,’ writes Arnold, ‘most added colour to colonial life, few were without redeeming features.’<sup>34</sup> Other New Zealand historians researching the country’s founding stock and societal development make passing references to Remittance Men. Miles Fairburn claims they symbolised ‘the absolute inconsistency between morality, status, and material success in New Zealand’.<sup>35</sup> James Belich writes of New Zealand being a ‘favoured destination for “remittance men”’.<sup>36</sup> Erik Olssen believes research of Remittance Men, ‘a recurring figure in older accounts of the nineteenth century who has long since disappeared from the literature, would also repay analysis’.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Adam et al., *Rugged Determination: Historical Window on Swanson, 1854-2004*, 51.

<sup>30</sup> Philip Hunt, “Social Relations and Class Divisions in the Te Aroha District,” (Historical Research Unit - University of Waikato, 2016).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>32</sup> Rollo Arnold, "Exodus from the Fringes: Emigrants to New Zealand 1839-1879," Typescript of a talk, n.d., <https://sites.google.com/site/rolloarnold/migration> (accessed 12 June 2018), 7.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>35</sup> Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900* (Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press, 1989), 73.

<sup>36</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, 326.

<sup>37</sup> Erik Olssen, “Where to from Here? Reflections on the Twentieth-Century Historiography of Nineteenth-Century New Zealand,” *New Zealand Journal of History* 26, no. 1 (1992): 74.

Olssen observes that ‘Although there is no good historical study of the phenomenon, in the late nineteenth century New Zealanders were especially fascinated with “remittance men”’.<sup>38</sup>

New Zealand historiography reflects a broader ‘amnesia’ around Remittance Men in scholarship of other British settler colonies. Mark Zuehlke’s *Scoundrels, Dreamers and Second Sons* focuses on stories of Remittance Men in Canada.<sup>39</sup> Patrick Duane’s *Gentleman Emigrants*, similarly centred on Canada, explores the reputations of Remittance Men and how their presence contributed to the differentiation between English-speaking Canada and the United States.<sup>40</sup> Lee Olsen tracks down Remittance Men in the American West in his 1993 publication *Marmalade and Whiskey: British Remittance Men in the West*.<sup>41</sup> *Nature’s Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West* by Monica Rico takes a gendered and transnational approach to the investigation of Remittance Men.<sup>42</sup> A handful of North American journals contain articles about Remittance Men. In “Great Plains Quarterly” Larry McFarlane challenges associated stereotypes. He uses two in-depth biographies of Remittance Men to ‘to both test and refine the emerging scholarly image of Remittance Men in the West’.<sup>43</sup> C. Jill Grady uses the biographical theme coupled with local and oral history when writing about Remittance Men in Oregon.<sup>44</sup> Many North

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<sup>38</sup> Erik Olssen and Hamish James, “Social Mobility and Class Formation: The Worklife Social Mobility of Men in a New Zealand Suburb, 1902-1928,” *International Review of Social History* 44, no. 3 (1999): 419.

<sup>39</sup> Mark Zuehlke, *Scoundrels, Dreamers & Second Sons: British Remittance Men in the Canadian West*, (Toronto, Canada: Dundurn Press, 2001).

<sup>40</sup> Duane, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier*.

<sup>41</sup> Lee Olson, *Marmalade & Whiskey: British Remittance Men in the West* (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 1993).

<sup>42</sup> Rico, *Nature’s Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West*.

<sup>43</sup> Larry A. McFarlane, “British Remittance Men as Ranchers - the Case of Coutts Marjoribanks and Edmund Thursby 1884-95,” *Great Plains Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (1991): 63.

<sup>44</sup> C. Jill Grady, “Remittance Men and the Character of Cannon Beach,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 108, no. 1 (2007).

American articles are rich in oral and local histories.<sup>45</sup> Australia, like New Zealand, is equally historiographically deficient, perhaps more so as not one dedicated publication can be found.

The historiography across colonies reveals two dominant themes. Firstly, Remittance Men are largely discussed in geographic, colony-specific isolation. Until now, there has been no attempt to compare the emergence of Remittance Men across the British Imperial world. Secondly, historiographies across colonies tend towards an individualist approach, focusing on specific Remittance Men and their individual biographies. This dissertation will bridge the geographical gap through a investigation into the emergence of Remittance Men in the English-speaking press of the Imperial world. With a focus on Remittance Men in the New Zealand press, this dissertation will then provide a socio-demographic profile of the social type. Finally, in-depth biographies of three Remittance Men in New Zealand will draw together statistical analysis and socio-demographic profiling to illustrate the extent to which their lives can be retrieved and understood.

Chapter One of this dissertation analyses the appearance of Remittance Men in the English-speaking press within Britain and its colonies of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. The results explain how, during a specific period from 1870 to the outbreak of World War One, social and economic forces in Britain correlate with the emergence and increased presence of Remittance Men in the colonial press. Analysis is achieved by the collation of data from several digital newspaper resources. Although not without their limitations, digital sources lend an advantage of accessibility, convenience, and keyword interrogation. Identification of Remittance Men in the colonial press has been conducted within Papers Past (New Zealand),

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<sup>45</sup> Zeisler, "Mr Langhorne - a Prairie Sketch."; McFarlane, "British Remittance Men as Ranchers - the Case of Coutts Marjoribanks and Edmund Thursby 1884-95."

the British Newspaper Archive, The Times Digital Archive, Trove (Australia) and Newspaper Archive (Canada). Archives for all but Canada offer comprehensive newspaper coverage. Efficient data retrieval is impeded by the fragmentation of Canadian newspaper archives and *ad hoc* regional digitisation projects.<sup>46</sup> Various keywords are used, including misspellings, alternative phrases, and wildcards, to maximise the accuracy of data retrieval.

Chapter two analyses a custom database of 166 Remittance Men in New Zealand. The database enables statistical analysis to create broad socio-demographic profiles. Two sources were used to populate the database. The first is digitised regional New Zealand newspapers such as the *Auckland Star*, *Wanganui Chronicle*, and *New Zealand Herald*. The second is the recently digitised *New Zealand Police Gazettes 1878-1945* (hereafter *Police Gazettes*), via the website Ancestry.com.<sup>47</sup> Data collected includes, where available, name, year of birth, country of origin, remittance amount, occupation in New Zealand, criminal record, reason for newsworthiness and cause of death. Given the availability of records and a limited research period, not all fields are complete for all individuals. Moreover, conclusions drawn from this dataset are skewed towards the behaviours and characteristics of only those Remittance Men reported in the New Zealand press and *Police Gazettes*. A larger research project is required to uncover Remittance Men who quietly assimilated into New Zealand life and were not reported in the press, such as those contained in Hartley's publication.

Chapter Three contains in-depth biographies of three Remittance Men from the database.

Thomas Barnes Birkett, William Montague Davenport Howes, and John Nathaniel Williams

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<sup>46</sup> Sean Kheraj, "Canada's Historical Newspaper Digitization Problem - Part 2," *Active History*, 13 February 2014, <http://activehistory.ca/2014/02/historical-newspaper-digitization-problem> (accessed 4 May 2018).

<sup>47</sup> See Appendix A for a sample of the Remittance Man Database (2018), compiler Helen Leggatt.

all emigrated to New Zealand in the nineteenth century. Their distinct backgrounds and experiences in exile provide insights into the making of and the lived experiences of Remittance Men. Their biographies synthesise individual data from the database with public records such as census records, electoral rolls, probate records and newspaper reports in Britain and New Zealand. Extended family trees have been created for each of the biographies.<sup>48</sup> They consist of an individual's records and those of his siblings, parents, and grandparents. The benefits of an expanded family tree, as opposed to a narrow focus on an individual's life history, are a better understanding of the family dynamics that shaped and governed the forced exile of Remittance Men. The death of an older brother, for example, would change the dynamics of inheritance for a younger son. Similarly, research including a father and grandfather might reveal a family tradition of military service.

This dissertation contributes new insights into the historical emergence of Remittance Men, in particular within the British colonies of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Statistical analysis of Remittance Men reported in the New Zealand press challenges current understandings of their socio-demographic profile and behaviour. To bring the research together, research findings and additional sources within public records have been synthesised into three in-depth biographies. The biographies integrate social and economic factors with their backgrounds and lived experiences to test the extent to which their lives can be retrieved.

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<sup>48</sup> See Appendix I (Family Tree of Thomas Barnes Birkett), Appendix J (Family Tree of William Montague Davenport Howes), and Appendix K (Family Tree of John Nathaniel Williams).

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Rise and Fall of Remittance Men in the Colonial World

#### Introduction

British governments were not averse to shipping their social problems abroad in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Scholars have paid particular attention to official policies of transportation, aided by the Transportation Act of 1718, as a solution to the country's burgeoning criminal population, an alternative to the death penalty, and as an answer to labour shortage in the American colonies.<sup>49</sup> The nineteenth century also saw many attempts to emigrate British vagrant or orphaned children.<sup>50</sup> Following the loss of the American colonies in the war of independence, and after a disastrous period during which West Africa became the destination for convicts, Australia became Britain's primary dumping ground in 1788.<sup>51</sup> The relationship between transportation and settlement developed over time.

Less understood, however, are the development and impact of informal networks of emigration that formed over the nineteenth century. Whereas official emigration programmes

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<sup>49</sup>A. Roger Ekirch, *Bound for America: The Transportation of British Convicts to the Colonies, 1718-1775* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1987). See also: H. Maxwell-Stewart, "Convict Transportation from Britain and Ireland 1615–1870," *History Compass*, 8 (2010): 1221-1242; Christian G. De Vito, Clare Anderson, & Ulbe Bosma, "Transportation, Deportation and Exile: Perspectives from the Colonies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *International Review of Social History* 63, S26 (2018): 2.

<sup>50</sup>Roy Parker, *Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917* (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2010), 6. See also: Elaine Hadley, "Natives in a Strange Land: The Philanthropic Discourse of Juvenile Emigration in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England," *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 3 (1990): 412.

<sup>51</sup>Clare Anderson, "Transnational Histories of Penal Transportation: Punishment, Labour and Governance in the British Imperial World, 1788–1939," *Australian Historical Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 381-383.



were institutionally led by government or charity organisations, another powerful institution of forced emigration emerged during this period; namely, the family. It was Britain's upper class and aristocratic families that forced the emigration of 'second sons' to colonial settlements in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. These Remittance Men, as forced emigrants, found themselves at the centre of public debates about who should emigrate and where.<sup>52</sup> Family policies of emigration, governed by expectations of masculinity, class, custom, and privilege, could be as persuasive and powerful as any legislation or government policy.

This chapter focuses on two key research questions. Firstly, it aims to place the visibility of Remittance Men in the New Zealand press within a wider British colonial world. In what ways does visibility of Remittance Men in New Zealand compare with the colonies of Australia and Canada? Secondly, by establishing this wider phenomenon of the emergence of Remittance Men, the chapter explores those factors that contributed to the practice of this forced emigration by family. In doing so, this chapter contributes to current understandings of the emergence of a colonial world and the colonial circulation of texts and people in the nineteenth century.

