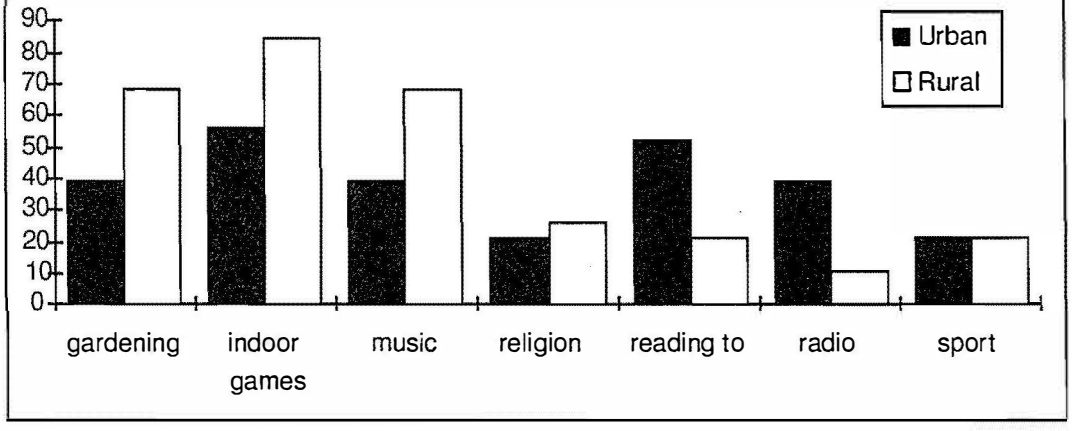
when the radio arrived it began to replace locally organised amusements. Edna Partridge explained that 'once the radio came that sort of entertainment [local concerts] dropped away'.[61]

In Britain musical evenings were one of the main forms of family entertainment, with almost forty per cent. describing musical evenings, although over 42.3 per cent. (nine families) had radios, and the gramophone had begun to replace the piano and the mouth organ. Peter Crookston, from Port Glasgow in Scotland, recalled musical evenings where they sang and recited poetry. His mother's family, the Camerons, came to the house once a month and 'they'd come up and they'd be talking and laughing and we'd finish up singing'.[62]

It is difficult to quantify all the leisure activities of parents and children accurately, but the following graph shows the leisure activities recorded in the interviews and outlined in this section. Although not authoritative it gives an impression of leisure activities as they were reported and recorded.

Fig 13
Leisure Activities at Home (Interviewees)



Despite class variation all the families in this study observed Christmas. Christmas became an important symbol, not just of family ties, but of the modern, close, nuclear family. Humphries and Gordon claim that:

> The increasing privatisation of family life and the development of more indulgent attitudes towards children is . . . illustrated by the phenomenal spread of Christmas as a great family festival in all social classes during the first half of the century. The rituals of the Christmas tree, Father Christmas, presents for the children and the family Christmas meal complete with roast turkey, plum pudding and crackers were the 'invention' of the relatively well-to-do Victorian middle classes in the mid-nineteenth century.

[61]Edna Partridge, 7.2.95, p.19. Marjorie Walker recalled her father playing the violin at times and 'it was always the Sunday evening ritual for the family to sing hymns while mother played the organ.' M.Walker, 7.12.94, p.13. See also Mavis Benson, 5.4.95, p.4.

[62]Peter Crookston, p.14. Courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive in Oxford.

Advertisement in the Christchurch *Press*, 1925. Department stores advertised in-store Father Christmases and promoted toy sales.

Christmas trees do not seem to have been universal at this period, and Christmas decorations were not as commercialised as today. This photograph shows the Christmas tree in the Anderson household, in Cranmer Square. The tree is largely decorated with home-made decorations. Margaret loved the excitement of Christmas 'knowing that there were parcels hidden in Mum's cupboard in brown paper, no fancy paper of course, just done up in brown paper and string and always a lot of people coming to the door prior to Christmas, it was sort of a nice time'. Courtesy of Margaret Anderson

> Behind them lay a worship of the family and a desire to protect children from the harshness of the real world.[63]

Their observation neglects the important kinship dimension of the Christmas celebration but highlights the way that Christmas came to represent a special family time. By the interwar years these rituals and the fantasy elements associated with Christmas were firmly established. Advertising reinforced the commercial aspect of Christmas, and raised children's expectations. One Christchurch retailer commented in 1926 that 'Parents will go without practically anything to buy the children Christmas toys'.[64] During the Depression some charities recognised the importance of Christmas and gave extra assistance to families and children. The 'Smith Family Joyspreaders' helped underprivileged families in Wellington.[65] Elliott Atkinson recalled that the Smith family gave out toys at Christmas. 'Come Christmas time that's all, you went down there [town hall] and your parents were given a few toys and that sort of thing for you'.[66]

The ideology of Christmas as a special time for children and a symbol of family life appears very strongly in interviews.[67] Most farming parents could not afford the time to play with their children, but at Christmas they relaxed and shared leisure with their children, although dairy farmers still had to milk cows on Christmas day. Edna Partridge's father grew early potatoes for the Christmas market, 'now those potatoes probably gave him the ready cash to buy the children's Christmas presents'. The children believed firmly in Father Christmas. Mrs Partridge reinforced this belief. They hung their stockings around the open fire in the living room:

> One Christmas Father Christmas got his coat caught on there and it tore a button off. Here was this big button with a thread of red fabric hanging on the poker nail. That was most exciting we treasured that for years. We put it out for him to take back the next year but he didn't seem interested - he must have got a new one by then.[68]

Parents emphasised the fantastic elements of Christmas, and spent considerable sums of

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[63]Humphries & Gordon, *A Labour of Love,* p.89.

[64]'Christmas Trade', *The Press,* 2 December 1926, p.2.

[65]H 35/70. The Smith Family supplied milk to undernourished school children in primary schools. Smith Family Joyspreaders (Inc.), 93-95 Wakefield Street, Wellington to Hon J.A.Young, Minister of Health, Wellington, 10th April 1934. Christchurch also had a Christmas city mission that gave gifts, clothes, and toys to the needy at Christmas. Children were encouraged to make or give toys to the mission. E.M.Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.13.

[66]Elliott Atkinson, 11.6.94, p.2.

[67]Mavis Benson's parents did not have much money but Mrs Benson tried to give her children a Christmas. Father Christmas gave them an apple, orange, chocolate and sometimes half a crown, as well as a hand-made gift. When they lived in town they also went to see Father Christmas at the big store. Mavis Benson, 12.5.95, p.11.

[68]Edna Partridge, 19.10.94, p.8, 8.3.95, pp.34, 36.

money on their children.[69] Christmas symbolises the encroachment of modern ideas as well the dominance of English celebrations in New Zealand.[70]

III

Out and about: entertainment, outings and social activities

> However, the focus on the family did not rule out collective social and leisure activities: rather it meant that communal organisations were themselves family orientated, based on common membership of church, sporting or residents bodies, but with separate men's women's and children's activities within them.[71]

Historians noted an increasing commercialisation of leisure in the twentieth century, as well as a shift to private family-based leisure. As Hughes and Hunt observe in the above quotation, this shift did not destroy community leisure but rather transformed these activities to reflect family patterns. Leisure outside the home either reflected the need to promote family interaction or reinforced the family, but split activities by gender or age. The section will explore 'private' family leisure outside the home then examine some of the commercialised leisure activities available in this time. Contrasts between urban and rural areas in New Zealand emerge again, community-based leisure activities were more important in the countryside because of the lack of commercialised facilities.

In the interviews, visiting is recorded as the most popular activity, both in New Zealand and Britain, reinforcing the impression that most leisure centred around home and community. Roughly the same number (62 per cent. in the New Zealand sample and 66 per cent. in the British sample) recalled visiting as their major social activity, although the very poor in both societies tended not to visit each other as much, probably because of inadequate facilities. The Keehans, a rural family, visited relatives on a Sunday. Irene recalled that the children gave recitals or played music: 'that was the entertainment we had'.[72] The Wicks had card evenings with neighbours, and visitors would come round for supper perhaps once a week.[73] Holidays were an extension of this interaction with kin or friends.

In the interwar years changing transport revolutionised aspects of leisure in New Zealand and Britain. Although all classes in society visited friends or relatives and went on holidays or outings, only the most prosperous could afford private transport. Possession of a motor car greatly influenced leisure patterns, allowing the middle classes to enjoy a leisure-

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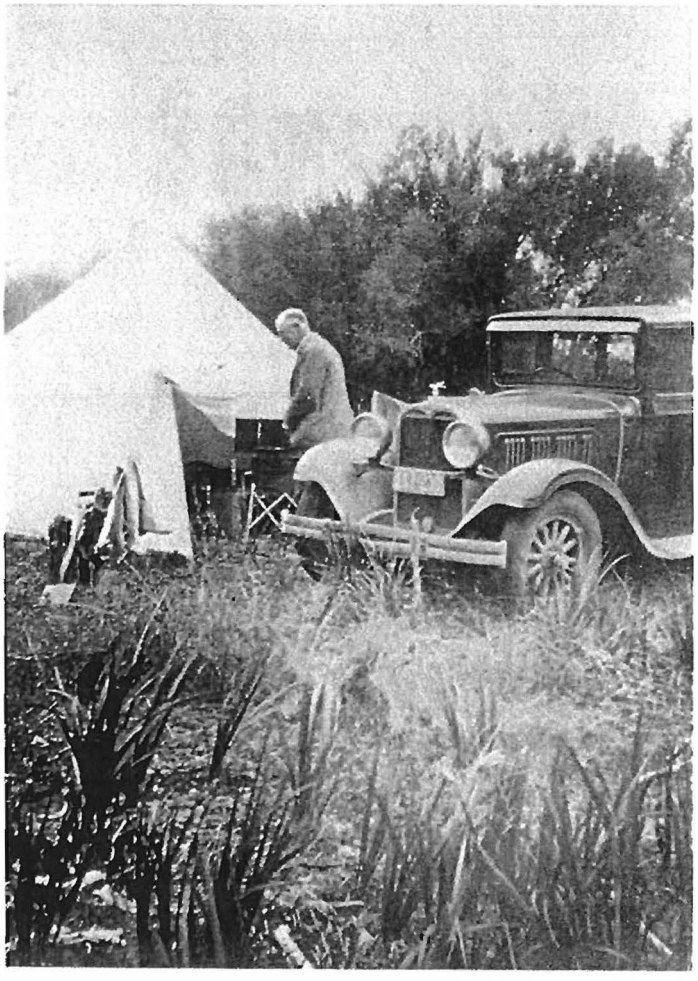
[69] Mada Bastings recalled 'we always left a plate with a bottle of beer and a bottle of lemonade and in the morning there would be bites out of and half the beer would be gone and all the lemonade, Father Christmas had had it'. Mada Bastings, 15.12.94, p.22.

