The Compassionate Contrarians

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A history of vegetarians in Aotearoa New Zealand

Catherine Amey

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info@rebelpress.org.nz
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Foreword

The rat was white and very clean, with a sensitive, twitching nose and a gentle expression. I looked at her in the cage, and she looked at me. Instantly I realised that it was quite wrong to kill her simply so that I could grind up her liver and measure the levels of her liver enzymes—an experiment that had been performed by thousands of biochemistry students before me on thousands of rats. Sadly for this particular rat, a tutor was standing right next to me. He pulled the rat out of the cage, twisted her neck, and handed her warm body to me. He looked at me sympathetically. 'I don't like this either,' he said. 'That's why I'm switching to botany.'

There I was with the dead rat and a scalpel. Eventually I cut a gulf into her limp stomach, exposing the miniature, human-like organs packed into her warm belly. She smelled of fresh butcher's mince. I felt nauseated and guilty. Not long afterwards, I read Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, and decided not to kill any more rats, and also to stop eating meat. Laboratory experiments and satisfying my taste buds both seemed trivial and inadequate reasons to take away a life. At the time, I knew few other vegetarians. I joined the New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society and marched through the Wellington streets to protest against animal experiments. I was too timid to become actively involved, however. Later, while I was working for an environmental group at Wellington's Peace and Environment Centre in Cuba Street, I gradually realised there were lots of other veggies and vegans around—in Peace Movement Aotearoa, the Wellington Rainforest Action Group, the anarchist Committee for the Establishment of Civilisa-

tion, Save Animals from Exploitation, Wellington Animal Action and the Vegetarian Society. I became involved in animal rights, and joined the anarcha-feminist Katipo Collective, which included many vegans. Over time I began to wonder about the history of vegetarianism and animal rights in this country. I had a vague idea of hippies in the 1960s eating lentils and not much else. In 2001 I went to an animal rights conference and met Margaret Jones, then in her seventies, and an inspiringly energetic anti-vivisectionist and Marxist. She had been campaigning against animal experiments since the 1930s, and remembered the vegetarian socialist playwright George Bernard Shaw staying at her house when she was a teenager. Quite a long time later I read David Grant's *Out in the Cold*, a history of conscientious objectors during the Second World War. Grant described Norman Bell, a leader of the No More War Movement in Christchurch:

> A scholar with first-class honours degrees from Canterbury, London, and Cambridge Universities, Bell had been barred from teaching and standing as a Labour candidate in the 1919 election because of his stand against the First World War. He lived, often precariously, as an outside examination tutor for Canterbury University students, and as a private teacher of Esperanto, German, Greek, Hebrew, and Maori. In many ways an otherworldly figure and a man before his time, his refusal to wear leather shoes as a protest against the killing of animals for food, was more than a little strange to observers in a conformist 1930s society.[1]

And so this book began. I would like to thank more people than I could possibly mention here. I'm particularly grateful to Christine Dann, for long-term support, advice, and the correction of many errors and to Rebel Press for bringing this project to fruition. Many thanks are also due to Janine McVeigh, and the 2009 Northland Polytechnic class, Ryan Bodman, Nicky Hager, Mary Murray, Lorraine Weston-Webb, Eric Doornekamp, Kevin Hague, Ann M., Hans Kriek, Ranjna Patel, Valerie Morse, Megan Seawright, Lyn Spencer, Ross Gardiner, Tanya Chebotarev, Sian Robinson, Michael Morris, Tanya Tintner, Peter McLuskie, Debra Schulze, Katy Brown, Eric Wolff, Margaret Jones, the research librarians at the National Library of New Zealand and many others. Words can't express how grateful I am to Mark Dunick for his support and love.