The term Remittance Man was popularised in the 1880s, perhaps due to its inclusion in the 1898 publication *Austral English*.<sup>53</sup> However, a far earlier mention can be found in 1868 in the Canadian press. The term is used in the short conundrum 'Why do the Subscribers of the

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<sup>52</sup> William H. A. Feilding, "What Shall I Do With My Son?" *The Nineteenth Century* 13 (74): 578-586. See also: William H. A. Feilding, "Whither Shall I Send My Son?" *The Nineteenth Century* 14: 65-77.

<sup>53</sup> Edward E. Morris, *Austral English: A Dictionary of Australasian Words Phrases and Usages, with Those Aboriginal-Australian and Maori Words Which Have Become Incorporated in the Language and the Commoner Scientific Words That Have Had Their Origin in Australasia* (London: Macmillan, 1898).

Mechanic's Institute increase so slowly? Because the Colony is full of Remittance men.'<sup>54</sup>

Clearly, the phrase is in common use, as no explanation of its meaning is deemed necessary.

Furthermore, the colony was deemed 'full' of Remittance Men suggesting an already advanced number among the population. 'Remittance man' is first used in the New Zealand press in March 1876, again used in a humorous manner and assuming the readership is familiar with the type:

We learn from the Wellington Post that one of the first uses made of the Australian cable was by a remittance man. He telegraphed to his friends in England 'Lend me £20.' The answer received was 'Paid for your telegram and this - balance per mail.' He is now waiting for the mail that will bring him about enough to acknowledge the receipt by post.<sup>55</sup>

These two early references to Remittance Men are indicative of a readership familiar with the type. Interestingly, both are humorous. According to Ted Cohen, only when a shared outlook on the world coupled with a shared response is present can the social interaction of humour succeed.<sup>56</sup> This suggests both readers and writers could draw on common knowledge of Remittance Men. The term 'remittance immigrant' can be found in the Australian press as early as July 1876, referring to the subject's purchase of shares in the Asiatic Circus.<sup>57</sup> The first reference in the British press is a decade later. It is contained in a short excerpt from a book about an English Remittance Man, Frank Marston, in the western United States.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> "Original Conundrums," *Victoria Daily British Colonist*, March 14 1868, 3.

<sup>55</sup> "News," *West Coast Times*, 4 March 1876, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Ted Cohen, *Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters* (Chicago, US: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 28.

<sup>57</sup> "Maryborough," *The Telegraph*, 22 July 1876, 3.

<sup>58</sup> "A Holiday in the Rockies," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 10 February 1886, 11.

No analysis currently exists that identifies the temporal visibility of Remittance Men in the colonial press. This is not surprising given the paucity of research specifically focused on Remittance Men. Current historiography reflects a focus on biographies and local and oral histories. This is largely the result of challenges faced identifying Remittance Men because the applied label depended on subjective observations as opposed to known facts. However, comparison of New Zealand press mentions with those in additional British colonies can locate New Zealand within the broader landscape of Remittance Men media discourse.

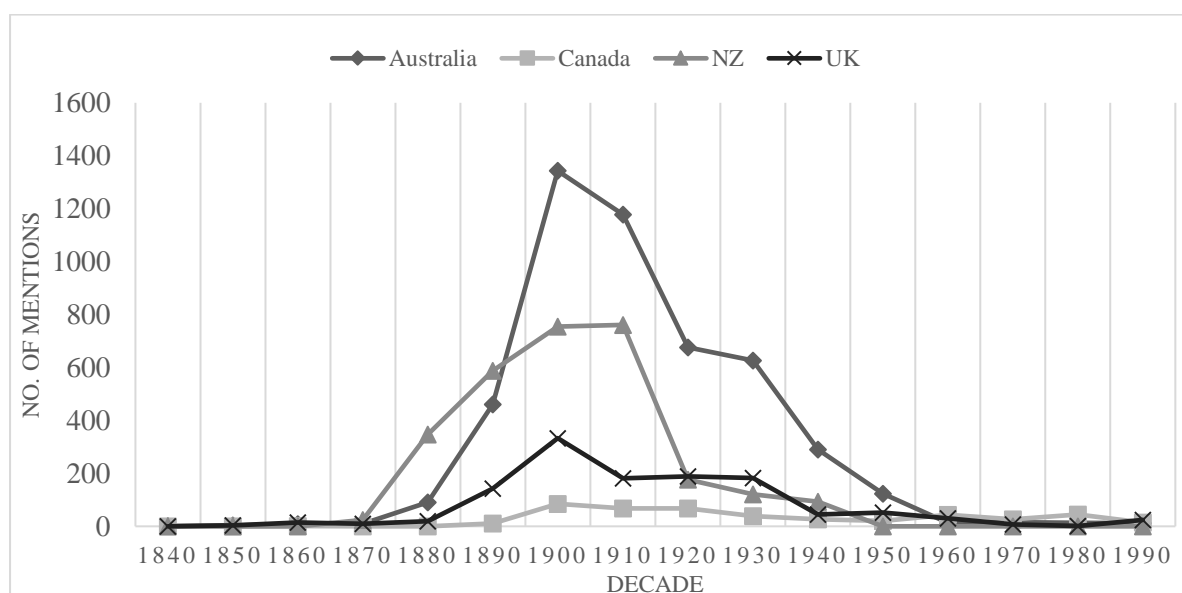
*Figure 1* illustrates the visibility of Remittance Men in the New Zealand press is not unique compared to Australia, Britain, and Canada.<sup>59</sup> The trend is remarkably similar across those colonial territories, beginning in or around 1870 and peaking between 1905 and 1910. This fits with cultural anthropologist C. Jill Grady's observation that 'The remittance man period lasted from 1870 to the beginning of World War I'.<sup>60</sup> After this period, press mentions across all colonies begin to decline until disappearing in the 1960s. To best explain this pattern, this dissertation identifies three key phases that are discussed in detail below. Phase One spans the years 1870-1914, Phase Two from 1915-1945 and Phase Three from 1946-1960.

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<sup>59</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>60</sup> Grady, "Remittance Men and the Character of Cannon Beach," 70.

Figure 1 – Number of Press Mentions of Remittance Men/Man across Colonies



### **Phase One**

Phase One represents the period 1870 to the outbreak of World War One. During this period, visibility of Remittance Men in the colonial press commences and rises significantly, peaking between 1905 and 1910. Remittance Men are a product of Britain and, in terms of economic and social change, the period contained in Phase One is significant. Firstly, in last quarter of the nineteenth century, wealthy British landowners became economically vulnerable.<sup>61</sup> The 1876 Return of the Owners of Land shows that one quarter of land of England and Wales was owned by 710 individuals.<sup>62</sup> In 1880, two-thirds of the total land of Britain was held in estates of 1,000 acres or more.<sup>63</sup> The opening of the American West to farming, coupled with technological advances in agriculture and transportation, led to cheap cereal imports flooding the British market. Between 1870 and 1895 wheat prices had halved while the volume of imported wheat doubled. Britain's landowners saw the value of their land decrease; gross land value dropped from £104m in 1867-9 to £62m in 1894-1903. Similarly, agriculture fell

<sup>61</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London: Papermac, 1996), 88.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 9.

from one fifth of national income in 1850 to one sixteenth in 1900.<sup>64</sup> David Cannadine and F. M. L. Thompson attribute the agricultural depression as a major cause of the decline of the aristocracy and the landed gentry.<sup>65</sup> That Britain ‘ceased to provide them with adequate financial support’ meant attention was turned to the colonies.<sup>66</sup>

Secondly, entry into careers traditionally occupied by younger sons of the aristocracy and landed gentry, such as the civil service, military, and clergy became increasingly restrictive or unattractive. This left the upper classes with the question ‘What Shall I do with My Son?’.<sup>67</sup> Everyone ‘from the small farmer and tradesman’ wanted their children to have an education so that they could escape the lives of their parents and ‘become rich more rapidly, and with less labour, or to do as little work as the funds at their disposal will admit’.<sup>68</sup> Professional success based on money, connections, and social status made way for success based on merit, ability, and education.<sup>69</sup> The last quarter of the nineteenth-century saw the upper middle class dominate British public schools such as Eton, Winchester, and Harrow. They ‘excelled at Oxbridge’ and were outstanding in examinations.<sup>70</sup> Beginning in the 1870s, the civil service introduced ‘open competition’, making way for the accomplished, privately-educated upper middle classes to enter into professions traditionally populated by the upper classes.<sup>71</sup> In November, 1871, the purchase of Army commissions was abolished under the Army

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<sup>64</sup> P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (London: Longman, 1993), 111.

<sup>65</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 26; F. M. L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1963), 293.

<sup>66</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 429.

<sup>67</sup> Feilding, “What Shall I Do with My Son?”, 578.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 579.

<sup>69</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 239.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

Regulation Bill.<sup>72</sup> ‘Notice to gallant but stupid young gentlemen,’ writes Punch, advising they had until the end of October 1871 to buy a commission after which they would be ‘driven to the cruel necessity of deserving them’.<sup>73</sup> Younger sons, who could previously purchase expensive Army commissions, would now have to compete on merit.

The clergy was another profession younger sons commonly expected to enter. This was often facilitated by a landowning fathers’ right of advowson, the ability to present to a Bishop their nominee for a parish priest with its accompanying benefices such as a dwelling and income from tithes. It was common for younger sons of landowners to be gifted such benefices as a living. A Royal Commission in 1879 reported on abuses associated with advowsons, or patronage. It recommended changes that protected parishes from advowsons that put in place immoral, aged, or incompetent clergy.<sup>74</sup> As lands were broken up after the Agricultural Depression advowsons were disposed of, or became unpopular, as parishes fragmented and associated income decreased.<sup>75</sup> The Benefices Act 1898 ensured Bishops were more able to prevent ‘unsuitable appointments’.<sup>76</sup> Ecclesiastical reform and a focus on moral suitability precluded automatic entry into the clergy by younger sons.

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<sup>72</sup> Dennis R. Dubs, “Edward Cardwell and the Reform of the British Army, 1868-1874,” (Thesis, University of Nebraska, 1966), 84.

<sup>73</sup> “Punch’s Essence of Parliament,” *Punch*, 5 August 1871, 45

<https://archive.org/stream/punch60a61lemouoft#page/n333> (accessed 7 September 2018).

<sup>74</sup> Royal Commission on the Law Practice of Sale Exchange Resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, *Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Law and Existing Practice as to the Sales, Exchange, and Resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices*, (London: George Edward Eyre & William Spottiswoode, 1879) <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951002137499c> (access via Hathitrust.org 22 September 2018).

<sup>75</sup> W. A. Evershed, “Party and Patronage in the Church of England, 1800-1945: A Study of Patronage Trusts and Patronage Reform,” (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1986), 37.

<sup>76</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 259.