[70] The Scots did not celebrate Christmas traditionally, but observed New Year. In my earlier set of interviews, among thirty Otago families, some children of Scots background could not remember Christmas as an important celebration. This distinction seems to have largely disappeared by the interwar years.

[71] Anne Hughes, Karen Hunt, 'A culture transformed? ', in Davies & Fielding, *Worker's worlds,* p.92.

[72] Irene Keehan, 26.5.95, p.9.

[73] Joan Wicks, 23.3.95, p.23.



Uncle Morton Anderson with his car by the Anderson's camp in the countryside. 1927.

It is not surprising that favourable recollections of fathers often stem from the family holiday. The following pictures of family leisure, either with a car in the foreground, or in areas only accessible by good transport, show the freedom the motor car conveyed. Most of the unposed pictures of children and fathers stem from holidays of family picnics. These photos also reflect the fact that people take photos on holiday, but they provide an invaluable visual record of family leisure.

Health and Happiness for *your* Family !

BUY A GOOD USED CAR TO-DAY

Are your children healthy, or must they be constantly dosed with medicine? Does your wife get her share of sunshine? She is always at work in the house—every day is a work day for her.

Why not buy a good Used Car to-day and give your family some joyful runs into the country—hours of fresh air and glorious winter sunshine. Your children will be healthier and your wife will return to household cares with renewed vigour. Isn't it worth it?

We are stock-taking in a few weeks' time, and offer Good Used Cars at prices that are exceptionally low. Call and select your bargains NOW. Easy terms arranged.

£25 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of late model CHEVROLET, newly finished; good hood and tyres; electric light and self starter. Price £75.

£25 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of STUDEBAKER, 5-seater; newly finished; electric light and self starter. Very suitable car for farmer. Price £85.

£35 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of STUDEBAKER, 5-seater, luxuriously equipped; electric light and self starter, rear wind-shield. Car newly finished cream; splendid appearance. Price £100.

£20 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of CHEVROLET 5-seater; finished grey; electric light and self starter; good tyres. Price £55.

£50 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of ESSEX 6-cylinder, luxuriously equipped; side screens, rear screen, two spare rims, covers and tubes, splendid order. Price £225.

£20 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of FORD, [illegible] model; newly finished; electric lights. Price £90.

£50 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of HUDSON, 7-seater; newly finished cream; electric light and self starter. Very suitable car for farmer. Price £175.

£50 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of FORD Tudor Sedan; newly finished. Had very careful [illegible]. Price £115.

£40 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of De Luxe 5-Model HUPP; newly finished cream; new hood, electric light and self starter. Price [illegible].

£20 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of AUSTIN, 7-seater; electric lights, almost new tyres; engine and gears splendid order. Will take £[illegible].

£35 Deposit

Secures immediate delivery of smart STUDEBAKER Roadster; newly finished cream; electric light and self starter; good tyres. Will take £[illegible].

New Zealand Agents for Studebaker Motors:

ADAMS LTD.

Showrooms: 152-154 High St. *Garage:* 219 Tuam St., Christchurch

Car advertisement, *The Press*, 1926.

orientated family life. Humphries and Gordon observed that this transformed the 'weekend', and the middle class Sunday 'once dominated by church and Sunday school, started to be more 'fun' orientated'. In Britain the number of cars increased from 500,000 in 1920 to 3 million in 1939. Humphries and Gordon suggest that middle class family men bought these cars, and certainly only the most prosperous in the British sample had motorised transport.[74] The number of motor cars in New Zealand also jumped sharply in the interwar years, and by 1928 cars were no longer the province of the wealthy. In 1918 there were an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 motor vehicles in New Zealand but by 1925, when the government introduced compulsory registration, a total of 106,000 motor vehicles were registered.[75] Many New Zealand car advertisements appealed to the image of the family man, and one advertisement in 1926 asked:

> Are your children healthy, or must they be constantly dosed with medicine? Does your wife get her share of sunshine? She is always at work in the house—every day is a work day for her. Why not buy a good Used Car to- day and give your family some joyful runs into the country—hours of fresh air and glorious winter sunshine'.[76]

Such appeals reveal the importance of the car to the leisure-based 'modern' family.

Only a quarter of the New Zealand families in this study - six urban families and eight rural families - had a car while their children were growing up.[77] Others had friends or relations with a car, but at least half of the interviewees did not have access to a motor car. This was higher than the British sample, where only a tenth had access to a car.[78] These families based weekend outings and picnics around the car, which gave them extensive freedom of movement. Other forms of transport such as horse and gig, or bicycles, were much slower but families still enjoyed outings before the arrival of the motor car. Reg Williams recalled how his father put the whole family on a railway jigger or trolley and pulled

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[74] Humphries & Gordon, *A Labour of Love,* p.88.

[75] R.M. Burdon, *The New Dominion A Social and Political History of New Zealand 1918-39,* A.H. & A.W. Reed, Wellington, 1965, pp.104-107. The result of this increase in vehicle numbers was a jump in the number of motor accidents. In 1928 it took over drowning as the most common cause of accidents. There were 176 deaths from motor accidents in 1928, then during the height of the slump the number of deaths fell to 120 (1933) before rising again to 216 deaths in 1939. Burdon, *The New Dominion, p.326.*

[76] Advertisment, The *Press,* 8 June 1926, p.9.

[77] Andersons, M, the Wicks, Gales, Vales, Maudsleys, the Allisons (?): all urban families, had a car. The Buchanans, McNeils, Dennistons, Greens, Gillespies, Chapmans, Ryans (from c.1935) Evans also had cars. The Bevans lost their car in the twenties and the Walkers could not afford to run theirs during the depression. The Kemps planned to get a car when Mr Kemp earned over £300 per year.

[78] This revolution in transport benefited men more than women since few women had licenses or drove cars regularly. Although Mrs Vale and Mrs Anderson could drive, they seldom did, and only Mrs Maudsley drove regularly. Teenagers also benefited from mobility. Anna Chapman started driving at the age of twelve so she could drive her mother to meetings. The motor car gave families the opportunity to enjoy leisure in the weekends, and made family holidays easier.

his way up to the Kaimai Bush.[79] Urban New Zealanders in this study recalled regular outings with greater frequency than the British sample. A third of the British sample, but almost seventy per cent of the urban New Zealand interviewees described family picnics, and walks. Rural New Zealanders recorded fewer outings: twelve per cent. had picnics, although a similar number, 43 per cent. in the urban and 35 per cent. in the rural sample, enjoyed recreational walking. Perhaps greater prosperity in New Zealand and easier access to recreational areas accounts for the contrast between the British and New Zealand samples. The conclusion can be drawn that urban New Zealanders enjoyed an increasingly private and family-orientated style of leisure.

During the interwar years the popularity of holidays increased, perhaps reflecting the emphasis on family based leisure. Rail transport became cheaper and more readily available in New Zealand and Britain. In Britain in the late 1930s five million people, or one in six of the population had a least one week's holiday away, usually by the seaside.[80] Humphries and Gordon argue that holidays became a time for children to establish friendly relationships with their fathers.[81] In New Zealand, however, men did not always spend the whole holiday with their family. Businessmen might only spend the weekend or a week away, while their wife and children remained on holiday. For example, Jocelyn Vale explained that they had a yearly holiday with relatives in Brighton, or at a hotel in Akaroa. Her father would take them there and stay for the weekend.[82] In this study over 60 per cent. of the New Zealand sample but only 36 per cent. of the British sample went away for holidays. Middle-class families in both countries were more likely to enjoy a holiday together than working-class families. Many families visited relatives but only the more affluent could afford to have a crib or a bach, or to stay in paid accommodation. Farming families seldom enjoyed holidays as a group.[83]

By the interwar years the annual Christmas summer holiday in New Zealand became an established tradition. Commercial enterprises, especially holiday resorts, developed to cater for the expanding market. Caroline Bay was one of the most important South Island resorts and had been established to attract families.[84] Jack Ford recalled:

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[79]Reg Williams, 28.9.94, p.7.

[80]Humphries & Gordon, *A Labour of Love,* p.88.

[81]ibid. Betty Stemp from Kent (an only child) recalled their annual trip to Hastings, a place her mother thought a more genteel resort. Betty's father worked on the railways so he had free train fares, and the family saved up all year for the treat. They stayed in a boarding house, and went to the beach every day. Betty Stemp, 22.1.96, p.11.

[82]Noelene Vale, 22.4.95, p.7.

[83] The mother and children might go away or a couple of children would stay with relatives. Edna Partridge explained that her family lacked the resources to go away together. Edna Partridge, 22.3.95, p.33. Thomas Ryan only once went on holiday. The family visited his mother's sisters in Taradale in 1929. He saw the sea for the first time 'this big great ridge that you think was never going to end.' Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.14.

[84]The beach at Caroline Bay was artificial, since it had no sand originally.

Organised Entertainment, advertisement in the Christchurch *Press* for Captain Greenhal's American Wild West Carnival. The *Press,* 1921.

Picnicking at Rakaia. The Andersons had a hut at the Rakaia river mouth. They were one of a number of middle class families who had holiday homes. The Maudsleys and the Musgraves also had cribs, which were located by the seaside. Courtesy of Margaret Anderson.

This photo comes from Margaret Anderson's relations in England. It is entitled 'Dolly Dick and family', and depicts a seaside resort in England. c. 1930s. Note the crowded beach compared to the New Zealand seaside photos on the following page. Courtesy of Margaret Anderson.

Procession through Cranmer Sq. 1925. Margaret Anderson explained that they loved watching processions and would hang out of the window waving flags. Courtesy of Margaret Anderson.

Nan Buchanan at Caroline Bay Timaru, c.1920. She is the child with the bow in her hair, and she and another child are carefully digging a deep hole in the sand Courtesy of Nan Buchanan.

And Nan at Sumner Beach, early 1920s. Courtesy of Nan Buchanan.

Chapter VIII: 'Playing Together'

> Timaru was a very good place to be at Christmas because at Caroline Bay they had so many events there you know and concerts, over the Christmas [holidays], and of course Timaru was promoted as a sunny town'. . . Us Kids always looked forward to going to Timaru and if our parents didn't take us in - which they did probably twice - we would hop into Timaru on the bikes.[85]

Figures for railways usage show New Zealander's enthusiasm for their annual holiday. On 2 January two excursion trains carried over 1000 people to the seaside town of Timaru and roughly 400 people visited the mountain resort of Arthur's Pass.[86] According to Phillips, New Zealand railways claimed to have been the first in the world to introduce family fares.[87]

Historians have lamented the decline of more spontaneous creative endeavours, but the motor car, the cinema and the theatre had not eclipsed local entertainments in importance during this period. Families visited annual attractions, such as the Agricultural and Pastoral Show (A & P), or the winter show, together. These events catered for the whole family, although competitions were divided by gender and age. Men entered garden produce and animals in the winter show, women entered butter, bread, scones and cakes, and children also entered competitions.[88] Sunday school or school picnics and excursions were also extremely popular and well attended, especially in country areas.[89] Elizabeth Green wrote that:

> School picnics were wonderful occasions, the whole village caught the train to Christchurch and then the double decker tram to New Brighton or Sumner. . . Fathers lingered in town to do business and came home in another train. Mothers came out with their picnic baskets keen for a good gossip with all the other mothers. I don't remember a mother ever having a swim.[90]

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[85] Jack Ford, 7.4.95, p.20.