Introduction

The compassionate contrarians

The miseries…[in the world] do not come to us by chance, but by a system of utterly false relations of people to one another and towards the animal creation.
—Jessie Mackay[1]

On a rainy Friday evening in July 1885, an unnamed country gentleman ventured through the mud to a community concert at the Stratford Town Hall. Arriving slightly late, he walked into the hall to hear a singer praising sauerkraut over roast beef and plum pudding. The mere suggestion that vegetables could be preferred to meat was offensive, and he sat down to write a piece for the *Taranaki Herald*, complaining:

> 'I should like to ask this gentleman if he considers it the part of a patriot to take advantage of a public platform, with the eyes of the world upon him, to disseminate the pernicious doctrine of vegetarianism? What is to become of Taranaki if beef goes out of fashion?'[2]

For a hundred and fifty years New Zealand's economy has largely depended on the bodies and infant milk of animals.[3] Historian James Belich characterises meat in colonial society as 'the essence of food, representing the rest…it symbolised human domination of nature, and was a marker of prosperity and status.'[4] The 'mystique' of grassland farming is part of our national identity, shaping our lives, our diets and the land around us.[5]

Nineteenth century European colonists settled in rural areas, clearing the forests to create pastures for sheep and cattle.[6] With so much food on the hoof around them, they turned to a diet laden with meat, alcohol, and bread.[7] Early New Zealand was 'a place of plain home cooking, heavy on meat dishes and sweetened by cakes, with little time for "foreign muck."'[8]

Yet there have long been idealists who disagreed with the meat-eating majority. Even though New Zealand kills millions of animals every year, there is also a significant history of concern for animal suffering—the first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was formed in Canterbury in 1872.[9] From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, ethical vegetarians have drawn attention to the contradiction between petting animals, and chewing on them. Their arguments challenge us at a very basic level, questioning what we put on our plates, and why. Just as conscientious objectors (some of whom did not eat meat) refused to participate in the wars of the twentieth century, ethical vegetarians refuse to be complicit in the slaughter of millions of animals. They remind us that the tidy, plastic-wrapped packets of flesh that we buy from the supermarket were once warm with life, and they point out that different and perhaps more compassionate choices are available to us.

Vegetarianism has a long history in Aotearoa, dating back to early Māori communities. For example, according to the oral literature of Ngāti Awa in the Eastern Bay of Plenty Region, the ancestor Toi-kai-rākau (Toi the wood-eater) ate vegetable foods.[10] In the nineteenth century, early British colonists explored meatless diets. Mary Richmond arrived in Taranaki from England in the 1850s, joining her husband's family in a small farming community, which raised pigs and cows for meat and milk. Mary believed that 'no apparent law of the universe or design of the creator can make it right to destroy life.'[11] Several decades later, young Harold Williams stopped eating meat in imitation of Tolstoy. The idealistic Christchurch teenager argued that 'it is wrong to kill animals for food, not only on the animal's account but also on the slaughterer's.'[12]

The late nineteenth century was a time of upheaval, of questioning the status quo, of experimenting with natural diets and imagining utopias.[13] The early vegetarians in this book were courageous and unconventional, cherishing ideals that were heroic and occasionally eccentric. They dreamed of international disarmament, equal rights for women, prison reform, the dismantlement of the British Empire, anarchism, socialism and a ban on alcohol. Among them were Seventh Day Adventists, theoso-

phists, free-thinkers and spiritualists. They included public figures such as the suffrage and temperance campaigner Kate Sheppard, the judge and politician Sir Robert Stout, and Maui Pomare, the first Māori doctor. In the early twentieth century Adventists started up vegetarian cafés, published cookbooks, and opened health food factories. Generations of children grew up munching on Weetbix, produced in those same factories. Over the years Weetbix and Marmite, once 'faddish' health foods, became iconic New Zealand products. Women's rights and temperance campaigners also explored meatless diets.[14] The *White Ribbon* temperance magazine published recipes for savoury lentil loaf, and nut plum pudding.[15] In the 1920s and 1930s pacifists such as James Forbes and Norman Bell set up the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society, probably New Zealand's first animal rights group. Bell looked to a future in which 'all exploitation of living beings by other beings will eventually become repulsive to man.'[16] During the Second World War, hundreds of young men were imprisoned for resisting conscription. They included vegetarians, and the dining hall at the Strathmore detention camp even had a special vegetarian table.[17] In the early 1950s young Lucien Hansen refused to register for military service, declaring that 'under no circumstance will I ever take part in any warfare, whether it be against colour, creed or nation…I am a non-meat-eater, and refrain from killing wherever possible.'[18]