Decreased land assets and income and the professionalisation of careers traditionally reserved for younger sons left families with ‘surplus gentlemen’.<sup>77</sup> Families looked to the colonies as locations where their sons’ futures might be forged. However, their sons’ goals differed. Some went for fun and adventure away from ‘the stern gaze of the parental eye’ and some to make a new life abroad. Then there were those sent ‘to live down disgrace, and often became more unacceptable in the process’.<sup>78</sup> Writing in 1872 of his experiences in Queensland, Charles Henry Eden, a British migrant and great-grandson of Sir Robert Eden third baronet of West Auckland, observed:

Every profession and calling in England being already overcrowded, and those unfortunate beings, younger sons, continuing to be born, there can be no doubt that these and other portionless individuals must direct their attention to the only outlet left open, viz. our Colonies.<sup>79</sup>

## **Phase Two**

Reports of Remittance Men across the colonial press were in decline during the period 1915-1945. As Britain entered into war in August 1914, sons of the aristocracy and peerage were likely to respond to a key ethic of their status – *noblesse oblige*.<sup>80</sup> They died in ‘disproportionate numbers’ – one in five killed were British peers or their sons, compared to one in eight British soldiers.<sup>81</sup> In Walhachin, British Columbia, a community set up and colonised by British aristocracy, many of whom were Remittance men, no military age men

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<sup>77</sup> Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West*, 52.

<sup>78</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 429-30.

<sup>79</sup> H. C. Eden, *My Wife and I in Queensland* (London: Longman, Green & Co., 1872), 1.

<sup>80</sup> Richard Carr and Bradley W. Hart, “Old Etonians, Great War Demographics and the Interpretations of British Eugenics, c.1914–1939,” *First World War Studies* 3, no. 2 (2012): 227.

<sup>81</sup> Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West*, 213.

remained after 1916 as all went to fight in the Great War.<sup>82</sup> By 1919, Walhachin was a ghost town.<sup>83</sup> A British newspaper reports that by January, 1916, 800 of those listed in Debrett's had been killed or wounded in action, and 100 peerages or baronetcies were endangered without heirs.<sup>84</sup> For many Remittance Men 'the coming of war was a godsend', their opportunity to 'do noble service in a worthy cause' and be reunited with their family that must surely embrace them after they had 'risked their life for king and country'.<sup>85</sup> The decline in visibility of Remittance Men in the period 1915-1945 is a result of previously redundant sons finding a vocation in fighting for their country.

Between 1915 and 1945, the law of primogeniture was abolished. Primogeniture ensured large estates remained intact and passed down from father to eldest surviving son.<sup>86</sup> Among the upper middle classes the eldest would inherit the family business.<sup>87</sup> Introduction of the Administration of Estates Act 1925 allowed spouses to inherit and for land and personal effects to be distributed among male and female children. No longer were younger sons, and daughters, cast adrift to make their own way or marry well. Younger sons were now eligible to inherit part of a family estate or business, and less likely to find themselves financially embarrassed or without personal assets.

### **Phase Three**

During the period 1946-1960, reports of Remittance Men in the colonial press have all but

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<sup>82</sup> Zuehlke, *Scoundrels, Dreamers & Second Sons: British Remittance Men in the Canadian West*, 131.

<sup>83</sup> Dunae, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier*, 162.

<sup>84</sup> "Losses of the Peerage," *Gloucestershire Chronicle*, 1 January 1916, 7.

<sup>85</sup> Zuehlke, *Scoundrels, Dreamers & Second Sons: British Remittance Men in the Canadian West*, 187.

<sup>86</sup> Julia A. Smith, "Land Ownership and Social Change in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain," *The Economic History Review* 53, no. 4 (2000): 775.

<sup>87</sup> Zuehlke, *Scoundrels, Dreamers & Second Sons: British Remittance Men in the Canadian West*, 16.



disappeared. The nature of discussion changes considerably. Whereas Phases One and Two see Remittance Men referred to as a real and present entity, press reports in the post-war period focus on a memory of the social type within theatre and literature. Between 1945 and 1960, British newspaper articles are concerned with plays, books, and films about Remittance Men. A 1954 film, 'The Beachcomber', featuring an 'unshaven, brawling remittance man' received a lot of press attention.<sup>88</sup> So too did 'Kookaburra', a musical featuring a Remittance Man in Australia.<sup>89</sup> Fictional works such as *End in Sight*<sup>90</sup> and *Fires of Spring*<sup>91</sup> contained Remittance Men characters. References to Remittance Men were also found in general articles. A discussion on pocket money expressed concern that 'money granted automatically may turn a boy into a 'remittance man''.<sup>92</sup> An article about British goods in Canadian stores warned 'Englishmen' would 'find no favours' in Alberta due to memories of British Remittance Men.<sup>93</sup>

Similar references are found in the Australian, New Zealand and Canadian press. A story serialised in the *Western Mail* featured 'a broken down but astute "remittance man"' <sup>94</sup> as did the short story 'You Never Can Tell'.<sup>95</sup> The Australian film, *Sundowners*, which featured a Remittance Man as a main character, received much press attention.<sup>96</sup> Online archives for the New Zealand press do not go beyond 1949. However, a 1949 article reviewed a ballet production featuring a Remittance Man.<sup>97</sup> A 1945 book, *Shining with the Shiner*, included a

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<sup>88</sup> "Films of the Week," *Belfast News-Letter*, 9 November 1954, 6.

<sup>89</sup> "Kookaburra at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre," *Birmingham Daily Post*, 10 November 1959, 11.

<sup>90</sup> "The World of Books," *The Sphere*, 25 August 1956, 300.

<sup>91</sup> "Our Bookshelf," *The Sketch*, 10 September 1952, 242.

<sup>92</sup> "How Much Pocket Money Should Children Have?," *Belfast News-Letter*, 30 January 1956, 4.

<sup>93</sup> "Dollar Drive Is Having a Magnificent Success," *Nottingham Journal*, 15 July 1950, 4.

<sup>94</sup> "The Widows of Broome," *Western Mail*, 28 February 1952, 25.

<sup>95</sup> "You Never Can Tell," *The Sun*, 17 January 1952, 38.

<sup>96</sup> "Big Stars for 'Sundowners'," *Australian Women's Weekly*, 13 May 1959, 9.

<sup>97</sup> "Ballet Gives Great Pleasure to Large Audience," *Waikato Independent*, 12 October 1949, 5.

Remittance Man ‘whose trouble was drink’.<sup>98</sup> The Canadian press in this period is not well represented online. However, a few mentions have been found. Memories of Remittance Men such as James Louis Phillippe d’Arcis featured in the article ‘Father Was a King’s Godson’.<sup>99</sup> An article on Canadian history painted Remittance Men as ‘unsung heroes’.<sup>100</sup> The disadvantages of an allowance provided to a son, so as to make him like a Remittance Man, was discussed in an agony column.<sup>101</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The rise and fall of Remittance Men in the colonial press can be explained by factors in Britain that changed the economic and social landscape. Research has identified three key phases within this rise and fall. Phase One, encompassing the period 1870-1915, saw British family fortunes diminished by the Agricultural Depression and career opportunities for second sons limited by the abolition of paid military commissions and the professionalisation of the civil service and clergy. Younger sons could no longer rely on status and connections to secure a future. Instead, merit, ability and education were key attributes. Families seeking futures for redundant younger sons turned their gaze to the colonies. Sent out with remittances to Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, the era of the Remittance Man was born and represented by their visibility in the colonial press. During Phase Two, 1915 and 1945, two World Wars provided second sons with a vocation – to fight for King and country – and lessened their need to be sent to the colonies. Within that same period, the abolition of primogeniture and the ability for all children to inherit assets and income led to a more secure financial future for second sons, and daughters. Finally, in Phase Three, encompassing the

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<sup>98</sup> “Recent Books,” *Evening Post*, 20 January 1945, 9.

<sup>99</sup> “Father Was a King’s Godson,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 14 February 1959, 17.

<sup>100</sup> “Pioneer Unsung Heroes Are Remittance Men,” *Medicine Hat News*, 1 April 1953, 7.

<sup>101</sup> “The Worry Clinic: Case Records of a Psychologist,” *Rocky Mount Evening Telegram*, 12 June 1952, 5.

period 1946 to 1960, reports of individual Remittance Men disappear. Instead, they appear as characterisations of an historic social type and are portrayed in film, books, and theatre.

## CHAPTER 2

### **Socio-demographic Characteristics of Remittance Men in the New Zealand Press**

#### **Introduction**

Research into Remittance Men in New Zealand has largely taken the form of anecdotal narratives of their lives. No statistical investigation has yet been attempted. The statistical approach employed in this chapter, among 166 Remittance Men, serves to challenge anecdotal representations of Remittance Men. A focus on the collation and analysis of socio-demographic information provides an ‘initial and powerful way of summarising the particular instances recorded in the data’.<sup>102</sup> Hartley’s *Colonial Outcasts*, though an important source for Remittance Men in New Zealand, contains no statistical analysis. Instead, Hartley focused on locating Remittance Men who turned exile into a positive experience, both on an individual level and for society at large. Hartley’s largely anecdotal approach resulted in a one-sided perspective of Remittance Men.

One challenge of discovering Remittance Men lies in its applied label. It was a descriptor mostly used in popular parlance beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. However, the New Zealand press proved a fruitful hunting ground for the discovery of individual Remittance Men. Those who lived out their exile without scandal and who successfully integrated into society were less likely to be represented in the press. Each individual discovered in the New

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<sup>102</sup> R. J. Morris, “Document to Database and Spreadsheet,” in *Research Methods for History*, eds. Simon Gunn, Lucy Faire (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 142.

Zealand press was reported for extraordinary reasons such as a criminal act or an unusual or scandalous death. A common factor across all cases was their status as Remittance Men.

Statistical analysis is useful to establishing the demographics of Remittance Men in New Zealand. For the purposes of this dissertation, several key demographics were identified to serve as useful indicators of Remittance Men's backgrounds and experiences. These are date of birth, country of origin, remittance amount, occupation in New Zealand, criminal activity, date of death and cause of death. Not all data fields were able to be populated for all Remittance Men; this has been considered in the statistical analysis. While demographic data such as level of education and profession prior to emigration was desirable, it was not available in newspaper reports. Date of birth enables correlation of their life-stage with key economic and social changes in Britain. Ethnicity allows confirmation of the official definition that Britain was the dominant source of the social type. Occupation reveals their social standing within New Zealand society. Where available, the amount of remittance (income) being received is indicative of the types of lifestyle that might have been achieved, or their need for employment to supplement remittances. Analysis of the reasons for their newsworthiness provides insight into their lived experience in New Zealand. Finally, cause of death highlights the effects of exile.