[86] 'Holiday Traffic', The *Press,* 3 January 1929, p.8.

[87] Phillips, *A Man's Country,,* p.236.

[88] Winter Show Section, *The Press,* 18 June 1927, p.6. See for instance, Joan Brosnihan, who remembered show day as a great day, , p.14. Kevin McNeil used to go to the Methven show once a year. Kevin McNeil, 8.6.95, p.10. The entire Partridge family attended the Rangiora show and as a teenager Edna also attended the Christchurch show, E. Partridge, 22.3.95, p.31.

[89] Film footage from the National Film Archive in Wellington reinforces the view of social competitiveness among New Zealanders. Films on view at the archive from the interwar period (and slightly earlier) included annual picnic in New Plymouth that featured tape-eating competitions, among various competitive activities. Other features include 'Happy Faces at the Duchess Theatre Last Saturday' which showed huge queues of children lining up for the cinema, and a Nelson beautiful child contest. The annual Christchurch Grocer's picnic attracted over 500 people in 1929 despite wet and stormy weather which meant that 'the excursion was not patronised as well as usual'. Games for children and adults included the 'elopement race' and 'Grocer's relay'. Picnics, The *Press,* 28 January 1929, p.2.

[90] Elizabeth Green, pp.8-9. Edna Partridge recalled that school picnics and Sunday school picnics were important occasions. They went to the seaside on wagons pulled by traction engine from Ohoka Flour mill, and it took most of the day to get to the beach. Later on they went by motor truck, 1.3.95, p.27. Mavis Benson recalled that on the 'School and Miners' picnic day, they would catch the train to Hokitika. There was booze for the men, tea for ladies and games for children', 12.5.95, p.10.

Chapter VIII: 'Playing Together'

New Zealanders in the interwar years were enthusiastic 'joiners' of clubs and organisations, and again these provided entertainment for men, women and children. Certainly the impression from reading the newspapers of the period is that a range of events existed in both country and town.[91] For example, The *Press* recorded that in one week in 1927 a fund-raising group from the Redcliffs Bowling and Croquet Club held 'A most successful coin evening' in the Redcliffs Community Hall, the Anglican Bible Class Union held a concert, and the school committee held their monthly meeting. In country districts community events provided the chief source of entertainment although as this next extract reveals, lack of transport inhibited regular events:

> *So were there many community district gatherings?* . . . Not a lot, no . . . . Our Sunday school picnics and the school picnics were the great events of the year for the younger children and there would be the Anglican church social in the wintertime. It used to start with tea at six o'clock for the children, and there would be games - ring a ring a rosy and that in the hall till eight o'clock for the children - then they were expected to go home and the adults and the older people would come and have dancing and general socialising and supper.[92] That was another occasion in the wintertime. But you see the lack of transport meant those things weren't very frequent because it was difficult for people to get around. A lot of families would have perhaps two bicycles but not many people had cars, there was still a few horses and traps around but that was the 1930s when people couldn't really afford to go far. . . . So you mostly made your pleasures at home.[93]

Respectable culture dominated community leisure, and little evidence of 'high' culture emerged, much to the dismay of the intelligentsia. Somerset commented slightingly in *Littledene* that clubs and meetings left little time for personal leisure. 'With six or seven Churches organising choir practices, bible classes, young people's guilds and what-not, the week is booked up before Sunday is over . . .'[94] Another important event linked communities - the commemoration of New Zealand's dead on Anzac day. Interviewees gave descriptions of Dawn Parades and ceremonies. Authorities involved children, and scouts and guides often paraded with the soldiers and the bands.[95]

Church and school provided a focus for community leisure activities, especially in

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[91] 'Sumner Items', The *Press,* 8 October 1927, p.6. During a week in 1919, in the small Canterbury township of Mt Somers the Tennis club held an annual meeting, the Men's Social club hosted an open night and Mount Somers and Mayfield played a football match. The Country, The *Press,* September 25 1919, p.5. Oxford (Littledene) had four lodges (which 75% of the male population attended), the Farmers' Union, a Benevolent and Improvement league, and football, cricket, bowling, tennis, croquet and golf clubs. Somerset, *Littledene,* pp.37-51.

[92] This seems t o have been fairly common. Jack Ford explained that the school concert was important and they had dances afterwards. He did not recall much drunkenness. 'I only knew one bloke, perhaps two blokes who ever bothered with drink, my father didn't.' Jack Ford, 21.3.95, p.16.

[93] Edna Partridge, 8.3.95, p.35, 1.3.95, p.30.

[94] Somerset, *Littledene,* p.51.

[95] Annette marched in the parades as a brownie. Annette Golding, p.11.

country areas where commercialised entertainments were not as important. Men, women and children attended events together. Kevin McNeil explained that 'if you went to dances, country dances in those days of course you were expected to behave like any ordinary person and not do silly things'.[96] This quote exposes the existence of older ideas about children, although these ideas may have been stronger in rural Catholic families than in other farming families. Events were not as age segregated, and children often attended the same events as adults. They were expected to fulfil adult standards of behaviour.[97]

Sport provided another source of popular entertainment. Joan Wicks recalled rugby matches being the centre of community attention. 'The Ranfurly shield matches played between Otago and Southland for 15 years went backwards and forwards, I didn't know it [was] played [by] any other county and those would be weekends when people would come down either way and stay - big weekends'.[98] Both men and women watched sport, although men appear to have been more regular supporters. Jean Bevan recalled 'my mum was a real rugby nut. She would run up and down the grounds, you know shouting and going on'.[99]

The cinema emerged as the most popular form of entertainment in the interwar years. It catered for men, women and children, and Waterhouse notes that different groups attended different sessions in Australia:

> The earliest (and cheapest) sessions drew women from the working classes, who afterwards had time to shop, pick up their children from school . . . Second sessions . . . attracted well-to-do housewives with servants at home to mind children and cook meals . . . the eight o'clock show was popular with married and courting couples.[100]

Olssen maintains that by 1918 more New Zealanders attended the pictures than church.[101] Roughly half of the entire New Zealand sample and nearly 60 per cent. of the urban sample attended the pictures as a form of family entertainment, although very few families attended the pictures regularly together. Just over a third, or 36.7 per cent .of the British sample attended the pictures regularly. There were almost a dozen cinemas in Christchurch by the 1920s, which shows their immense popularity. One woman recalled that as well as the fancy

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[96]Kevin McNeil, 18.5.95, p.3. The St Patrick's day celebrations were important for Catholic families, and the family also attended those as well. Kevin McNeil, p.10.

[97]Jane and James Ritchie noted a similar tolerance of children in Maori society. Maori children 'are not excluded but neither are they included nor allowed to interfere. They are just there'. Jane and James Ritchie, *Child Rearing Patterns in New Zealand,* A.H. & A.W.Reed, Wellington, 1970, p.131.

[98]Joan Wicks, 23.3.95, p.24.

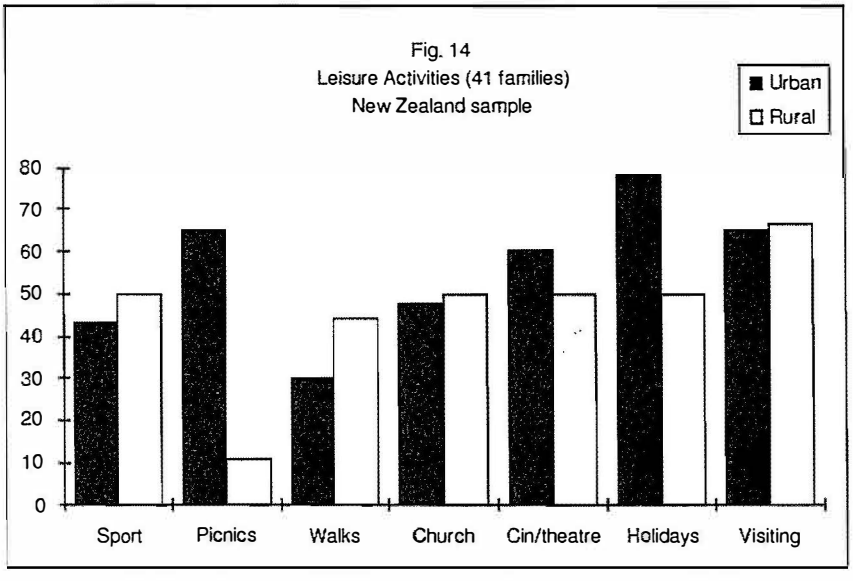
[99]Jean Bevan, p.9.

[100]Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure,* p.181. Children of course attended the cheap Saturday matinee, and the range of children's films expanded in the 1930s with the advent of Rin Tin Tin and Mickey Mouse (see section on children's leisure).

[101]Olssen, 'Towards a New Society', in Oliver & Williams (eds.), *Oxford History of New Zealand,* p.273.

cinemas there were cinemas that ran shows all day. 'They called the Grand the bug house, it started at 11 in the morning and went to 11 at night. You paid sixpence and stayed there all day because there were continuous shows.'[102] Although families sometimes went to the cinema together, increasingly parents used the cinema as a child-minding service. Husband and wives also attended such entertainments together.[103] Urban dwellers had greater access to the cinema but rural townships often had travelling pictures. For example, Frances Denniston recalled silent movies once a fortnight in Riversdale from about 1928: 'the hall was cold you used to have take a hottie bag and a rug and they were hard seats to sit on, but they were always packed.'[104] All classes attended the cinema but it seems to have been the main form of entertainment for the working classes in this period, although other organised entertainments attracted huge crowds.

The following graph indicates that visiting, picnics, the cinema/theatre, and holidays were the most popular activities among the families in this study. New Zealand families enjoyed outings together, and during the interwar years many organised entertainments catered for families. These entertainments often provided separate activities for men, women and children. Families played or attended sport and church reasonably frequently, but rural families attended fewer leisure activities; they attended the cinema less frequently, and enjoyed organised communal activities such as the church or school picnic, rather than private outings.



[102]Doris Baron, Life history interview.