Theosophy, a syncretic religion that drew from Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and the occult, also influenced vegetarianism and animal rights trends in New Zealand. Geoffrey Hodson, an English theosophist lecturer, set up the New Zealand Vegetarian Society in the 1940s. He and other theosophists campaigned against animal experiments and investigated slaughterhouse practices, protesting that animals were slowly bludgeoned into unconsciousness with hammers.[19] In the 1960s and 1970s the counterculture emerged, and young people explored more ethical and natural ways of living. Meanwhile, New Zealand's cuisine was becoming more diverse, as immigrant communities introduced tantalising new herbs and spices, and New Zealanders travelling overseas discovered exciting flavours and textures—dhal, falafel, tofu, spanakopita, Asian stir-fries and fake meat dishes. The following decade, a new animal rights movement emerged from the 1970s protest movement. Anti-vivisectionist Bette Overell led hundreds of people through the Wellington streets to protest against animal experiments, and some activists turned vegan, boycotting all animal products.[20]

Over the years, our attitudes towards animals and food have shifted. New Zealand cuisine is no longer just about roasts, sweet cakes and stodgy puddings. Meatless options are almost everywhere, and are crammed with subtle and surprising flavours. On Saturday mornings at my local Newtown vegetable market in Wellington, the rhythms and voices are as complex and varied as the flavours and aromas—golden deep-fried tofu, fresh noodles, sticky rice, gleaming eggplants, wheatgrass, chillies, crisp stalks of lemongrass, feathery green bunches of coriander. A caravan dishes up savoury vegan mushroom, quinoa, and walnut burgers, and a middle-aged gentleman with a contented dog and a guitar strums protest songs next to the tofu stall and urges us all to 'cheer up and smile.' Vegetarian and semi-vegetarian diets have become particularly attractive to young people. A 2001 study found that twenty-six per cent of people chose to eat up to half their meals without meat, and a further twenty-one per cent were planning to cut back on meat.[21] Environmentalists point out that a major proportion of New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions come from the meat and dairy industries.[22] Most people now want to ban intensive farming; back in 1995 a survey found that seventy-seven per cent of people were opposed to battery hen cages.[23] Our relationship towards animals is becoming more thoughtful.

The experiences of the vegetarians and animal rights activists who worked for and dreamed of a non-violent society have remained largely untold. Historians and statisticians have tended to ignore meatless diets, and it is especially difficult to uncover the lives of working-class vegetarians and vegetarian people of colour. Yet the history of our communities includes the stories of the vegetarians, pacifists, and socialists, as well as those of the meat companies, soldiers, and capitalists. The gentle voices deserve a hearing, as well as the strident ones. Primarily, this is the tale of a handful of courageous idealists who spoke out against cruelty and injustice, and were not afraid to defy convention. Although their impact on our communities is difficult to assess, they were brave and inspiring figures, many of whom did their utmost to create a more compassionate world for all living beings. They still set an example for us today.

1

A fig for the vegetarians!