Date of birth is known for almost three-quarters of the 166 individuals (72%).<sup>103</sup> Dates of birth were standardised into decade for easier analysis. The pattern of birth decade among Remittance Men in New Zealand reveals a correlation with Phase One of press mentions. Individuals born in the 1850s and 1860s would have reached the age of majority during the

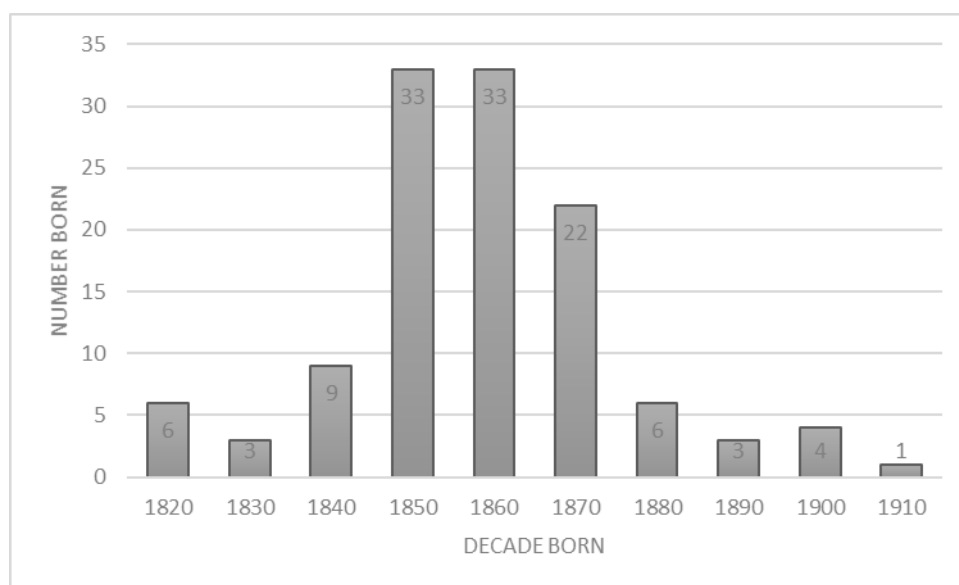
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<sup>103</sup> See Appendix C.

1870s and 1880s, a time when their occupation in life would begin to be considered. It is at this life-stage that the Remittance Man begins to be visible in the New Zealand press.

Furthermore, the pattern reveals a social type with a young average age.

*Figure 2 – Remittance Men in New Zealand - Decade born*

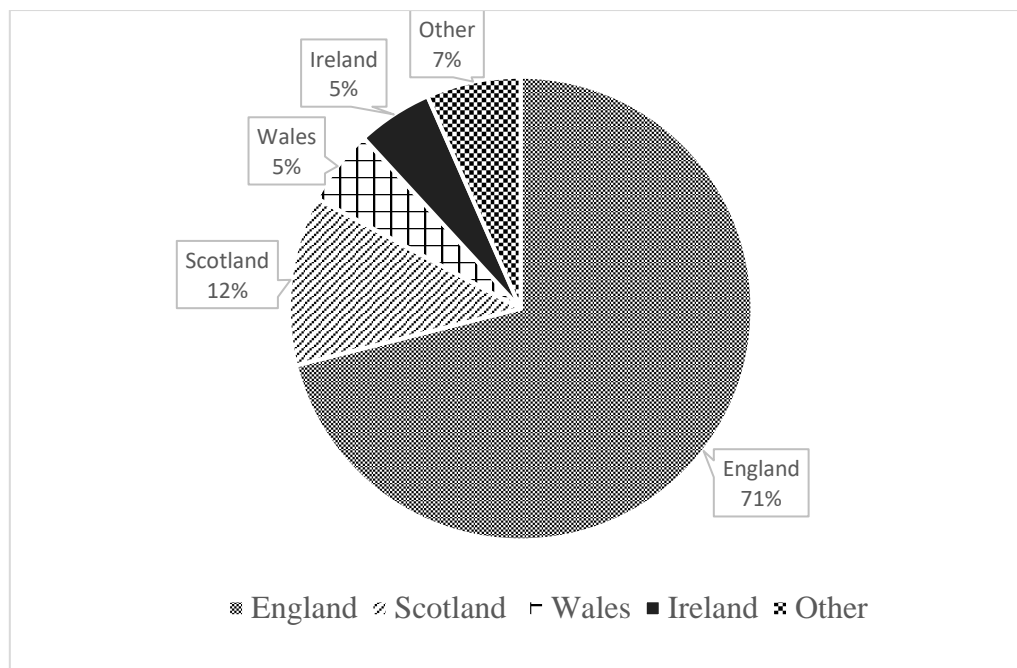


Ethnicity is known for 72 (45%) of the 166 individuals.<sup>104</sup> Where country of birth is known, more than three-quarters came from England. This is far greater than the national composition of emigrants which was between 45%-55% from England for the period 1853-1890.<sup>105</sup> Scotland and Ireland are also under-represented. Just 6% hailed from Wales but this is larger than the national composition averaging 1%. Comparison with the national composition of single male arrivals between 1891-1915 does show a correlation. As date of arrival of individual Remittance Men has not been ascertained, an accurate comparison of their national make-up compared to New Zealand as a whole has not been possible.

<sup>104</sup> See Appendix D.

<sup>105</sup> Jock Phillips, "Boom, depression, and immigration, 1871-1890," *British & Irish immigration, 1840-1914*, 2014, <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/files/documents/peopling4.pdf>, (accessed 5 June 2018), 6.

Figure 3 – Remittance Men in New Zealand - Ethnicity



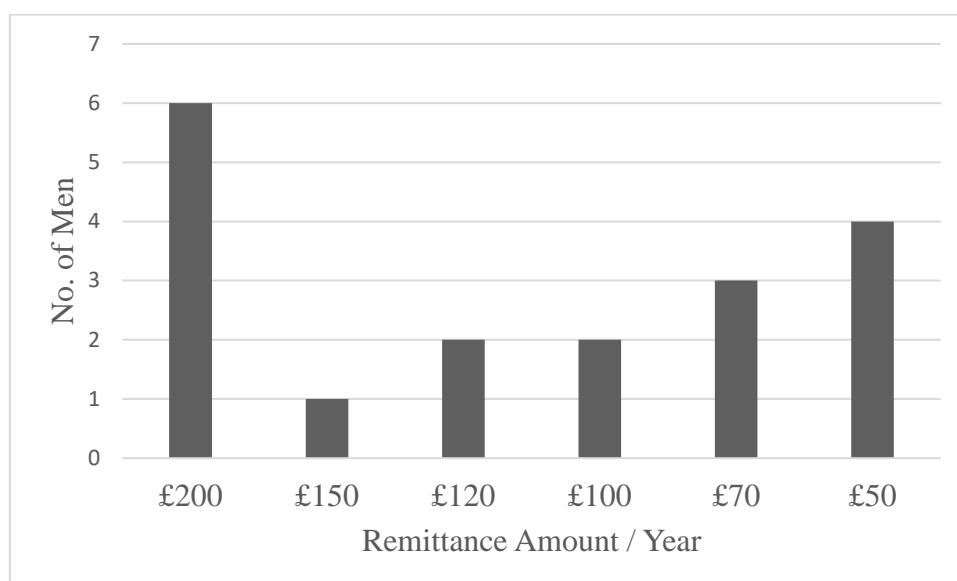
Annual remittance amount is known for 18 (11%) of the 166 individuals.<sup>106</sup> Where annual remittance amount is known, 39% received £150-£200 per annum, an income that contemporary commentators noted would comfortably support a family.<sup>107</sup> Half (50%) received an income of £120 or more, approximately double that received by single males employed as general labourers.<sup>108</sup> The income of Remittance Men was therefore sufficient, without a need for work, to provide them with lodgings and subsistence.

<sup>106</sup> See Appendix E.

<sup>107</sup> Hursthouse, *Emigration: Where to Go and Who Should Go: New Zealand & Australia (as Emigration Fields) in Contrast with the United States & Canada: Canterbury and the Diggings*, 90.

<sup>108</sup> "1875 Official Handbook," *Statistics New Zealand*, [https://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic\\_publications/1875-official-handbook/1875-official-handbook.html#idsect2\\_1\\_20509](https://www3.stats.govt.nz/historic_publications/1875-official-handbook/1875-official-handbook.html#idsect2_1_20509) (accessed 23 September 2018).

*Figure 4 – Remittance Men in New Zealand - Income*



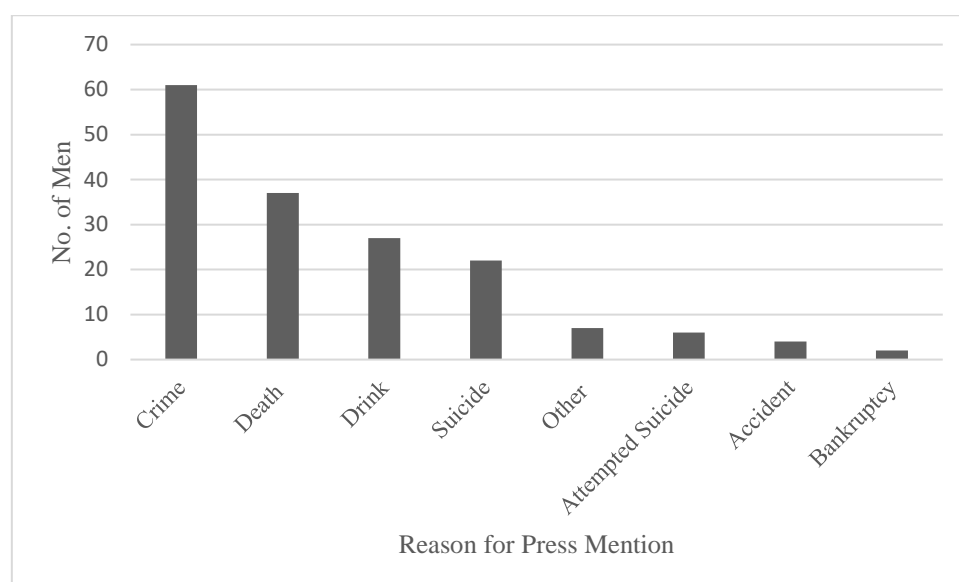
Occupation is known for half of all Remittance Men.<sup>109</sup> This does not indicate that half had no occupation, only that occupation could not be ascertained from the records used. Only three individuals claimed the occupation ‘gentleman’. Several had professions such as dentist (1), theatrical manager (2), solicitor (2), salesman (3), accountant (1), or journalist (3). However, the majority were listed either as clerks (12) or labourers (13). Other manual occupations listed include gardener (4), farmer (4), gum digger or sorter (3), and miner (3). This finding suggests that Remittance Men were unable to survive on remittances alone. That the majority of occupations were labourers or clerks suggests few Remittance Men had the skills necessary to undertake more specialised work. Neither do they appear to have been entrepreneurial, none are listed as business owners and one is listed as a merchant. Upper-class and aristocratic gentlemen believed themselves above working. That they would undertake such menial work suggests financial motivation.

<sup>109</sup> See Appendix F.



Newsworthiness is known for all men in the database.<sup>110</sup> In many cases, particularly among recidivists, they are mentioned several times in the press. Crimes mainly consisted of theft and forgery. Theft was of small items, such as clothing. Forgery mainly took the form of passing false cheques. Deaths include sudden death, death associated with drinking, drowning, accidental or natural death. Death by suicide was singled out as a category due to the large numbers involved. Some of those reported for crime or drink went on to commit suicide.