[103] Theatres had comprehensive programmes and included romantic films such as 'My Wild Irish Rose' or the 'real romance', 'Missing Husbands'. The *Press* May 9, 1923, p.6

[104]Frances Denniston, tape 5 of 8. Her father took them to see Maori concert parties that came once a year, black and white minstrels, and the circus. They went to the Invercargill and Gore AMP show. He went to Christchurch summer show because he liked machinery. The Gillespies went to Kurow for shopping on Saturday, and when shopping, was finished 'Dad would say would anyone like to go to the pictures - did we want to go to the pictures my word. Bill Gillespie, 7.12.94, p.5.

gambling or sport. Gender segregation in leisure was a legacy of Victorian days when activities centred around sport and the pub, before commercialised entertainments developed that men and women could attend together.[105] The pub appears to have been a more popular form of entertainment in Britain with over a third of the British sample attending the pub regularly, some every night. Less gender separation occurred there, however, and a fifth of the British mothers (all working-class women) attended the pub with their husbands. Certainly puritanism gripped New Zealanders firmly, although a greater percentage of the British sample attended church regularly. Only 17.1 per cent. of the New Zealand fathers and 57.1 per cent. of New Zealand mothers in the study attended church, while 88.3 per cent. of the British mothers and 42.3 per cent. of the British fathers in the sample went to church.[106] A greater number of the British mothers in the sample had very little social interaction, partly because three women in the Lancashire group were deaf. Urban women in New Zealand appeared to have more time for leisure, probably because far fewer of them worked outside the home (see chapter II). In both countries married couples with young children had less opportunity for leisure, but this situation improved throughout the life cycle of the family.[107] As children grew older they needed less supervision, and when they began earning the increased family income allowed parents to enjoy leisure.

Wealthier families in both countries escaped these constraints and enjoyed a more leisured existence. Servants looked after children and household. Men and women engaged in numerous social activities, either together or separately. For example, Margaret Anderson's parents had a fortnight's camping holiday after their children went back to school.[108] Newspapers recorded the activities of these leaders of society, at home, the races, or garden parties and charity functions.[109]

It is useful to examine men's and women's leisure separately because attitudes to leisure influenced children's expectations and ideas about masculinity and femininity, as well as revealing the limitations that modern ideologies had on romantic relationships between husband and wife. Men regarded their greater access to leisure and family resources as the breadwinner's prerogative. Extra privileges made domesticity more attractive for men, while women fitted in leisure around the demands of home and family, providing their children with an example of restraint and self-sacrifice. This unequal access to leisure also appeared in

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[105]Andrew Davies, 'Leisure in the 'classic slum' 1900-1939', in Davies & Fielding (eds.), *Worker's worlds,* p.107.

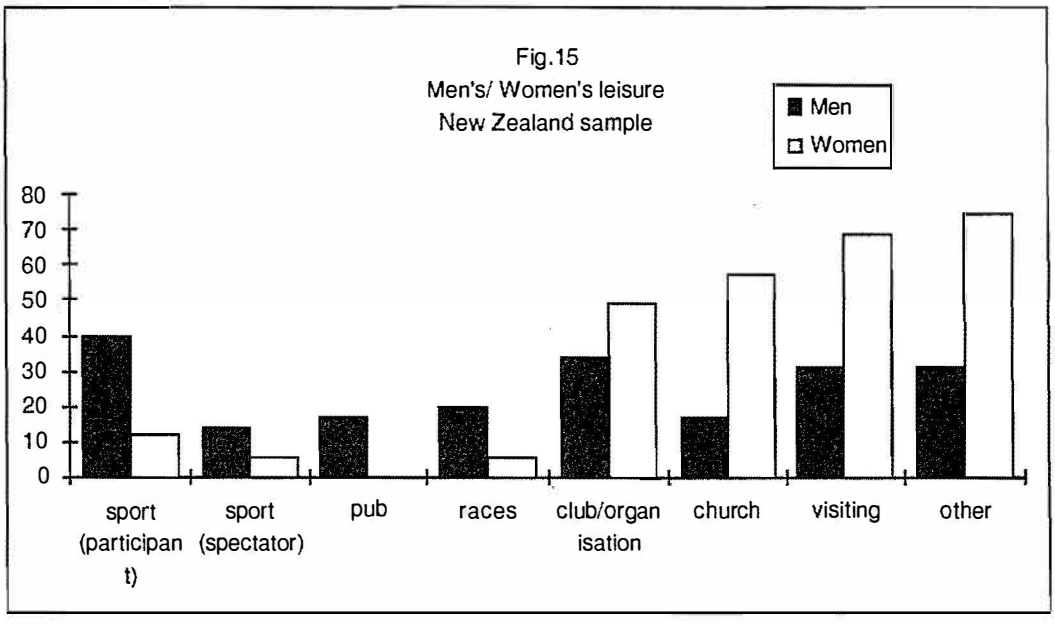
[106]I have used 'mothers' and 'fathers' to differentiate the respondents' parents.

[107]Andrew Davies, 'Leisure in the 'classic slum' 1900-1939', in Davies & Fielding (eds.), *Worker's worlds,* p.113. For example, Reg Williams (a New Zealand interviewee) explained that his parents did not often go out together without the children. The Bensons seem to have been an exception. Mavis recalled her parents going out dancing when she was very small. Her mother dressed up in long beads and a straight frock. Mavis Benson, 12.5.95, p.10.

[108]Margaret Anderson, 5.10.94, p.11.

[109]e.g. The *Press* recorded that 75 guests assembled at Mrs Osbourne's residence in Lincoln Rd in Christchurch to attend a kitchen evening in honour of Miss Poppy Osbourne, who was shortly to be married. 'Garden party', The *Press*, Friday 21 March 1928, p.3.

children's lives. Girls were also tied to home and family. Typically they often spent more time on domestic work than boys, who seem to have been freer from parental constraints. What does a gendered discussion of leisure add to the story of the development of the modern family? Leisure activities provided an opportunity for the divided masculinist family to meet on friendly and equal terms. Yet the perpetuation of inequality in leisure also reinforced distinctions in family life. Men could choose how much time they wanted to spend with their wives and children.



Contrary to expectations the New Zealand fathers in this study appear very home and family oriented, more so than the British sample. Few married men with children seem to have indulged in masculine pursuits such as sport, lodges, fighting, excessive drinking or gambling.[110] Such behaviour undoubtedly existed, as children were aware of packapoo and opium dens on the streets of Wellington, but it remained underground. There are no descriptions of the drinking and gambling that took place on the streets in urban working-class areas in Britain. For example, one man from Tipton recalled: 'the men that was older than me, they'd all be gambling, playing marbles or playing cards. And they used to have us to watch for the policeman'.[111] If Phillips and Fairburn are correct these activities may have been more common in the male dominated nineteenth century.[112] Some echoes do remain, since some of the fathers in this sample offended against the strict image of the family man. Mr Musgrave was a womaniser, which eventually broke up his marriage to Joyce's mother, Mr Robinson gambled, straining the family's precarious income, and Mr Harris seems to have

[110]See also chapters', III and V.

[111]Sidney South, p.6. Courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford.

[112]See Phillips, *A Man's Country?,* pp.28-38, Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900,* Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1989, pp.195-233. Fairburn notes that compared with Britain 'supposedly *the* conflict ridden society, New Zealand had consistently more homocide charges per 100,000 adult males from 1872 (the point at which the Justice Department in New Zealand started compiling court data on homocides to some time after 1914)', ibid, p.217.

been a pugnacious man. The family had to move away from Blenheim because he broke another worker's jaw. 'We didn't last there long', Steve explained.[113] Eric Robinson described his father's weakness for gambling but believed his father kept it within reasonable boundaries:

> [Father] bet on the horses and used to put money on the Tattersalls . . . used to send money over to Australia. He'd put his five shilling bet in a newspaper and send it over to this fella over in Australia, and of course this fella over in Australia put the money on this Tattersalls for him and he'd send him the tickets back to Dad. He used to get a bit of money now and again but not very much. That's when I found out that gambling is not successful like I don't bet much at all.
>
> *And what about your mother - how did she feel about him doing the horse racing and stuff?* Oh she didn't like it very much because he was spending quite a bit of money . . . [but] I think the only money he took out was for betting on horses and his tobacco . . . He never actually spent much on himself really. He very seldom went to the pub. He'd go to the pub of course like most fellas. He was never actually drunk . . . There was some people there [Saltwater Creek] that the husbands would go to the pub and be drunk most of the time. Those were the people that were sort of - didn't seem to get along - they couldn't manage their money, put it that way. Their father would go to the pub and get drunk instead of putting the money into the house, looking after the children and that, because the children would be running round in rags and they weren't very well looked after.[114]

The emphasis on respectability constrained men's leisure patterns in New Zealand. Men had a greater disposable income than women but powerful social constraints acted to keep their behaviour within strict boundaries. For example, Jack Ford explained that he could not recall his father or brothers drinking as he grew up. 'You would never let your grandparents down. They seemed to be the head of the family as it were. They were respectable business people in Timaru and they never drunk or anything like that. So this sort of filtered down through the family'.[115] At least five men were committed teetotallers, a higher proportion than in the British sample. Consumption of alcohol and strictly male pursuits appear to have been more common in country areas in New Zealand. Frances Denniston recalled that 'after a funeral in these country places [Riversdale], the cars, streets would be lined with cars. . . there was two hotels there . . . They'd all be in the hotels drinking, the men, and the women would be home with their cups of tea and sit. It was just the done thing'.[116] A rigid gender separation of

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[113]Stephen Harris, 1.8.96, p.3.

[114]Eric Robinson, 10. 6.96, p.7, 14.6.96, p.11. According to Mary Sherry they considered Saltwater Creek (where Eric lived) as the rough end of Timaru, and all its inhabitants were considered rough. But as this extract also shows, the people who lived there also had definitions of rough and respectable. Note: Eric's wife commented to me that she did not know how Mrs Robinson managed to feed the family on what she had to live on, and thought the children did not eat very well.

[115]Mr Ford attended the races with his employer. Jack Ford, 7.4.95, p.24.

[116]Frances Denniston, side 6 of 8.

'rougher' activities emerged to a greater extent in New Zealand, confirming that puritan, middle class values held greater sway than in Britain and Australia.