James is about to part with, dispose of or let his cows… having nothing but horses…I am not sorry for this change since his wife sets so inordinate a value on mere animal life that she would think herself guilty of a crime were she accessory to the death of a chicken…She is a dear, sweet, loveable creature, sensible & cultivated with everything to recommend her but this compassion run riot.
—Jane Maria Atkinson, 4 September, 1859.[1]

On a grey July evening in 1857, the *Kenilworth* approached the Taranaki coastline, bringing a group of English settlers, among them Mary and James Richmond, to the small town of New Plymouth.[2] It had been a protracted voyage—122 days, and two deaths, between Gravesend and Auckland. James' family waited on the shore to welcome the young couple as they disembarked, and soon the group started for home along one and a half miles of muddy road to the family's land at Merton. The winter night was moonlit, yet showery, and as Mary approached her new home, a rainstorm pelted down.[3] She thought about her sisters and mother, half a world away, and felt the weight of separation. Her 'dearest ones may be in sorrow or danger, lying seriously ill, perhaps dying & yet that for months one can know nothing of it—do nothing to help or comfort them.'[4]

The travellers arrived at a cluster of cottages, the homes of James' extended family, and Mary and James settled into 'Bird's Nest,' a one-room hut jutting from a roughly cleared paddock studded with large blackened tree stumps. Here Mary learned to cook meals in vast iron pots, and worried that her husband's farm raised cows and pigs for slaughter. At twenty-three, Mary was an ethical vegetarian, who was horrified that 'animal life has to be sacrificed by men…for their own sustenance.' Deeply religious, she was sometimes stricken by doubt, as she thought about the ultimate fate of the cows and pigs. The degree of suffering in the universe implied that 'things must have got a twist' and life was not moving in harmony with the will of God.[5]

Friends and family perceived the will of God quite differently, however. Around Christmas 1859, Richmond opened her mail to find a long and closely argued letter from her sister in London. Annie Smith was anxious about her sister's vegetarian diet, especially now that Richmond was pregnant, and had consulted a family doctor on her behalf: *

> 'I thought it would be well Mary dearest to ask Dr. Kidd how vegetarianism was likely to agree, thinking perhaps his opinion might have some weight with you (on the physical side of the question)… He remembered you and your constitution quite well. He said he thought it would be very injurious to you & injure your constitution & your child's *very much*…I had no idea he would speak so strongly. He said that you should not on any account persevere in it.'[6]

Vegetarians in nineteenth century New Zealand faced intense pressure to shut up and eat up. The tens of thousands of migrants that arrived on New Zealand shores in the nineteenth century were largely from Britain, and British culture shaped colonial views of meat and vegetarianism.[7] Animal products were nutritious, delicious and signified wealth and power. Meat was 'a marker of prosperity and status, of being one's own master.'[8] As well as eating animals, people wore them—in the 1880s, one woman returned from Europe with a reception gown 'that must have 200 little brown birds fastening a rose-coloured crepe upon a skirt of white silk.'[9] With the advent of refrigerated ships in the 1880s, and the dispatch of vast numbers of icy sheep carcasses to Britain, animal flesh assumed a central role economi-

* Frances Porter's *Born to New Zealand* implies the vegetarian issue arose during Mary's first pregnancy in 1858. However, many of the letters about vegetarianism in Guy Scholefield's *The Richmond Atkinson Papers* are dated 1859, and seem to relate to Mary's second pregnancy.

cally as well as gastronomically. Vegetarianism seemed eccentric, extreme, and possibly unpatriotic.

Nonetheless, the growing vegetarian movement in Britain influenced New Zealand. Ships set off for New Zealand, bringing ideas in the form of newspapers, books, letters; they also carried vegetarian settlers. Occasionally overseas lecturers toured the country, creating debate about meatless diets, and persuading some New Zealanders to take a fresh look at what was on their plates.

Early Māori vegetarianism

Although this chapter focuses on British colonists, Māori certainly had traditions of vegetarianism. According to the oral literature of the peoples of Te Tai Rāwhiti (the East Coast), the ancestor Toi-kai-rākau (Toi the wood-eater) was a vegetarian. Ngāti Awa retell the story:

> 'Twelve generations from Tiwakawaka came the ancestor Toi te Huatahi. Toi resided at Kaputerangi Pa which is located above the Koohi Point Scenic Reserve. On the arrival of Hoaki and Taukata to the area in search of their sister, Kanioro, they were treated to a feast consisting of fern root, berries, and other forest foods. Upon tasting these foods they took an instant dislike to them, remarking that it was just like eating wood. It was from this event that Toi became known as Toi-kai-rakau (Toi the vegetarian). Hoaki and Taukata asked for a bowl of water in which they added dried preserved kumara or kao and asked their hosts to taste it. Having tasted this delicious kai they desired to have more of it.' [10]

The nineteenth century Pākehā scholar Elsdon Best reported that Māori tohunga used a vegetarian diet to treat diseases such as ngerengere (leprosy):

> 'The Maoris [sic] endeavoured to cure the disease by keeping the leper from sunrise to sunset in a vapour bath. During the process of steaming, the tohunga (priest-physician) repeated the karakia and charms especially applicable to such a malady. The diet during treatment was entirely vegetarian, no fish or pork being allowed.' [11]

Vegetarian traditions continue today among Māori. Early in 2013, the Tūhoe political activist and leader Taame Iti (whose son is named Toi-kai-rākau) announced his preference for vegan food on his release from jail. [12]

Meat and class in Britain

Knowing a little about food and society in nineteenth century Britain can help us understand why European settlers, both rich and poor, prized meat so highly. Prosperous British people chewed through copious quantities of flesh. Meat-eating was 'central to [British] society, and, especially for the middle classes, as a sign of social affluence…The vegetarian could hardly even begin to erase this symbol of power and wealth.'[13] Isabella Beeton's extremely popular *Book of Household Management* (1861) suggested 'plain family dinners' of boiled turbot and oyster sauce, roast leg of pork, roast haunch of mutton, boiled neck of mutton, ribs of beef, or rump-steak pudding.[14] The 'comfortable meal, called breakfast' was even more of a feast, if possible one should set a sideboard with dishes of cold tongue, veal and ham pies, broiled sheep's kidneys, grilled whiting or haddock, cold joints of game and mutton chops.[15] Amid all the plates of meat, fresh vegetables were noticeably absent. Raw vegetables, Beeton warned, 'are apt to ferment on the stomach.'[16] Tomatoes should only be eaten stewed, and one should be wary of them, as 'the whole plant has a disagreeable odour, and its juice, subjected to the action of the fire, emits a vapour so powerful as to cause vertigo and vomiting.'[17]

Working class British people ate little meat, but not by choice. Many people were nearly starving. A doctor gave evidence in 1843 to a government commission that 'four out of five working people who consulted him were really suffering from malnutrition and their medical problems would be resolved if they ate decently and regularly.'[18] The journalist and former labourer William Cobbett described English peasants as 'the worst used labouring people on the face of the earth. Dogs and hogs are treated with more civility, and as to food and lodging, how gladly would the labourers change with them.'[19] Factory workers in the cities suffered desperate hardship, and people occasionally collapsed from starvation in the London streets.[20] Where people endured such poverty, deliberately rejecting any kind of food would have seemed puzzling.

Some working people sought to escape from hunger and hardship by moving overseas in the hope of a new life. Shipping and emigration companies produced booklets and posters encouraging workers to migrate overseas to other parts of the Empire. New Zealand was portrayed as a land of milk and honey, and thousands of British settlers arrived in the nineteenth century in search of a better way of living.[21] The military surgeon and author Arthur Thomson wrote in 1859 that 'England has no

future for most of the present generation…the working man from the cradle to the grave lives little above starvation and has nothing to hope for, whereas in New Zealand there is a great future for him.'[22]

Abundant New Zealand

Prime joints of roast lamb and beef were central to this 'great future.' Although company propaganda about New Zealand was often misleading, it was true enough that food was cheap and plentiful. When labourers wrote back home to England, the satisfaction of fine roasts, steaks, and chops shines through in their letters.[23] Visiting union official Christopher Holloway praised the living conditions at an Oamaru sheep ranch in the 1870s. He observed:

> 'some 40 men set down to as good substantial a dinner as one could desire. There was roast beef, vegetables, and plum duff. I was told that the men get beef or mutton 3 times a day, and plum duff 4 times a week—the employers here say that if a man is to work well, he must live well.'[24]

Some working people were excited to get the chance to go hunting, an upper class sport in Britain. John Gregory, a Wellington resident, wrote that:

> 'If you go into the bush about three miles you can have plenty of pork for shooting but you must have a good dog and gun. There are plenty of wild bulls, it is the best of beef; there is no one to say they are mine; those that get them have them.'[25]

Cheap and tender meat also appealed to well-bred ladies and gentlemen. Lady Mary Anne Barker enthused that 'there is no place in the world where you can live so cheaply and so well as a New Zealand sheep station.'[26] At her farm in the foothills of the Southern Alps the family dined on:

> 'Porridge for breakfast with new milk and cream a discretion; to follow mutton chops, mutton ham or mutton curry, or broiled mutton and mushrooms, not shabby little fragments of meat broiled, but beautiful tender steaks off the leg; tea or coffee and bread and butter, with as many new-laid eggs as we choose to consume. Then for dinner at half past one we have soup, a joint, vegetables and a pudding, with whipped cream…We have supper about seven, but this is a moveable feast consisting of tea again, mutton cooked in some form of entree, eggs, bread and butter, and a cake of my manufacture.'[27]

Stupendous quantities of meat were prepared for celebrations. In 1857, the vegetarian Mary Richmond joined her husband's extended family for a shared Christmas dinner at their home near New Plymouth. A summer downpour rendered outdoor dining impossible, so eighteen family members squeezed into the living room to feast at a makeshift table of kauri boards laden with turkey, ham, beef pies, and five roast chickens. A sixteen pound boiled plum pudding and mince pies followed the main course, though both would have contained suet. There was little vegetarian food—Richmond had a choice of raisins, almonds, or gooseberry pie.[28]

'Compassion run riot'

In 1850s Taranaki, Richmond was constantly nagged about her diet. Her sister-in-law Maria was bewildered that Richmond cared so much for 'mere animal life.'[29] Ten years older than Richmond, Maria felt herself much more experienced and sensible, and considered that the younger woman was 'inclined a little to be morbid in some of her notions, owing to what in phrenological terms would be called an undue development of the organ of compassion.'[30] She urged her sister-in-law to begin eating meat again. Richmond's husband, James, was a little more sympathetic; in December 1857 he sold the farm pigs to his brother Harry, appeasing Mary's conscience somewhat. However, he kept the cows.[31]

Richmond was also badgered by friends and relations back in England. Family friend and *Spectator* editor Richard Holt Hutton became worried that Richmond might waste away. In March 1878 he announced his intention to: 'inveigh against her on Maurician† principles for this vegetarian notion. She is a sweet creature, and I would not willingly see her health fail from any reverence for cows and sheep. I don't undervalue animal enjoyment—such as it is—but surely one of the highest things that animal life can effect, is to contribute to the health & strength of a higher order of beings.'[32]

He was wise enough to add that 'I must not put it to her on this ground.'[33] Though Hutton strongly opposed animal experiments, his sympathy for animals did not extend to avoiding their flesh. He believed implicitly in 'the clear law of physical health which requires animal food.'[34] At the time many experts believed that meat was essential for health. Doctors prescribed beef tea for invalids, and argued that herbivorous animals suffered from tuberculosis, and therefore 'a person of consumptive tendency,

† Mary Richmond was strongly influenced by F. D. Maurice, a Christian socialist theologian.