*Figure 5 – Remittance Men in New Zealand - Cause of Newsworthiness*



Among the 71 (43% of total) men whose cause of death is known, by far the major cause is suicide accounting for 36% of all known causes.<sup>111</sup> This compares dramatically with suicide rates of between seven and fifteen per 100,000 of the New Zealand population during the period 1870-1925.<sup>112</sup> It is acknowledged that the Remittance Men cause of death dataset is

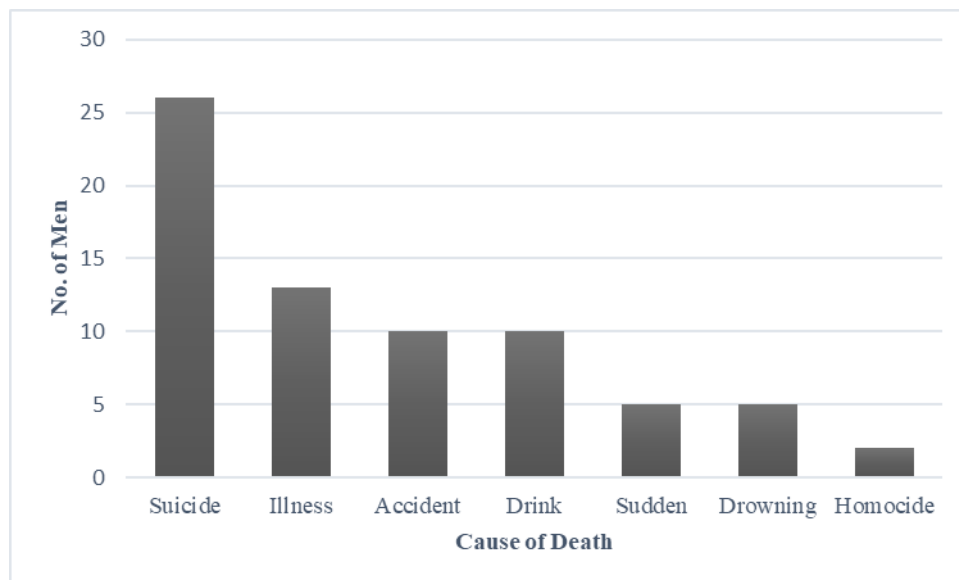
<sup>110</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>111</sup> See Appendix H.

<sup>112</sup> David Victor Madle, "Patterns of Death by Accident, Suicide and Homicide in New Zealand 1860-1960, Interpretation and Comparisons," (Victoria University, Wellington: 1996), 96. See also Jock Phillips, "Suicide," *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/mi/suicide/print> (accessed 9 October 2018).

too small to extrapolate to deaths per 100,000, but it is illustrative of a significantly disproportionate suicide rate among this social type.

*Figure 6 – Remittance Men in New Zealand - Cause of Death*



## **Conclusion**

The vast majority of Remittance Men in the database were born between 1870 and 1879. This contributes to our understandings of the period during which economic and social factors in Britain contributed to a decrease in family fortunes and opportunities for younger sons of the upper classes. That three-quarters were born in England suggests this was the country most affected by economic and social change. The effects of the Agricultural Depression had less impact on the landowners of Scotland. They were more connected to and involved in industrialisation than affluent landowners in England.<sup>113</sup> Most Remittance Men were supported by finances that would allow them to lead a comfortable life. Despite this, many were forced to find employment. The traditional professions would not have been open to them in New Zealand. Furthermore, as gentlemen they would not have acquired the practical

<sup>113</sup> Stana Nenadic, "Industrialisation and the Scottish People," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Scottish History*, eds. T. M. Devine, Jenny Wormald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 407.

or artisanal skills that frontier societies demanded. Remittance Men were therefore restricted to jobs to which their literacy would lend itself, such as clerks, or resigned to employment in the non-skilled but plentiful category of labouring. Despite financial support and, for some, employment, many turned to crime to support their lifestyles. The significant number of suicides and drink related crimes among Remittance Men suggests a tough existence for which their privileged backgrounds had not prepared them. Drink, whether an existing addiction or a new-found solution to their predicament, was the cause of many a downfall. New Zealand's Remittance Men, as their counterparts in other British colonies, 'represented the utter failure of elite masculinity to function in the modern world'.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West*, 77.

## CHAPTER 3

### Biographies

This chapter explores the extent to which the lives of Remittance Men can be retrieved. This has been achieved by the construction of in-depth biographies for three individuals from the Remittance Man Database - Thomas Barnes Birkett, William Montague Davenport Howes, and John Nathaniel Williams. The construction of a rich biography allows for discovery of similarities and differences of the economic and social realities faced by Remittance Men both in their country of origin and in New Zealand. The three biographies synthesise genealogical records, newspaper reports, archive materials, and local history sources to illustrate the three Remittance Men's movements through life, the society that shaped them, and their subsequent lived experiences.

This part of the dissertation uses research within online public records to create genealogies for each Remittance Man. Genealogical research is increasingly being adopted by historians, particularly those researching the lives of those on the fringes of society.<sup>115</sup> The purpose has its roots in a prosopographical approach to examine individuals within common historical contexts. Prosopographical research is used 'to demonstrate the cohesive strength of the group in question, bound together by common blood, background, education, and economic interests... prejudices, ideals, and ideology.'<sup>116</sup> Proposography is particularly useful when researching individuals from the upper echelons of society for whom the quality and quantity of documentation is higher than those lower down the social scale.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Krista Cowman, "Collective Biography," in *Research Methods for History*, eds. Simon Gunn, Lucy Faire (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 96.

<sup>116</sup> Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus* 100, no. 1 (1971): 47.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

Biographies are further enhanced with research into each individual within the British and New Zealand press. This has enabled the discovery of additional layers of facts about an individual's life before and after emigration to New Zealand. This is an important step that emphasises key features of Remittance Men – their social status and behaviour prior to exile. Selection for in-depth biography is based on several factors. Firstly, that information in newspapers and public records is sufficient for accurate identification of an individual. Secondly, that sources are sufficient to adequately track that individual's actions and geographical movements. Thirdly, that there is evidence or inference that the individual was in receipt of remittances. Public records consulted include birth, marriage, death, probate, census, electoral rolls, cemetery records, passenger lists, and military service documentation. These are sourced via Ancestry. Public record sources are not restricted to those from the United Kingdom and New Zealand but include all available international records. This ensures as comprehensive and accurate a biography as possible. Find My Past is used specifically for its New Zealand Passenger Lists archive.

### **Thomas Barnes Birkett (1869-1897)**

Thomas Barnes Birkett was born 29 May 1869 at Yealand Conyers in Lancashire.<sup>118</sup> He was the youngest son of Cambridge-educated Reverend Thomas Birkett M.A. and Jane (nee Barnes), daughter of a renowned University of Edinburgh educated physician.<sup>119</sup> The Reverend Birkett supported the state sponsorship of agricultural education. He was an

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<sup>118</sup> Ka-Yin Williams, Royal Agricultural University Archives, personal email correspondence to Helen Leggett, 19 June 2018.

<sup>119</sup> "1871 England Census", database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Thomas Barnes Birkett (age 2), Bristol, Gloucestershire, England.

advocate for temperance and opened a ‘coffee tavern’ in Weston-Super-Mare.<sup>120</sup>

Thomas’ elder brothers, John Stanwell Birkett and Arthur Ismay Birkett, were born in 1867 and 1868, respectively. Both graduated from Cambridge with a Master of Arts degree. John went on to become partner in a London firm of solicitors.<sup>121</sup> Arthur worked with the Christian Missionary Service in India.<sup>122</sup>

Thomas Barnes Birkett enjoyed a privileged education. He attended preparatory school in Weston-Super-Mare, leaving at the age of 14 in 1883.<sup>123</sup> No records can be found for Thomas’ subsequent education, and he does not appear in the Cambridge alumni database, nor is he mentioned in his father’s or siblings’ Cambridge entries. In February, 1885, Thomas was reported in the press playing rugby for the Weston Crusaders.<sup>124</sup> In April 1888, age 18, he attended a ball in Weston-Super-Mare.<sup>125</sup>

In the winter of 1890, aged 21, Thomas began a two and a half year Diploma course at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester. Most of the college’s students were sons of the aristocracy and upper classes or ‘of army, navy, church, bar, merchants, land agents and some

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<sup>120</sup> “The Late Rev. T. Birkett, M.A.,” *Carlisle Patriot*, March 6 1891, 6.

<sup>121</sup> “A Cambridge Alumni Database: a database of all alumni of the University of Cambridge, 1200 – 1900,” online database <http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/intro.html>, entry for John Stanwell Birkett (accessed 4 June 2018).

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, entry for Arthur Ismay Birkett.

<sup>123</sup> “1881 England Census,” database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Thomas Barnes Birkett (age 11), Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, England.

<sup>124</sup> “Football,” *Weston Mercury*, 7 February 1885, 5.

<sup>125</sup> “Subscription Ball,” *Weston-super-Mare Gazette and General Advertiser*, 1 January 1887, 5.

farmers'.<sup>126</sup> A photograph in the Royal Agricultural University Archives titled 'R.H.C. Group Easter 1891' shows Thomas seated on the ground, fourth from the left (*Fig. 7*). In the same row on the far right 'H.R.H. Kawanakoa' is identified. He was actually Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole of the then Republic of Hawai'i, illustrating the status of the College's pupils.<sup>127</sup> During Thomas' first term, his marks were excellent, he finished first in class in five out of seven subjects.<sup>128</sup> Over the course of the remaining five terms his performance decreased markedly and he finished near to or bottom of the class in some subjects.<sup>129</sup> Thomas appears to have been an outgoing and social student. He is cited in the "Students' Gazette" for his 'willingness to appear at the footlights' and his singing abilities.<sup>130</sup> Within four months of entering the college, in March 1891, his father dies.<sup>131</sup> The Reverend Thomas Birkett left behind a personal estate of just over £9,000. Thomas, along with his brother John, were Executors of the Will.<sup>132</sup> Thomas did not complete his Diploma, as confirmed by the college archives and evidenced by the lack of his name on the College Honours Board.<sup>133</sup>

Not long after leaving college in December 1891, Thomas left Britain. He set sail from Plymouth on the *Kaikoura*, leaving on 7 January 1892 and arriving in Port Chalmers on 19 July 1892 aged 23.<sup>134</sup> Thomas travelled first class and his occupation was listed as

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<sup>126</sup> Roger Sayce, *The History of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester: An Independent College* (Stroud, UK: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992), 91.

<sup>127</sup> "Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-present*," online database <http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp> (accessed 10 October 2018).

<sup>128</sup> Ka-Yin Williams, Royal Agricultural University Archives, personal email correspondence to Helen Leggatt, 23 June 2018.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> "The Late Rev. T. Birkett, M.A.," *Carlisle Patriot*, March 6 1891, 6.

<sup>132</sup> "England & Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1858-1966," database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Thomas Birkett.