Roughly half the fathers in this study engaged in sport, a much higher proportion than among the British men (7 per cent.), although working class men probably took part in informal street games. Only Gwen Jones's father, who became the amateur snooker champion for Wales, engaged in regular sporting activities. Shooting, hunting and fishing were popular in the country areas and probably could be justified as practical, productive activities, since rural men had little time for unproductive leisure.[117] More gender separation in leisure activities appeared in rural areas. Mr Jones and Mr Ford both went rifle shooting in the winter. Watching the races and attending shows seems to have been a popular pastime in rural areas.[118] Mr Partridge regularly attended the Christchurch and Rangiora shows, and the Addington Market because he enjoyed the opportunity to meet other farmers.[119] Few men had much money so visiting friends and playing cards appear to have been one of the most popular male leisure pursuits. Bill Gillespie recalled his father going over to the old rabbiter's hut. 'Sometimes three or four of them would gather for a game of cards and cup of tea and go home. One night Dad went over and while they were there about nine o'clock an alarm rang, pinned up on the wall was a note "visitors are requested to leave when the alarm rings"'.[120]

Clubs and Friendly societies were extremely important for many New Zealand men. In 1924 there were 927 lodges, or clubs, on the Friendly societies' register. These included the Hibernian and Protestant Societies, sixteen working men's clubs, and lodges: the Oddfellows, Rechabites, Foresters, Shepherds, Druids, Templars. In total there were 84,433 lodge members in 1924, roughly 12 per cent. of the male population.[121] Olssen discovered that there were a large number of Friendly societies in the largely working class Caversham area. These lodges were concentrated in working-class areas but they attracted a range of social classes, with the middle classes dominating the Freemasons. Meetings provided a convivial atmosphere where men could talk, play various games and drink in peace.[122] It is difficult to find out the rate of active participation since these organisations acted as insurance schemes in event of sickness or death. They also occasionally lent money for building houses and expanding businesses.[123] For example in 1924 13,686 members were sick, and would have presumably received some assistance. The *Year Book* notes that New Zealanders invested much more capital per head of population in Friendly Societies than any state of

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[117]Thomas Ryan commented that his father's work was his hobby since he was busy from daylight to dusk. Thomas Ryan, 24.4.95, p.19. See also chapter V.

[118]Jack Ford, 13.4.95, p.26.

[119]Edna Partridge, 22.3.95, p.41.

[120]Bill Gillespie, 7.12.94, p.2.

[121]*NZOYB*, 1926, p.691.

[122]Some lodges were anti-alcohol. Olssen, *Building a New World*, pp.36-38.

[123]ibid, p.37.

Australia.[124]

Just over a third of the fathers (twelve men) in this study belonged to a club or organisation, a figure roughly equal to the British sample (29.2 per cent.). Four men were masons, others belonged to unspecified lodges, several belonged on committees or boards, one man went to the RSA, and two were active union members.[125] Friendly societies did not emerge as being important (in the eyes of children anyway). Joan Evans explained that her father did not go to the lodge or R.S.A often, 'no, it was just work and family'.[126] Although men from all social classes in this study belonged to organisations, active participation in lodges may have been more important for businessmen. Certainly Mr Wicks attended the Masons regularly, taking part in various activities such as flower shows. Joan explained that she 'learnt early one of their [mason's] creeds which was don't let your right hand know what your left hand doeth, which means if you do a good thing don't talk about it.'[127]

Only two men actively involved themselves in Union politics, despite a union membership of some 96,822 men, or 26 per cent of wage earners, nationwide.[128] Edward Twort's father had been a Red Fed, and Ivy Anderson's father joined the Federation of Labour where he became involved in demonstrations during the depression. Ivy recalled, 'Dad was quite a fighter too and he fought for the unions, he got blacklisted once for a job because he was a unionist. . . . Oh yes he fought for a good living for people, he didn't believe in them being slaves or nothing'.[129] Church does not appear to have been as important for men as for women, but a minority of men spent much of their spare time involved in church activities. For example Mr Williams worked in the vestry and sang in the church choir.[130]

The graph at the beginning showed that few New Zealand women engaged in sport or enjoyed independent hobbies, although over half attended church or belonged to a woman's organisation (the large percentage in the category 'other' includes knitting and sewing, which were both hobbies and necessary household work). The situation seemed to be fairly similar to Britain where, as one Lancashire woman stressed (while discussing her step-mother), women spent most of their time working. 'You never saw people idle in them days. She was a good woman and what she would call leisure time she liked sewing. Occasionally her and dad and me would go to the Grand, they had shows then, or we'd go to the pictures which was coming'.[131] Although women's activities appear extensive, many women only participated in

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[124]*NZOYB*, 1926, p.693.

[125]This includes information recorded in interviews, and participation might have been higher than this as children might not have known all their father's affiliations.

[126]Joan Evans,13.11.96, p.4.

[127](Mathew 6:3-4), Joan Wicks, 23.3.95, p.23.

[128]*NZOYB*, 1926, p.762.

[129]Ivy Anderson, 25.5.95, p.6.

[130]Reg Williams, 21.1.95, p.25.

[131]Interview between Elizabeth Roberts and Mrs M.3L, February 1957, p.36.

organisations and other activities when their children were old enough to be left. Millie Jones, a rural interviewee, explained:

> The woman's job was in the house, and children, and there always seemed to be children to drag around, and if it was somewhere where we could all go, well we would go as a family, Mother and us, but I never remember her ever going out on her own. It certainly wasn't expected, and Dad certainly never minded us, except when she went to church on Sunday night. She only went when I was old enough to be left with my sisters, we were put to bed.[132]

In contrast church and visiting could be enjoyed without the need for childcare.[133] Prosperous women enjoyed a greater variety of leisure activities since they could afford domestic help.

Children's leisure tended to be much more closely linked with their mothers than their fathers, as Millie Jones described. Many interviewees recalled visiting or shopping with their mothers. The afternoon tea party, or in upper middle class circles the 'at home', appears to have been the most common form of leisure, especially for urban women. Women and children socialised in a world devoid of men during the day. Margaret Anderson explained that her mother had cards printed when she first came to New Zealand but soon stopped that because New Zealand was less formal than Ireland. Her mother had tea with a small circle of friends:

> Not necessarily all doctor's wives but there'd be perhaps half a dozen of them and they'd be just having their chat and tea. Of course Mum would have had a maid in those days who would bring it in and they'd have this tea. Then we'd just go in be asked and usually told how much you'd grown or . . . how like your mother you were or those awful comments which children hate and then you'd bolt out and wait for what was left [of] the tea to come out.'[134]

The only women who did not experience these social exchanges were remote rural women such as Mrs Benson, and the very poor. Mrs Rylance and Mrs Harris both experienced periods of extreme social isolation. Edna Partridge explained that when she was a teenager her mother joined the Women's Institute and then later joined the Women's Division of Federated Farmers but could not attend very often. She had to ride a bicycle for three miles over shingle roads, which must have been difficult since she suffered from poor health as a

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[132]Millie Jones, 17.9.96, p.25.

[133]Mrs Forest, who was secretary at her local Mother's Union, had to take her daughter to meetings. 'She never had anybody to mind me, wherever she went I went, in fact she said, "I suppose I made you old before your years", but I don't regret anything she did, she did her very best'. Pauline Forest, 3.3.95, p.17, see also 26.1.95, p.7.

[134]M. Anderson, 5.10.94, p.11. Joan Wicks recalled that at her mother's afternoon teas the children had to perform to the guests. Joan Wicks, 1.3.95, p.18.

result of bearing a large family.[135]

V

The regulation of children's leisure: organised entertainment and private fun

Historians such as Sutton Smith have argued that children's leisure became increasingly dominated by adults during the interwar years. This development deserves serious consideration, because it reveals important aspects of the transformation of childhood and family life in the period. Commercialisation of leisure in the form of the cinema, toys, or commercial objects influenced the shift in leisure patterns. The radio and the gramophone, for instance, may have contributed to the gradual decline of the musical evening as part of family leisure. The suggestion that parent's 'realisation of the needs of children' may have also contributed to the change in leisure patterns, seems valid. Certainly a new generation of child experts after Truby King stressed the importance of play for child development. The *New Zealand Farmer* in the 1920s and 1930s suggested activities to keep children occupied and encouraged them in good play habits. Recognition of the child's needs occurred because modern ideologies placed a value on children and their activities in themselves, rather than regarding childhood as merely a transition to adulthood. These ideas had existed for years in middle class families but now became increasingly widespread. Another significant factor in the transformation of leisure may be declining family size. Wealthy parents or parents with small families could afford the money to give their children expensive toys, extra lessons, or the time to supervise and regulate their children's leisure. The decline in family size affected the dynamics of children's play. In large families children could play with one another and had less need for toys or adult-directed activities. Large families also resulted in large numbers of children in a neighbourhood. It seems likely that the existence of a lively and independent children's culture might be strongest when there were large numbers of children in society, while as numbers began to decline it became easier for adults to direct and control them.

Shifts in the nature of play are observable in the period shortly after the First World War. In all classes of society children appear to have had greater access to commercialised leisure. They possessed more toys than those in my earlier study, went to organised entertainment more frequently, and had access to gramophones and also radios. Above all organised sport dominated children's leisure to a far greater extent than in my earlier study. All the boys and most of the girls studied in the interwar period reported significant involvement in sport. The transformation that Sutton Smith cites seems to have occurred more strongly in urban than in rural areas, continuing the pattern of rural-urban differential observed throughout this study.

New Zealand and British children's leisure follows similar patterns although some

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[135]Edna Partridge, 22.3.95, p.41. Marjorie Walker explained that her mother depended on her father for transport and Anna Chapman learnt to drive at the age of twelve so she take her mother to church and meetings. Anna Chapman, 12.12.94, p.6.

contrast emerged in this study. A greater gender contrast emerges among children's' play in Britain. Almost all of the boys (93.8 per cent.), but only forty per cent. of the girls, engaged in physical or sporting activities. Outdoor play features more strongly in the New Zealand sample, which could partly reflect the influence of climate, since New Zealand had a milder climate than Britain. Working-class children in Britain also appear to maintain traditional games for a longer period than New Zealand children. A majority of the New Zealand children in the sample (almost seventy per cent. of girls) and 54 per cent. of boys enjoyed reading regularly, while only 40 per cent. of the British sample of girls, and 12.5 per cent. of the boys recorded reading as a regular activity.

Unstructured leisure

Organised leisure activities clearly expressed modern ideas towards children. Authorities, and increasingly parents, believed that leisure activities should be educational. Much organised entertainment, scouts and guides, sport, clubs and learning skills aimed to improve children. Middle class children especially, led more structured and organised lives but despite increasing control over children's leisure children did have freedom to engage in unstructured play. The first section will examine the still resilient patterns of children's play, before exploring adult-organised leisure.