Mary Richmond, 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-1802-1-46

who demands, above all things, easily digestible food (which vegetables, on the whole, are not) and a diet rich in fats, might develop the disease through rash experiments in vegetarianism.'[35] The French physician, E. Monin, argued that: 'vegetable diet, owing to its introducing more mineral salts into blood than animal food, was the means of causing chalky degeneration of the arteries.'[36]

Richmond's family in England were concerned about her soul as well as her body. Her sister Annie Smith worried that Richmond had a 'spiritual disease.'[37] Smith wrote long letters to Richmond, arguing that vegetarianism was unchristian:

> 'If you believe in the inherent sinfulness of taking animal life, I don't see how you can believe in a *good* Creator...animals are so evidently made to prey upon one another, besides their instincts who can look at a tiger or hawk...and doubt it. We cannot live without taking life, do what we will we kill animalcule [sic] in the water we drink.'[38]

Smith continued, 'does not your belief make all creation sinful? how then can it be the work of a good God? Is it not far harder to believe this than to believe that taking animal life is not in itself a sin?'[39] Closer to home, her sister-in-law Maria continued to argue against vegetarianism. Eventually Richmond succumbed to Maria's 'kind urgency,' agreeing to eat a little meat, at least while she was pregnant.[40]

Meanwhile, tensions over land were growing between Māori and Pākehā. Many Taranaki colonists hoped for a war that might grant them extra land. After Te Atiawa chief Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitake peacefully evicted a European survey party from his land, Governor McLean announced martial law.[41] On February 22nd, 1860, Major Murray declared war, and many European women and children left as refugees for safety in Nelson. Mary Richmond, seven months pregnant, travelled with them. She lived in the South Island for the rest of her brief life, giving birth to four more children. Exhausted after nursing three of her children through scarlet fever, she became ill herself and died in October 1865, at the age of thirty-one.[42]

Richmond's vegetarianism may have had some influence on those around her. During her years in New Zealand she grew very close to Arthur Atkinson, her brother-in-law.[43] Some years after Richmond's death Atkinson stopped eating meat. He adopted unusual eating patterns, consuming his main meal of the day at nine or ten o'clock at night, and washed down his vegetarian food with sour ale and soda.[44] Atkinson was nicknamed 'Spider' because of his passion for collecting spiders, and whenever possible, he locked himself away into his study, a 'chaos of bottles, dusty books, cobwebs and wood ashes.'[45] Maria, his wife, complained about his bizarre food habits, commenting that 'for fanatical faddism, there is no match for a true born Atkinson.'[46]

Vegetarianism in Britain and New Zealand

Mary Richmond's ideals were shaped by the vegetarian movement overseas, especially in Britain. Much as meat was prized in nineteenth century British society, a curious phenomenon emerged early in the century—citizens who deliberately rejected meat. The term 'vegetarian' came into usage in the 1840s, and a Vegetarian Society formed in Ramsgate in 1847. In the early days the Vegetarian Society was largely an initiative of the Bible Christians, a sect inspired by Emanuel Swedenborg, a Christian mystic who believed that meat-eating signified the fall of man from divine

grace.[47] Later vegetarians set up their own communities, such as Alcott House in Richmond, where the members were celibate, spent much of the day gardening, and followed a vegan diet for health, spiritual, and ethical reasons.[48]

Such ideas spread to New Zealand. Despite being separated by thousands of miles of sea from other parts of the Empire, settlers eagerly followed developments overseas. A wide selection of newspapers and magazines were shipped in; in Otago in the 1870s one could subscribe to papers ranging from the *Illustrated London News* to the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*.[49] In 1876 the telegraph arrived, an information revolution that allowed virtually instantaneous communication with the wider world.[50] According to the Wanganui Herald Newspaper Company, 'a daily supply of well-selected telegraphic items is an absolute necessity.'[51] The quantities of data arriving by cable encompassed almost every imaginable topic, including meatless diets. Between 1850 and 1900, New Zealand newspapers published over two thousand articles mentioning vegetarianism or vegetarians.‡ These discussed food safety, health and animal rights, reported on the doings of famous vegetarians such as Thomas Edison and Leo Tolstoy, and cracked vegetarian jokes.[52] From at least 1882 onwards, one could buy imported vegetarian cookbooks.[53]