<sup>133</sup> Ka-Yin Williams, Royal Agricultural University Archives, personal email correspondence to Helen Leggatt, 26 June 2018.

<sup>134</sup> "Shipping Port of Wellington," *Evening Post*, 19 July 1892, 2.



Figure 7 - Thomas Barnes Birkett, Royal College of Agriculture, 1891. Source: Royal Agricultural University Archives.





‘gentleman’.<sup>135</sup> Thomas’ next appears in the records over a year later in the farming region of Makuri, 125 miles north of Wellington.

A press report shows he intended to breed Exmoor ponies, perhaps using experience gained from his agricultural studies.<sup>136</sup> By May 1894, a notice in the *Woodville Examiner* announces Thomas was selling his stock and some large possessions because he planned to return to England.<sup>137</sup> The following month, he transferred his land to the Willoughby brothers.<sup>138</sup> The 1896 Electoral Rolls show Thomas living in Greenmeadows near Napier. His occupations was listed as ‘gentleman’.<sup>139</sup> He is living in quarters at Charles Joyce’s stables.<sup>140</sup> It is here, on 5 February 1897, that he took his life by swallowing carbolic acid. According to a press report of the incident:

The jury, no doubt in kindly consideration, came to the conclusion that death was caused by the poison being taken in mistake for medicine. But then the verdicts of coroner's juries are invariably tempered with feelings for those left behind.<sup>141</sup>

Thomas’ entry in the Notices of Deceased Estates shows the value of his estate was less than £20.<sup>142</sup> A report of his death in the *Wanganui Chronicle* claims Thomas’ quarterly remittance of £75 was waiting for him in the mail, sent via his brother John’s law firm. Also in the mail was a letter from his mother.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> “Passengers Lists Leaving UK,” database, FindMyPast <https://www.findmypast.com>, entry for T B Birkett, Kaikoura, 7 January 1892.

<sup>136</sup> “News in Brief,” *New Zealand Herald*, 20 October 1893, 6.

<sup>137</sup> *Woodville Examiner*, 30 May 1894, 2.

<sup>138</sup> “Wellington Land Board,” *Woodville Examiner*, 4 June 1894, 2.

<sup>139</sup> “1896 New Zealand Electoral Roll,” database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Thomas Barnes Birkett, Napier, Hawkes Bay.

<sup>140</sup> “Found Dead in his Bunk: Suicide Suspected,” *Daily Telegraph*, 6 February 1897, 3.

<sup>141</sup> “Thomas Barnes Birkett, the Story of a Wasted Life,” *Wanganui Chronicle*, 12 February 1897, 3.

<sup>142</sup> “New Zealand Notices of Deceased Estates 1897,” database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Thomas Barnes Birkett, Greenmeadows, New Zealand.

<sup>143</sup> “Thomas Barnes Birkett, the Story of a Wasted Life,” *Wanganui Chronicle*, 12 February 1897, 3.

Thomas is typical of Remittance Man sent to New Zealand. He was well educated, from a respectable family, and the youngest son. He attended the Royal Agricultural College to acquire skills in agriculture, perhaps persuaded by his father's advocacy of agricultural education and a lack of an alternative occupation. He failed to graduate. Whether Thomas left for New Zealand of his own volition or not, remains unknown. However, his ability to purchase land, livestock, and equipment after his first year in New Zealand suggests he may have been endowed with an initial capital sum, perhaps left to him in his father's Will. Initially, Thomas made a great effort to establish himself in rural Makuri supported by generous remittances by family of £300 per annum.

Despite selling his land, livestock, and most of his larger assets, Thomas died with very few possessions. A clue as to why this might have been can be found in a press report stating his 'great failing was drink, which proved a big curse'.<sup>144</sup> However, Thomas' drinking was not troublesome enough to merit entry into the *Police Gazettes*. Thomas was not entirely abandoned by his family. Remittances were being sent via his brother and a letter from his mother was waiting for him in the mail. He may have been out of sight, but he was certainly not out of mind.

### **William Montague Davenport Howes (1859-unknown)**

Born in Kensington, London, in 1859, William Montagu Davenport Howes was the youngest son of George Fuller Howes (1816-1888) and Ann Elizabeth Laming (1820-1878). The Howes family had long been associated with the King's Own Light Infantry Regiment of

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<sup>144</sup> "Thomas Barnes Birkett, the Story of a Wasted Life," *Wanganui Chronicle*, 12 February 1897, 3.

Militia, George having served as a Captain, as had his father before him.<sup>145</sup> William's elder brother, Herbert Taylor McCrea Howes, was director of a London wine and beer merchant.<sup>146</sup>

Records for William are sparse. At age 2, he was living with his family in Clifton Villas in Paddington, once a respectable upper class area of London, with a retinue of three servants.<sup>147</sup> A decade later the family moved to a large property in Heston where William was listed as a scholar. This is the last identified record of William in Britain. No emigration records can be found, but he next appears in the Auckland area of New Zealand in 1889 in a report of his arrest for obtaining money under false pretences.<sup>148</sup> A year later, the 1890 New Zealand Electoral Rolls show William, age 31, across the country in Opotiki, Hawke's Bay. His occupation is listed as journalist.<sup>149</sup> Press reports of the time confirm his employment, albeit for bed and board only, at the Opotiki Herald.<sup>150</sup> By 1900, William has relocated to the Auckland region where he worked as a gum-digger.<sup>151</sup>

The main sources of information for William after 1900 are in the New Zealand press and *Police Gazettes*. A 1903 newspaper report references a conviction in 1900 for assault and use of insulting language, although this cannot be found in the *Police Gazettes*.<sup>152</sup> In this report, William is referred to as an ex-Army Officer who had fought in the Boer War. However,

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<sup>145</sup> "Deaths," *Homeward Mail*, 9 April 1888, 477.

<sup>146</sup> "1901 England Census," database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Herbert Taylor McCrea Howse [sic] (age 44), Hanwell, Middlesex, England.

<sup>147</sup> "1861 England Census," database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes (age 2), London, Middlesex, England.

<sup>148</sup> *Auckland Star*, 26 June 1889, 4.

<sup>149</sup> "New Zealand Electoral Rolls 1890," database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for William M Davenport Howes, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.

<sup>150</sup> "Alleged Criminal Libel," *Bay of Plenty Times*, 25 March 1891, 4.

<sup>151</sup> "New Zealand Electoral Rolls 1900," database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes, Waitemata, Auckland, New Zealand.

<sup>152</sup> "An Ex-Army Officer in Trouble," *Auckland Star*, 4 May 1903, 2.

examination of his army records reveal a very different reality. His Attestation in 1881 shows he was visually impaired and had previously been considered unfit for service. The 1881 Attestation overlooked this condition and he was signed up. There is no mention of any Boer War service. Instead William spent eighteen months in Malta and two years in the West Indies, the remaining two months of his short service of under three years were spent in Britain. He spent an inordinate amount of time in army hospital care – a total of 477 days – mostly for ‘general debility’.<sup>153</sup> William was discharged as unfit for service in May, 1884.

In May 1903, William was again convicted of forging and uttering and given probation on condition he repay the debts. He broke this condition and served a year in prison. A more severe sentence was imposed on William in 1912. He was sentenced to seven years hard labour for indecent assault on a male. At his hearing William’s defence referred to him as ‘a sort of remittance man’ who ‘at times gave way to drink.’<sup>154</sup> He was discharged on remission in 1917, having served five years and his photograph included in the *Police Gazettes* (Fig. 8). In 1919, William was employed as a caretaker at a girls’ school, the Diocesan School in Epsom, Auckland, but was again arrested for indecent assault on a male and given a ten year jail sentence.<sup>155</sup> William was released on licence in 1927, age 68, after serving eight years.<sup>156</sup> At this point the trail goes cold and neither death nor burial records can be positively attributed to William.

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<sup>153</sup> “British Army Service Records,” database, *FindMyPast.com* <https://www.findmypast.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes, 23 February 1881.

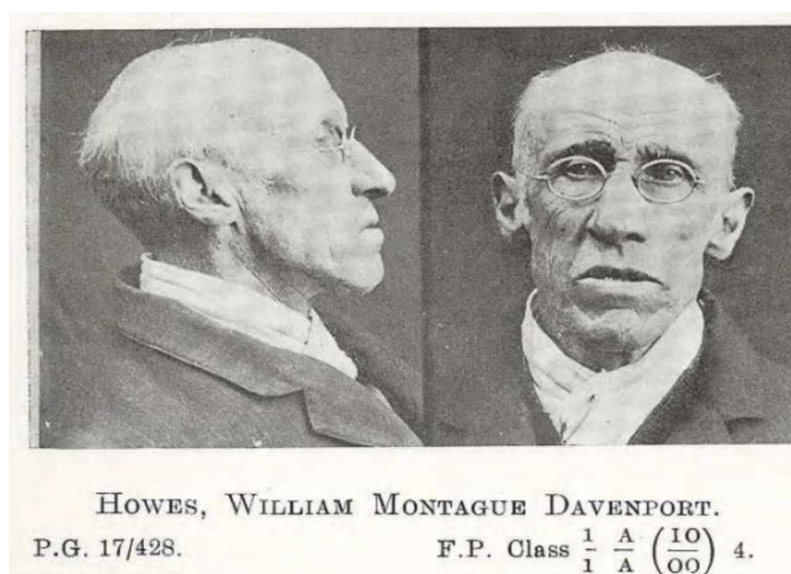
<sup>154</sup> “Unnatural Offence,” *Auckland Star*, 21 May 1912, 7.

<sup>155</sup> “Ten Years Imprisonment for Unnatural Offence,” *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 May 1919, 5.

<sup>156</sup> “New Zealand Police Gazettes 1878-1945,” database, *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes, 2 March 1927, 158.

William was raised in a military family. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been officers in the King's Own Light Brigade. However, it is evident William did not measure up to military life, likely due to his visual impairment and sickly constitution. Neither can any reference to an education at Oxford, Cambridge, or any other university be found, despite his Attestation in 1881 listing his previous occupation as 'student'.<sup>157</sup>

*Figure 8 - William Montague Davenport Howes. Source: New Zealand Police Gazettes, database, Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes, 5 September 1917, 36.*



William first appears in the New Zealand records in 1884, very soon after his medical discharge from the military. After a short stint in the gum-digging region of Northland, he took a job as a journalist in Opotiki, Hawke's Bay. His recompense in board and lodgings implies he had an alternative income suggesting the receipt of remittances from home. William's indecent offending later in life may be indicative of behaviour that would cause damage to his family's reputation had it been discovered during his life in Britain. Likewise, his predilection for alcohol, and its effect on his behaviour, may have been cause for concern.

<sup>157</sup> "British Army Service Records," database, *FindMyPast.com* <http://www.findmypast.com>, entry for William Montague Davenport Howes, 23 February 1881.

His behaviour and inability to fulfil a military career are likely the reasons William was exiled, or encouraged to remove himself, to New Zealand.