A strong gender difference emerges in children's unstructured play, and is evident in games, toys, and access to leisure. Girls' play reinforced domesticity, and reflects British patterns. All the female interviewees had dolls, some tea sets and other domestic toys, although social class and family income determined the quality and quantity of these. Poorer children had few toys. Jean Moss thought that 'the only thing [toy] I can ever remember having was a doll somebody gave me once.'[136] Girls' play shows a strong identification with their mothers. They mothered, and punished dolls, and imitated domestic roles.[137] Mada made houses in the macrocarpa trees at school. 'The girls used to cook the dinners for the boys, make the boys do the dishes'.[138] Doll's tea sets assisted their imaginative recreation of home life: Jean recalled that 'they used to fill them up with water . . . I can remember some of them soaking lollies in the water to make it coloured and pouring it out you know like tea parties.'[139] Self-selected activities developed other feminine skills. A quote from an English woman provides a useful parallel, and describes the industrious nature of girls' play. She spent much of her weekday evenings doing chores but then she 'went out in the back street, you skipped, you played rounders, you went into the garden, you found a nice big patch, you sewed things. I was always making - always making something and cleaning everything. I had

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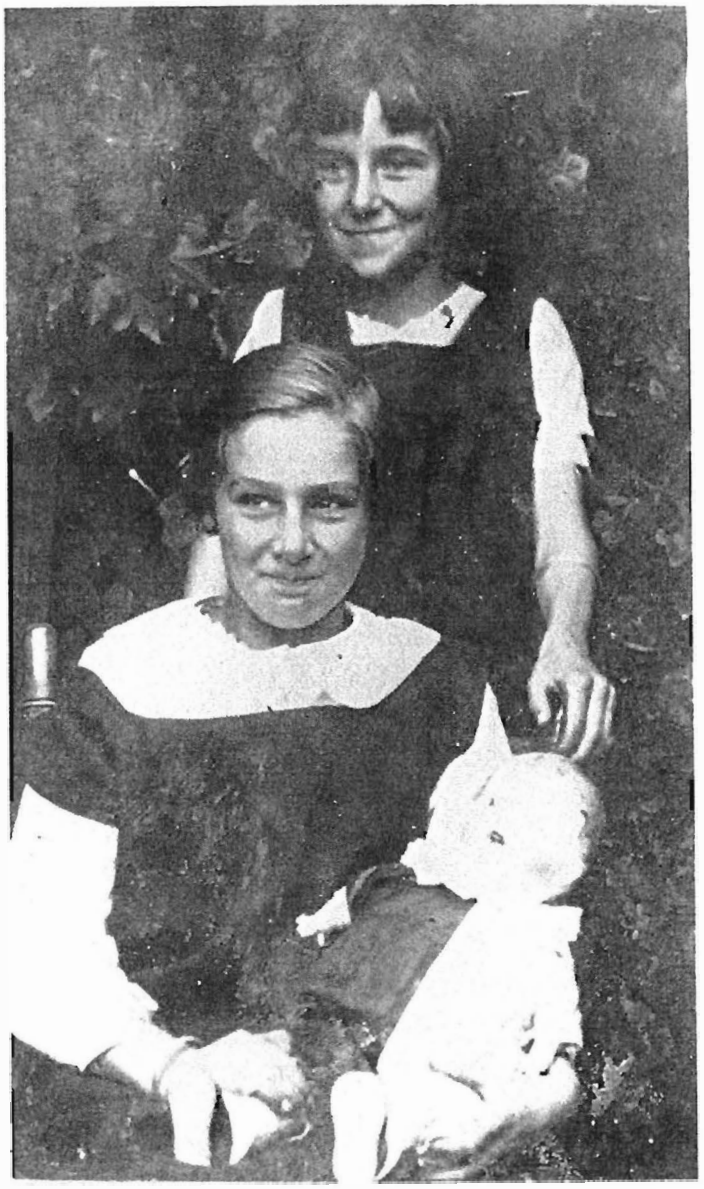
[136]Jean Moss, 25.6.94, p.10.

[137]Domestic toys, such as toy sewing machines, irons, even mangles were popular, while toy china tea sets appear to have been very common. Peggy Armstrong & Denise Jackson, *Toys of Early New Zealand,* Grantham House, New Zealand, 1990, pp.43-45.

[138]Mada Bastings, 18.10.94, p.17.

[139]Jean Moss, 10.7.94, p.18.

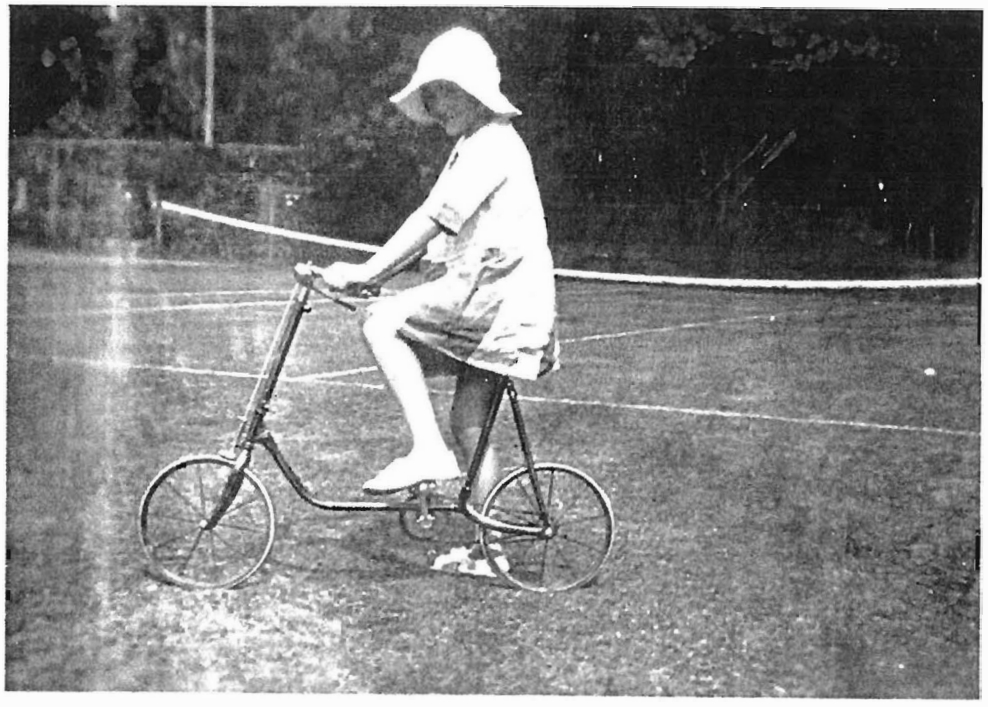
Children playing, 158 Fitzgerald St, St Albans, Christchurch c.1915. This photograph of children playing shows them with presumably all their toys lined up. Included are books, teddy bears, dolls, a miniature castle and cannon. They are lined up as an army and the boy is taking aim behind a trolley. Cordery Collection, Canterbury Historical Association Collection, Canterbury Museum.



Mada Bastings (at rear) and friend with a china doll, Mada is at the rear and both are dressed in school gymfrocks. c. 1922, Dunedin. Courtesy of Mada Bastings.

Nan Buchanan with two china dolls and her parasol, on the steps at Kinloch. c. 1921. Courtesy of Nan Buchanan.

Nan and her elder sister Helen with their doll's tea set, and various toys. c. 1919, at Kinloch These photos show the beautiful toys that prosperous children enjoyed, including a huge teddy bear that was about the same size as Nan. Courtesy of Nan Buchanan.



Nan Buchanan on her 'fairy bike', at Kinloch, c.1924. Courtesy of Nan Buchanan.

Mada (who described herself as a tomboy) with her brother Bob and a friend, along with the family cat and dog. Courtesy of Mada Bastings.

to use my hands'.[140]

If girls' toys reinforced feminine roles, boys' toys undoubtedly reinforced masculinity. Some age variation occurred. Toys for small children were not as clearly differentiated according to gender, and both boys and girls had teddy bears. George Goodyear had a teddy bear, a rabbit, and ducks to play with in his bath, as a small boy. His later toys reinforced the masculine skills of war, and construction. He owned a set of blocks, later a meccano set, with which he constructed boats and buildings. They had toy soldiers and he and his brother played war games, and made elaborate forts.[141] He also received an Indian suit with real feathers.[142] Reading material enforced gender separation as well. Comics were very popular, and most popular lines catered for boys and girls separately. *Chums*, *Boys Own Annuals,* and *Magnet*, among others, reinforced British ideals of masculinity.

New Zealand girls in this period had much more freedom than those of an earlier generation even though some prohibitions continued. Bicycles became more common although some parents still frowned upon them. Frances Denniston explained 'you weren't allowed pushbikes, ladies didn't have pushbikes that was the way my mother was brought up'.[143] Freer clothes and the health ethos of the interwar years meant that girls were much freer to engage in energetic physical activity. About a quarter of the women in this study described themselves as being tomboys when they were younger. Mada Bastings in Dunedin and Jean Moss from Nuhaka spent much of their time playing with their brothers.[144] Jean and her brother gathered pipis, occasionally rode a Maori neighbour's horse, and sometimes helped the local Maori catch carp in the lagoon. 'We used to get in the water and stir the mud up till the carps floated to top, and then they scooped them up.'[145] The impression emerges that girls had more freedom and appeared more active in New Zealand. British girls such as Ella Carr played rounders but spent much of their time in more passive activities such as playing with dolls, sewing and knitting: as one woman recalled, 'we were more or less indoor'.[146]

Although girls were less restricted than previously, boys in both town or country had

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[140]Ella Carr was born in 1915, in Bedlington, England, which was a mining town. Her father worked as a miner, and her mother looked after the family. There were eight children in the family but three of them died, and Ella took over the cooking and cleaning from the age of nine. Ella Carr, p.7. Courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford. See also Elsie Cuff, who enjoyed playing houses, and sat on a window ledge playing with her dolls, and knitting. Interview with Henry and Elsie Cuff, p.45. Courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford.

[141]Toy soldiers reinforced the values of Empire. The toys for sale in New Zealand were based on the British Army, and after World War One they were dressed in khaki rather than distinctive regimental colours of earlier years. Peggy Armstrong & Denise Jackson, *Toys of Early New Zealand,* Grantham House, New Zealand, 1990, pp.55-57.

[142]George Goodyear, 14.2.95, p.16.

[143]Frances Denniston, tape 6.

[144]Ivy Anderson spent most of her spare time helping her mother, but did manage to occasionally play tennis, cricket and football with brothers, and went surfing on the beach. Ivy Anderson, 14.6.95, p.14.

[145]Jean Moss, 25.6.94, p.10.

[146]Jean Nash, Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford. She grew up in Baker Street in London.

far greater freedom. Basil Grether described playing games on the street, such as cricket or football, or bowling car wheels.[147] Working-class boys in particular played tricks on neighbours or passers by and enjoyed various 'larrikin' activities.[148] Elliott Atkinson remembered annoying local shopkeepers as they waited for a tram:

> [We'd go to] the Chinese fruiterer there and all go in and make a fuss. One or two would buy apples and everybody would have apples when they came out . . . Next door's a bookshop - second hand books - we had one chap in particular there he'd go in and he'd buy one but he'd have a dozen when he came out - sort of thing. Oh she was a good world, everyone enjoyed it.