### **John Nathaniel Williams (1878-1915)**

John Nathaniel Williams was born on 24 January 1878 in the affluent London borough of Kensington. He was one of seven children born into a renowned lineage of English bankers and Members of Parliament. His father was Sir Robert Williams (1849-1943) and his mother Rosa Walker Simes, daughter of a Sussex landowner. Sir Robert was made 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet of Bridehead, the family estate, in 1915. Following the early death of his elder brother, Robert Williams (1874-1881), John became the eldest son and heir apparent. John's lavish coming of age celebrations in 1899 demonstrate the family's wealth. The event spanned several days, involved luxurious gifts, and ended with fireworks by a Mr Brock, famous for his Crystal Palace displays.<sup>158</sup>

John was educated at Eton and New College, Oxford. He graduated with Master of Arts in 1901.<sup>159</sup> During his time at Oxford he was gazetted into the Volunteer Brigade Dorset Regiment, attaining the rank of Lieutenant in 1899, age 21.<sup>160</sup> He was described as well-liked and had an easy-going personality that was devoid of ostentatiousness. He was also known as being a well-rounded sportsman and athlete, particularly for his cricketing skills.<sup>161</sup> John appears to have acquired a penchant for gambling at University. He left in 1901 with

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<sup>158</sup> "Coming of Age of the Son of Colonel Williams M.P.," *Western Gazette*, 8 September 1899, 6.

<sup>159</sup> "For King and Country," *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 7 June 1915, 4.

<sup>160</sup> "A Memorable Day at Bridehead," *Bridport News*, 8 September 1899, 8.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

bookmaker and moneylender debts totalling £4,500 which were settled by his father.<sup>162</sup> In the same year, the census showed John boarding at London's fashionable Cox's Hotel on Jermyn Street, popular with high society and politicians.<sup>163</sup> Within six years, John accumulated further betting debts of more than £12,000, again settled by his father. John was declared bankrupt in 1909, owing over £20,000. John's representative at the bankruptcy hearing declared him to be 'a young man who became obsessed with a desire to bet, the fever having attacked him.'<sup>164</sup>

John next appears aboard the *Tainui* which departed Plymouth on 20 July 1911, sailing for Wellington. He was travelling second class and his occupation was listed as 'gent'.<sup>165</sup> John's great-nephew Sir Philip Williams recounts that John's father 'gave his son an ultimatum to live abroad as a Remittance Man or be disinherited completely.'<sup>166</sup> This was not John's first visit to New Zealand. During 1902 and 1903, he was in Auckland, possibly visiting his sister who was married to Frederic Wallis, Bishop of Wellington from 1895 to 1911. During his stay he played cricket for Lord Hawke's XI on the invitation of the team captain, an old friend from his school days.<sup>167</sup> After his subsequent arrival in 1911, John worked as a metallurgist for the Grand Junction Mining Company in Waihi where he was still working at the outbreak of World War One.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> "Young Man's Betting Losses," *Globe*, 9 February 1909, 5.

<sup>163</sup> "1901 England Census," database, *Ancestry* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for John N Williams (age 23), St. James, Westminster, London.

<sup>164</sup> "Young Man's Betting Losses," *Globe*, 9 February 1909, 5.

<sup>165</sup> "Passenger Lists Leaving UK," database, *FindMyPast* <https://www.findmypast.com>, entry for Mr J N Williams, Tainui, 21 July 1911.

<sup>166</sup> "John Nathaniel (Nat) Williams," *Waihi Museum* <http://www.waihimuseum.co.nz/museum-and-research/world-war-i/john-nathaniel-williams> (accessed 12 July 2018).

<sup>167</sup> Barry Patemen, "Private Williams of Waihi," *New Zealand Cricket Museum* <http://nzcricketmuseum.co.nz/williams> (accessed 14 July 2018).

<sup>168</sup> "New Zealand Army WWI Nominal Rolls, Vol: 15 Aug 1914 - 31 Dec 1915," database, *Ancestry* <http://www.ancestry.com>, entry for John Nathaniel Williams,.

On 12 August 1914, at Paeroa, John signed up for military service with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His appearance in his friend Gerald ‘Tad’ Morpeth’s war diary was usually associated with lively stories of antics on leave, discipline for late returns to camp, and John’s fondness for playing bridge. Private John Nathaniel Williams died on 25 April, 1915, during the New Zealand Expeditionary Force’s landing at Gaba Tepe, Gallipoli.<sup>169</sup> According to his entry in *De Ruvigny’s Roll of Honour* he died ‘setting a most gallant example’ and that by ‘dying in the ranks’ he had ‘done more for this force and perhaps for the Empire than he would have done as a commissioned officer.’<sup>170</sup> His war medals were sent to his father who had recently received a baronetcy, to which John was heir. His younger brother, Philip Francis Cunningham Williams, became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Baronet of Bridehead on the death of their father in 1943.

John was the youngest son in a wealthy and powerful British family. Following the death of his elder brother, Robert Williams, in 1881, John became heir apparent to the Williams’ fortune and family estate. Its value was not inconsiderable, reported to be nearly £209,000 in 1943.<sup>171</sup> However, despite his affable nature, John evidently had a gambling problem. This problem was made public in the British media and would have embarrassed his family. As such, John was given the choice of exile abroad or disinheritance. It is possible that New Zealand was chosen because his elder sister resided there as wife of the then Bishop of Wellington. John was able to find employment and friendship in Waihi. He did not appear in

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<sup>169</sup> Allan Philip Morpeth, *The “Waiheathens” at Gallipoli*, Tauranga City Libraries Research Collections, 2008, [http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/remembering\\_war/documents/show/429-ebook-epub-format-the-waiheathens-at-gallipoli-by-allan-p-morpeth](http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/remembering_war/documents/show/429-ebook-epub-format-the-waiheathens-at-gallipoli-by-allan-p-morpeth) (e-book accessed 23 May 2018).

<sup>170</sup> “De Ruvigny’s Roll of Honour Volume 1,” database, *Ancestry* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for John Nathaniel Williams, 380.

<sup>171</sup> “England and Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1858-1966,” database, *Ancestry* <https://www.ancestry.com>, entry for Sir Robert Williams, probate date 19 October 1943.



the *Police Gazettes* nor was he reported for any misdemeanours in the press. This suggests exile to New Zealand was, for John, a redeeming factor in his life.

John's eagerness to enlist for World War One demonstrates a patriotic and militaristic ethos probably instilled in him by his family, education, and upper class status. That he enlisted with the New Zealand force in the rank of Private, instead of taking a commission offered by the British forces, also speaks to a camaraderie he found among those he befriended in New Zealand. This close friendship is particularly evident from his friend, Tad Morpeth's, diary.

Figure 9 - John Nathaniel Williams, 1914 (far left). Source: "The Morpeth Waiheathens (WWI) 14-0333," *Tauranga Memories: Remembering War*, Tauranga City Libraries, [http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/en/remembering\\_war/images/show/8934-the-morpeth-waiheathens-wwi-14-0333](http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/en/remembering_war/images/show/8934-the-morpeth-waiheathens-wwi-14-0333).



## CONCLUSION

Despite being a small but consistent migrant type within British settler societies, and the subject of popular mythology, Remittance Men are but footnotes in New Zealand historiography. This dissertation greatly advances current understandings of the emergence of Remittance Men across the British colonies of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. New insights are revealed about New Zealand's founding stock.

Firstly, analysis of their visibility in the colonial press reveals three key phases defining the rise and fall of Remittance Men in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. In the first phase those British economic and social forces that shaped the emergence of Remittance Men in the nineteenth century are identified. Between 1870 and 1915 the fortunes of many British families, particularly landowners in England, were diminished by the agricultural depression. Furthermore, career opportunities for second sons were limited by the abolition of paid military commissions and the professionalisation of the civil service and clergy. Families seeking alternative futures for redundant younger sons turned their gaze to the colonies. The period 1915 -1945 saw visibility of Remittance Men in the colonial press decline. This phase incorporates two World Wars that provided redundant second sons with a vocation – to fight for King and country – and lessened the need for forced emigration by the family. During the same period, the law of primogeniture was abolished, enabling all children to inherit thereby reducing the numbers of surplus gentlemen. In the subsequent years of 1946 to 1960, a continued decline in reports of Remittance Men in the colonial press is evident. During this period, reports in the press turned from discussion of individual Remittance Men to characterisations of their type within visual entertainment and fictional literature.

Secondly, statistical analysis of Remittance Men in the New Zealand press, bolstered by demographic and criminal reports in the *Police Gazettes*, revealed a social type very different to that currently portrayed in Hartley's *Colonial Outcasts*. Instead of quietly integrating into New Zealand society, this dissertation shows that many Remittance Men struggled within a frontier society that provided few opportunities for gentlemanly professions. Despite being provided with remittances sufficient to lead a comfortable lifestyle, many were forced to find employment labouring or clerking. That such lowly jobs were considered among men of their status and income suggests Remittance Men in New Zealand were either unwilling, or incapable, of adapting financially. Many turned to petty crime to support their lifestyles. The significant number of suicides and drink related crimes among Remittance Men indicates a tough existence for which their privileged backgrounds did not prepare them. Drink, whether an existing addiction or a new-found solution to their predicament, was the cause of many a Remittance Man's downfall.

Finally, the use of public records through genealogical portals, coupled with archive sources from New Zealand and Britain, allowed the narration of in-depth biographies of Remittance Men. Such biographies, that synthesise data retrieved from the press with personal data from public record archives, demonstrates the extent to which the lives of Remittance Men can be retrieved. Not only do the biographies corroborate the official definition of the remittance type and illustrate profiles created by the statistical analysis, they also contribute significantly to current understandings of the backgrounds and behaviour of Remittance Men within a New Zealand context.