New Zealand boys were always a little wary of the neighbourhood policeman, as a result of such activities, but do not seem to have expressed the same hatred for authority as working class boys in England. One East London man recalled that 'what used to worry us was the coppers . . . He used to have a stick and he'd give you a clump'.[149] Elliott explained that the local policeman at Karori 'certainly kept the district under control,' but he thought he 'was a great old chap.' Elliott had a racing bike with acetylene lamp, and recalled one occasion when he rode down the road with his feet strapped to the pedals and turned off the light, 'and next minute a big shadow looms up and he says, "Where's your light?" and I said "well for heaven's sake hold me," And he says "you damn well fall", which I did and I got ticked off and told to go home and my bike was hung up in the shed for about three weeks'. The policeman told his father, who told him to hang up his bike and think about it. 'And you did think about it too, it was good having to walk everywhere.'[150]

Schools provided an important opportunity for play, and a similar gender separation emerged there. Girls and boys played separately and often played different games, with boys' games emphasising masculinity. Dennis Kemp played marbles, and recalled that some boys became very proficient: 'they got to collect great mountains of marbles - there were a lot of fights over marbles, too, cos guys would lose a lot of marbles and then decide the best way to get them back was to beat someone up'. He recalled fairly frequent fights at his school. They also played tops (whipping tops), chasing games, hide and seek, and a very 'macho' game with knives. Boys 'used to throw knives and see if they could get them to stick into trees, or into walls or into the ground even'.[151] Boys and girls had some games in common. Although boys played games such as bar the door (kinga-sene in the North Island), hide and seek,

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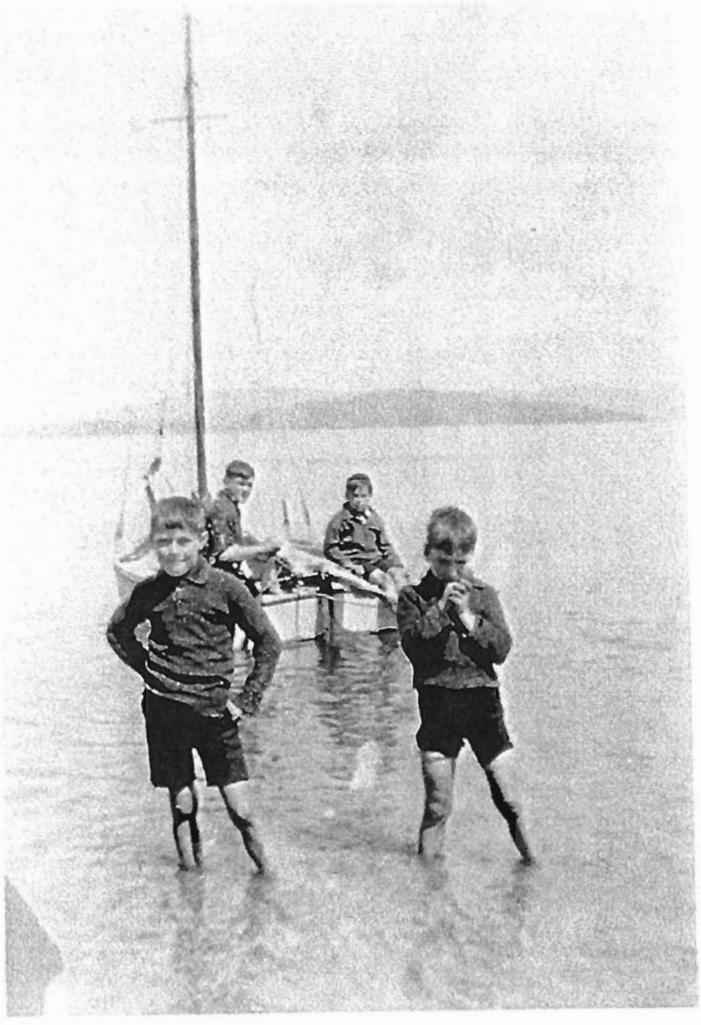
[147]Basil Grether, 29.11.94, p.3.

[148] Dennis Kemp recalled occasional organised friendly fights in Rotorua, 'you picked a gang and two gangs would, one would defend an area and the other would attack . . . we got to using shanghais and slings and that sort of thing and occasionally B.B. guns would get into it." B.B. guns were little air rifles that shot pellets. Dennis Kemp, 29.5.95, p.24.

[149] Interview with Henry Cuff and Elsie Cuff, p.46, courtesy of Paul Thompson's archive, Oxford.

[150]Elliott Atkinson, 25.6.94, p.15.

[151]Dennis Kemp, 26.7.94, pp.14-15.



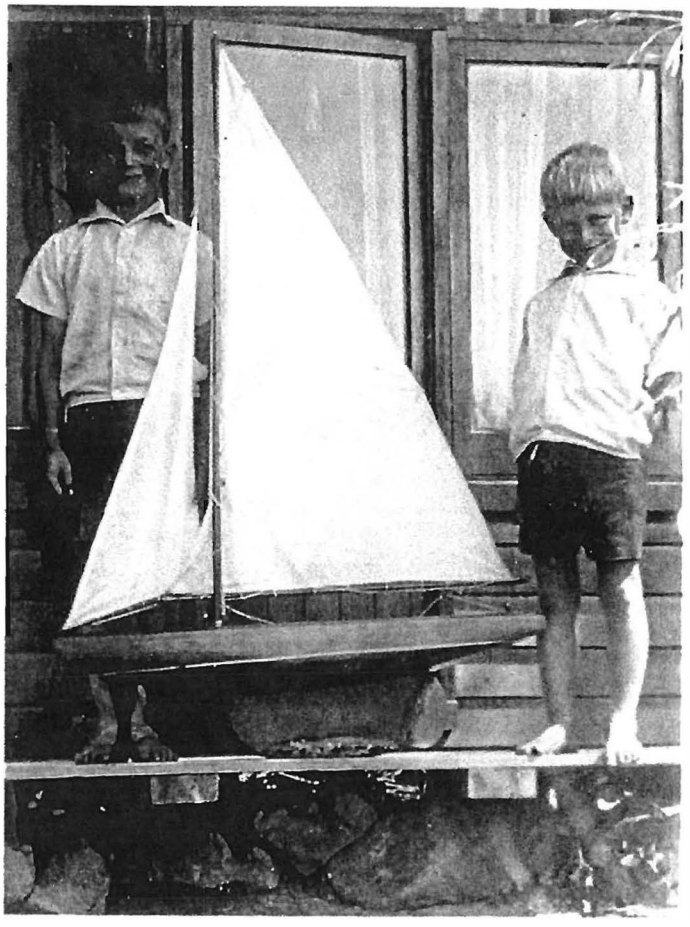
Steve Harris's cousins, Jack and Waly Orm, with their boat at Days Bay. c. 1927. Steve and his brother Colin are at the front. Courtesy of Steve Harris.

Swimming in the river near Lumsden. Courtesy of Bill Gillespie, 1930s.

Robin and Thomas Johnson, dressed in their cowboy outfits. John thought that his mother or Auntie Wyn made the cowboy suits out of sugarbags. Courtesy of John Johnson.

Jack Ford loved cowboys and Indians, and his mother also made cowboy trousers out of sugar bags. 'We would wear them and they had all fluff down the sides, she would sew them up and then tease it out to make them look fluffy down the sides'. They had ropes to lasso, and chased calves around and tried to lasso them by one leg. They had bows and arrows but parents disapproved 'if you really liked to be vicious you put a nail into the end of the arrow so it made a good job of whatever you hit.

Eric and Robin Johnson, out roaming c.1939/40. The Johnson children, unusually for many middle class children, were allowed a great deal of freedom. As teenagers they went out sailing overnight to an island on the harbour.



Neil and John with their toy boat 'The Blue Duck', 1928. The boys made this boat themselves.

Courtesy of John Johnson.

Robin and Thomas Johnson, dressed in their cowboy outfits. John thought that his mother or Auntie Wyn made the cowboy suits out of sugarbags. Courtesy of John Johnson.

Jack Ford loved cowboys and Indians, and his mother also made cowboy trousers out of sugar bags. 'We would wear them and they had all fluff down the sides, she would sew them up and then tease it out to make them look fluffy down the sides'. They had ropes to lasso, and chased calves around and tried to lasso them by one leg. They had bows and arrows but parents disapproved 'if you really liked to be vicious you put a nail into the end of the arrow so it made a good job of whatever you hit'.

marbles, and tops more frequently than girls, some girls recorded playing such games as well. Girls played skipping, hop scotch, singing games, houses, and generally spent much of their time chatting. Few children described playing these games after the ages of ten or eleven, and sport began to dominate the playground. A streak of cruelty emerges in some accounts of childhood play. Although few interviewees recalled being deliberately exclusive and thought they treated all children equally, the excluded remembered events somewhat differently. Mavis Benson stood out as being rather shabby since her mother dressed her in her cousin's hand-me-downs, so the other girls would not let her play basketball unless they were short of players. 'If so and so turned up, well I was pushed out. It didn't worry me after a while I would just carry on with something else, but it usually hurt a bit, being knocked aside like that'.[152]

Organised games dominated children's play in urban areas but did not attain such dominance in country areas. Sport remained important but a greater sense of space and freedom emerged among country children, despite heavier workloads. This is of course a generalisation since many New Zealand cities were fairly open. The contrasts do exist, however, especially when one compares the urban middle classes with rural middle-class children. The country children in this study spent less time playing with toys or in organised leisure, and spent most time in physical activities. Rural girls had far greater freedom in the country, although their urban counterparts captured some of that freedom on holidays and outings.[153] Edna Partridge commented 'one of the things we used to love most was to catch and cuddle a Pukeko chick when it was a bit bigger before it got its feathers . . . it was like a ball of navy blue plush and it had this red head and beak and these red legs and it couldn't fly'.[154]

Children, especially in country areas, still enjoyed independent child-directed play in the interwar years, but organised activities had made a significant impact on children's leisure. Organised activities affected older children especially, and few children over the age of ten or eleven could have avoided participating in organised sport, games, clubs or organisations. The following graph shows the leisure activities of the interviewees in this study, graphically revealing the importance of sport and other entertainments such as the cinema.