Future expansion of research to include Remittance Men unreported in the New Zealand press would significantly augment understandings of their behaviour and experiences. Such research would serve to contrast and compare those Remittance Men visible in the press with those who successfully integrated into New Zealand society. For this, research must be expanded to include the discovery of additional sources such as diaries, personal documentation, coroner's reports, local histories, and family histories.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

Sample 'Remittance Man Database' created by Helen Leggatt

<i>Name</i>	<i>Remitt. (£ / Yr)</i>	<i>Date Birth</i>	<i>Native Of</i>	<i>Cause of Death</i>	<i>Occ. In NZ</i>	<i>Occ. Standardised</i>	<i>Reason for Press Mention</i>	<i>Police Report?</i>	<i>No. of Offences</i>	<i>Multiple Offences?</i>
George Henry ADAMS	n/a	1846	Wales	n/a	Settler	Manual	Crime	Y	1	N
Alfred ALBERTS	n/a	1865	Other	n/a	Clerk	White Collar	Crime	Y	6	Y
William Henry ALLEN	n/a	1876	Other	n/a	Labourer	Manual	Crime	Y	3	Y
Middleton Gordon ANDERSON	70	1854	Eng.	Drink	Labourer	Manual	Drink Death	N	0	N
James Alexander ANDERSON	n/a	1866	Ireland	n/a	Theatrical manager	Professional	Crime	Y	1	N
Alfred ASHENDEN	75	1862	Eng.	Illness	Gentleman	Gentleman	Crime	Y	10+	Y
Henry Thomas ATKINS	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Crime	N	0	N
James Channing BAGNALL	n/a	1852	Eng.	n/a	Clerk	White Collar	Crime	Y	10+	Y
Arthur Windle BAILEY	n/a	1865	Eng.	Illness	Surveyor	Professional	Crime	Y	3	Y
Frank BAKER	n/a	1850	n/a	Accident	n/a	n/a	Accident	N	0	N
William Evinson BAMFORD	240	1857	Eng.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Drink Death	N	0	N
John Cockburn Owen BASSETT	n/a	1859	Eng.	Suicide	n/a	n/a	Suicide	N	0	N
Stanlake Henry BATSON	n/a	1864	Eng.	n/a	Gentleman	Gentleman	Bankruptcy	N	0	N

*Source: Regional newspapers via Papers Past, New Zealand Police Gazettes 1878-1945 via Ancestry.com*

## **APPENDIX B**

Press mentions of Remittance Men in colonial press by decade

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>NZ</b>	<b>UK</b>
1840	0	0	0	0
1850	0	0	0	0
1860	9	1	0	15
1870	10	0	24	10
1880	91	0	347	19
1890	461	11	588	143
1900	1343	85	754	333
1910	1178	68	761	181
1920	676	68	176	189
1930	626	39	121	183
1940	290	27	93	45
1950	123	21	0	52
1960	13	43	0	30
1970	16	26	0	7
1980	13	45	0	1
1990	12	15	0	24

Source: Trove, <https://trove.nla.gov.au>; Newspaper Archive, <http://www.newspaperarchive.com>, Papers Past, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>; British Newspaper Archive, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>.

## **APPENDIX C**

Number of Remittance Men born, by decade

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Number Born</b>
1820	6
1830	3
1840	9
1850	33
1860	33
1870	22
1880	6
1890	3
1900	4
1910	1
	<b>120</b>
Unknown	46
Total	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*

## **APPENDIX D**

Number of Remittance Men by country of origin

Country of Origin	No.
England	38
Scotland	4
Wales	3
Ireland	2
Other	3
	<b>50</b>
Unknown	116
Total	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*



## **APPENDIX E**

### Income

Annual Remittance (£)	No./Men
200	6
150	1
120	2
100	2
70	3
50	4
	<b>18</b>
Unknown	148
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*

## **APPENDIX F**

### Occupation

<b>Occupation (NZ) (Standardised)</b>	<b>Count</b>
Gentleman	4
Professional	14
White Collar	19
Manual	48
Unemployed	1
	<b>86</b>
Unknown	80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*

## **APPENDIX G**

### Newsworthiness

<b>Reason for Press Mention</b>	<b>No.</b>
Crime	61
Death	37
Drink	27
Suicide	22
Other	7
Attempted Suicide	6
Accident	4
Bankruptcy	2
	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*

## **APPENDIX H**

### Cause of Death

<b>Cause of Death</b>	<b>No.</b>
Suicide	26
Illness	13
Accident	10
Drink	10
Sudden	5
Drowning	5
Homocide	2
	<b>71</b>
Unknown	95
Total	<b>166</b>

*Source: Helen Leggatt, "Remittance Man Database," (2018).*

## APPENDIX I

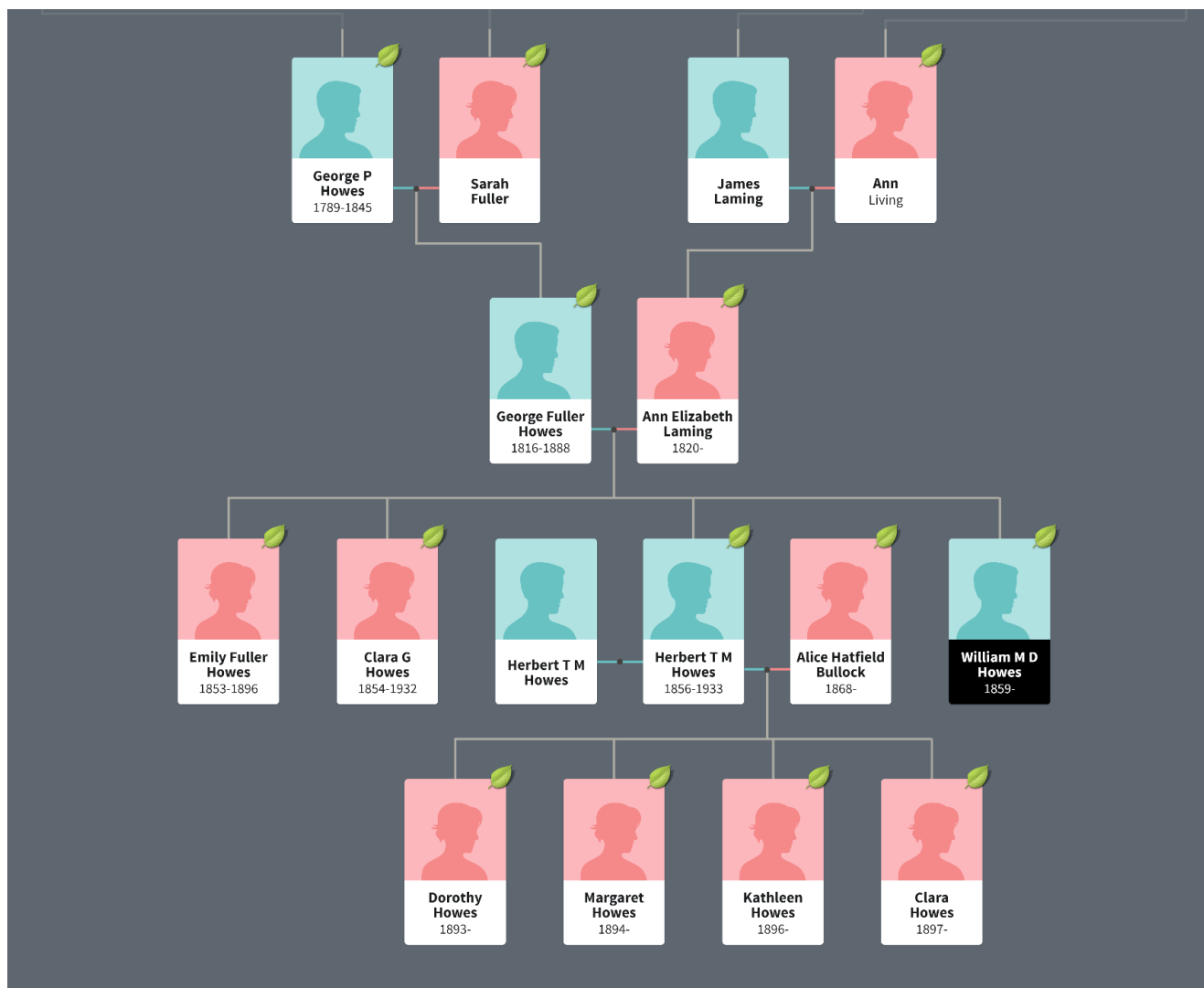
### Family Tree for Thomas Barnes Birkett



Source: "Birkett Family Tree," database, Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com>

## APPENDIX J

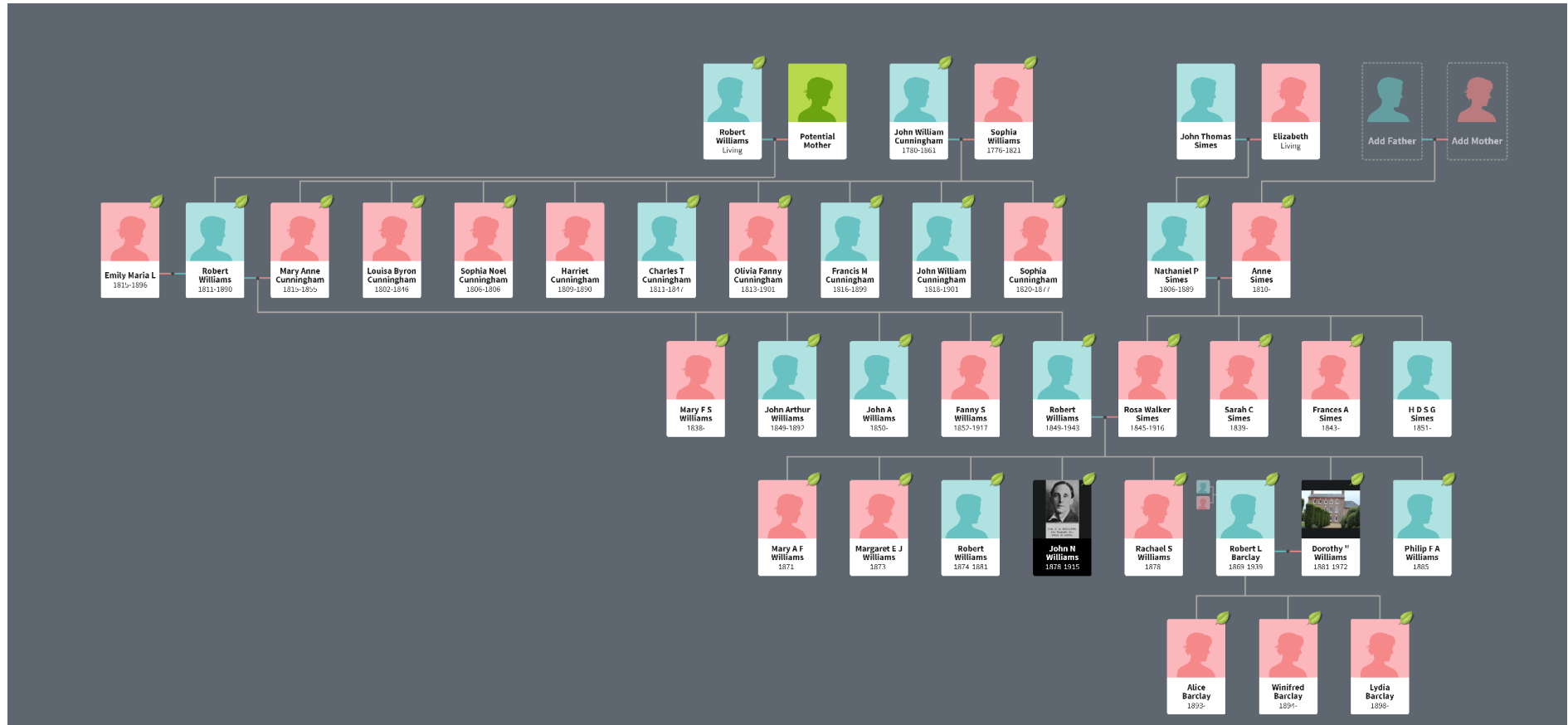
### Family Tree for William Montague Davenport Howes



Source: "Howes Family Tree," database, Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com>

## APPENDIX K

### Family Tree for John Nathaniel Williams



Source: "Williams Family Tree," database, Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com> Compiler Helen Leggatt.

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