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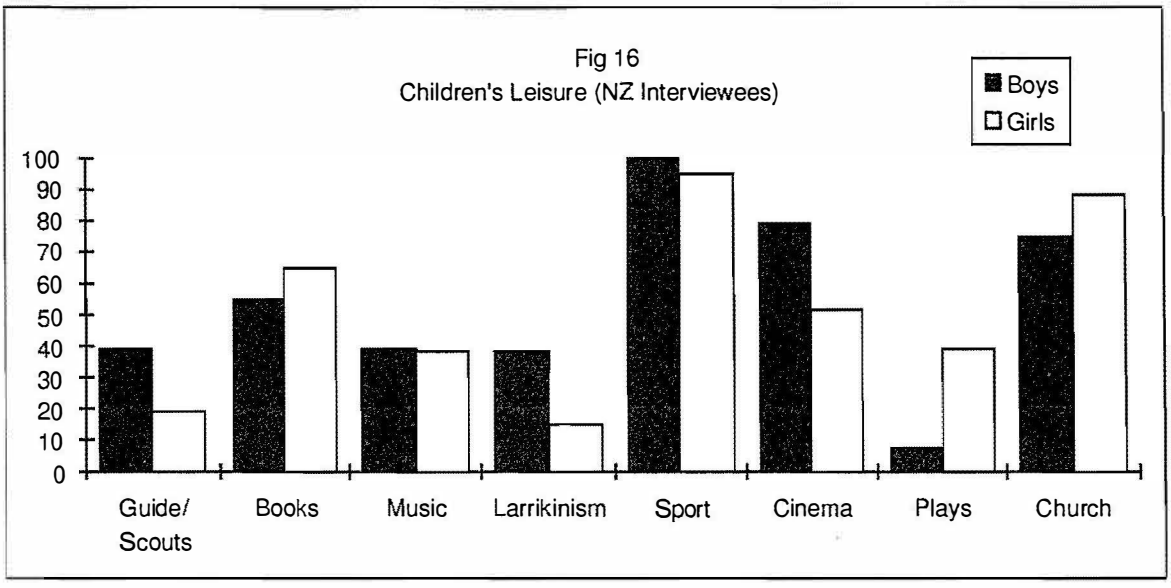
[152]Mavis Benson, 12.5.95, p.10.

[153] Boys such as Bill Gillespie recalled swimming in the river in the afternoon, and ranging out into the countryside. Thomas Ryan explained that 'life was good on a farm'. Thomas Ryan, 11.4.95, p.16.

[154]Edna Partridge, 1.3.95, p.30.



Numerous clubs and organisations existed for children by the interwar period, although these generally focused on older children (10-16 years). Edith Hart lists sixteen different types; varying from scouts and guides, newspaper clubs, church groups such as the Busy Bees, junior lodges, sports clubs and jingoistic organisations such as the Navy League.[155] Most organisations aimed to make children into good moral citizens. Holt observes that ''Youth' by which commentators usually meant inner-city working-class boys, was defined as a 'social problem' towards the end of the nineteenth century and efforts were made to direct the energies of what came to be called "adolescence" into acceptable channels'.[156] Although these societies hoped to improve the children of the poor, in practice these groups seemed directed at or orientated towards middle class children. For example newspaper clubs encouraged children to donate money or presents to children less fortunate than themselves, which implies that participants were largely middle class.[157] The following information about children's organisations comes from Christchurch, though most groups would have existed in other urban centres. Studies concentrated on urban boys, since observers believed that they were potentially the most disorderly and destructive group in society. For much of this period rural children were not seen as problematic and so were seldom the objects of study. Investigators believed that their problems stemmed from not enough leisure, instead of too much free time.

These clubs and organisations must have made an impact on children's lives, but can hardly have helped create the sober and moral society authorities desired, since children did not participate in organised clubs or societies in very large numbers (see table).[158] The

[155]British boys recorded belonging to scouts, cubs, the Labour Party League of Youth, youth clubs, operatic societies, and church guilds, while the girls belonged to guides or church guilds.

[156]Holt, *Sport and the British,* p.138.

[157]E.M.Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children outside the school,' MA Thesis, Canterbury University College, 1936, p.13.

[158] There were tramping clubs for boys and girls, and hobby clubs such as he 'Meccano and Hornby Railway

percentages in the British sample appear roughly similar 33.3 per cent. of the British boys and 13.3 per cent. of the girls) belonged to an organised group while the figures were 39 per cent. for New Zealand boys, and 18 per cent. for British girls, respectively. Many organisations for adults had junior leagues in an attempt to encourage membership. The Rechabites, Good Templars, Druids, Oddfellows and Orange Lodges had children's leagues. These organisations encouraged thrift and the development of good character and held some elements of ritual.[159] Propagandist societies also encouraged children's participation. The Victoria League and the Navy League promoted patriotism and ties with the British Empire. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had a juvenile league that worked through schools.[160] Guides or scouts were probably the most popular, closely followed by newspaper clubs. According to Edith Hart's 1936 study, the women who ran the newspaper clubs in Christchurch exerted a considerable influence over the lives of children who wrote to them. 'Many parents have approached Lady Gay to ask her advice on careers for their children, and she has found work for quite a number. Aunt Hilda is more often approached by girls in their teens who are in need of advice on affairs of the heart, or who feel that their sexual instruction has been neglected'.[161] Much to the disgust of educationalists, such as Shelley's student, Harris, a number of boys avoided organised leisure activities altogether. According to Harris, Boys' High students were the most likely to take part in organised activities, and primary school boys the least likely. Only 4.5 per cent. of the Boys High group, 16 per cent. of the Technical school boys and 22 per cent. of the primary school boys did not take part in any organised leisure activities.[162] It is noticeable that the most privileged group (secondary school children) had the highest rate of participation in organised leisure activities, reinforcing the argument that middle-class children were subject to greater adult regulation.

Table 13 Participation in Clubs, Boys only

Group	No. in group	Y.M.C.A	Lodge	Old school clubs	Church Clubs	None
High School	74	4	5	19	5	44 (59 %)
Technical	103	2	12	6	7	78 (77 %)
Primary 'Sample 100'	100	4	3	2	2	90 (90 %)
TOTALS	277	10 (.3.6 %)	20 (7.2 %)	27 (9.7 %)	14 (5 %)	212 (76 %)

Source: Harris, 'The Boy just left school', p.223.

club'. The Meccano clubs hoped to 'make every boy's life brighter and happier, 'to foster clean-mindedness, truthfulness, ambition and initiative in boys' and to develop knowledge of engineering principles. Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.19. Hart notes that children joined clubs between the ages of 8 and 12 and were most enthusiastic around the ages of 10 and after 14, Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.43.

[159]ibid, p.22.

[160]ibid, p.21.

[161]ibid, p.12.

[162]Harris, 'The Boy just left school', p.235.

Table 14: Participation in organised activities: 1936 figures, Boys and Girls.

Name	B	C	D	E
Sunbeams	28	50	33, 000 total	Even
Star	31	76	20, 000 total	1 boy:5 boys
Busy Bees	-	9	350	a few busy boys
G.F.S	-	1	250	Girls
Boys Brigade	3	-	30	Boys
L.S.Guards	-	2	640 (NZ)	Boys dwindled
Band of Hope	1	1	2, 250 (Cant)	One third boys
Bible Class	10	-	-	-
St Johns	16	9	400	Even
Navy League	-	1	-	-
Bird Clubs	3	-	-	Adults
Lodges	25	26		
32 M	3	-		Boys
Football	3	-		Boys
Tennis	4	3	-	-
Swimming	4	5	-	-

Source: EM Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.41.

Although less than a quarter of my sample and Harris's sample belonged to organised leisure groups such as scouts or guides, much greater numbers participated in church activities. Roughly half of boys (51 per cent.) aged four to thirteen attended church although participation declined among adolescents.[163] Harris calculated that roughly 18 per cent. of Presbyterian and Anglican boys belonged to Bible Class groups in 1927.[164] It seems likely that if Harris had sampled a younger group of boys, participation rates in organised religion would have been higher. Hart mentions that the YMCA asked 682 primary school boys if they attended Sunday school and found that 71.5 per cent. claimed they attended.[165] This is very similar to my figure of 76.2 per cent of boys attending religious services. In my sample 9 out of 13 boys and 21 out of 24 girls went to church or Sunday school. The British sample were fairly similar but slightly lower, with 67 per cent .of the boys and 75 per cent. of the girls attending church or Sunday school regularly. Although children usually attended a Sunday school attached to their parents' church some children moved between different Protestant denominations and David Moore attended a Catholic primary school for a year although his family were Protestant.

[163]ibid, p.212.

[164]ibid, p.235.

[165]E.M.Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', p.52.

Chapter VIII: 'Playing Together'

Table 15: Participation in religious activities, boys only

Group	No. in group	Church	Bible class	Sunday School	Choir or band	No. not answering or replying none
Boys High School	74	39 (52 %)	18 (24 %)	6	3	30 (27 %)
Technical	103	38 (37 %)	26 (25 %)	1	5	44 (43 %)
Primary Sample '100'	100	32 (32 %)	18 (18 %)	1	4	46 (46 %)
TOTALS	277	109 (39 %)	62 (22 %)	8 (2.8 %)	12 (4.3 %)	110 (40 %)

Source, Harris, 'The Boy just left School', p.215.

Recollections show that by the interwar years churches had made an effort to make Sunday school interesting. Hart notes that in Christchurch in the mid 1930s 'there was a Sunday School war raging in Sydenham'. She claimed that 'One or two small sects established there were adopting most peculiar tactics to get children into their schools. It was alleged that children had been approached and all sorts of bait held out to them in the promise of parties, picnics and prizes'.[166] The churches were fighting against the tide of secularism. In the mid 1930s the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Congregational Churches, Youth for Christ and most of the Anglican churches in Christchurch ran a 'Youth for Christ' campaign. Hart believed this had been very successful in raising enthusiasm for Sunday schools and Youth Groups.[167] They may have been forced to improve their classes in order to compete with other demands on children's time. Frobellian influences were revealed in Mada Basting's Sunday school where the children had a sandpit to play in.[168] Church groups made an effort to appeal to boys by including popular interests in Sunday school. 'Muscular Christianity' made an impact in at least one Sunday school as the this next recollection shows. Elliott Atkinson went to the St Giles Presbyterian church in Kilburnie. Alec Irvine, his Sunday school teacher, had been New Zealand's amateur heavy-weight wrestling champion, 'and as soon as we got the Sunday school part over he would teach us all a bit of wrestling and that was quite good, you never sort of missed Sunday school if you could help it.'[169]

Organised religion formed an important part of childhood although few Protestant children appeared deeply religious. Children tended to interpret religion in a very literal way, as David Moore's memory of being deeply afraid of hell demonstrates. He went to a Catholic school when he first started school, and the religious atmosphere there made a deep impression upon him:

> On Monday mornings . . . the sister would say, "How many of you went to church this morning?"

166Hart, 'The organised activities of Christchurch children', pp.52-53.
167ibid, p. 53.
168Mada Bastings, 13.9.94, p.2.
169Elliott Atkinson, 10.7.94, p.20.