Diseased and dangerous flesh

There were certainly compelling reasons to think twice about eating meat. In 1898, a horrified journalist from the *Marlborough Express* inspected the carcasses of euthanised dairy cows in Whanganui:

> 'Such a gruesome sight as was presented by the viscera of the cows destroyed was enough to turn even the strongest stomach, and to make one forswear beef and dairy produce forever, and, without single exception, tuberculosis, hydatids, actinomycosis [lumpy jaw], and other bovine diseases were plainly to be seen in the different organs affected.'[54]

Such reports tended to put vegetarianism into a more favourable light. There was no national system of meat inspection in the nineteenth century, and people imagined that they might contract cancer or tuberculosis from eating sick animals.[55] The British dietary reformer Thomas Allinson painted a grisly picture of the consequences of eating meat:

‡ Information from searching the Papers Past archive of digitised newspapers on March 16, 2013.

> 'Flesh may contain parasites, and so give rise to tapeworms or trichinae; or it may be diseased and cause consumption or malignant pustule [sic], and other dreadful complaints or it may flood our system with nitrogenous waste, and start off gout, rheumatism, stone [sic] in the gall bladder, in the kidney, or in the urinary bladder or cause indigestion, biliousness, stomach or liver trouble, etc.'[56]

In 1894 Mayor Henry Fish of Dunedin personally examined local butcher shops. To his horror he discovered 'patches of hydatids and cysts' in the mutton for sale.[57] An unhappy restaurant patron was disgusted to find a 'tubercular deposit' in a leg of mutton while dining out:

> 'We all are aware that the poison of tuberculosis is easily transmitted by animal food to human beings, giving rise to a bad form of consumption; and the evil does not remain in the individual using the diseased meat, for if he be a married man it is transmitted to his offspring.'[58]

Novelists drew further attention to the meat industry. In 1906 Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* appeared on the shelves of New Zealand bookstores. Sinclair's book described the experiences of workers in a Chicago slaughterhouse, using the treatment of animals as a metaphor for the fate of working class people under capitalism. Inadvertently, he influenced people all over the Western world to stop eating meat. As the *Otago Witness* put it, 'many people are wondering, since they have read the horrors recited in its pages, what unutterable horrors they have literally been swallowing.'[59] There were calls for a commission to investigate the meat trade. The *Bush Advocate* described 'unborn calves taken from the carcasses of dead and sometimes diseased cattle, and used as sausages' and cases where inspectors had accepted bribes for passing cattle that should have been condemned.[60]

Some readers demanded stricter regulations, or even stopped eating meat. In the early 1850s James Boylan, an Auckland councillor, visited a slaughterhouse. He was so appalled that he turned vegetarian, fearing that he might catch cholera from the diseased flesh.[61] However, improvements were slow. Forty years later, the *Grey River Argus* was complaining about the large numbers of tubercular cattle sent to slaughterhouses, commenting sardonically that 'it will be no wonder if the people up here swear off meat and milk altogether and take to beer and vegetarianism. One does not know how much cancer and consumption may be packed away in the succulent sausage.'[62]

Vegetarianism pays. Diner: Thank goodness I'm a vegetarian. Cartoon commenting on public concern about the Chicago meat industry, *New Zealand Free Lance*, June 9, 1906, Alexander Turnbull Library

Refrigeration and the economy

Such reports must have made anxious reading for New Zealand farmers, who were enjoying the profits of the frozen mutton trade. Up until the 1880s, wool and wheat were New Zealand's main agricultural exports. However, in the late nineteenth century, new refrigeration technology meant that it was practical for farmers to ship frozen meat to the northern hemisphere. The first shipment of five thousand frozen sheep carcasses left from Port Chalmers in March 1882, and was sold in Britain for sixpence a pound, a high price at the time. The *North Otago Times* predicted:

> 'the inauguration of a new commercial era…placing at the disposal of New Zealand stockowners "the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice." With a sure market to which it can be sent with the certainty of obtaining a good price, it is no exaggeration to

> say that this country could produce twenty times as much meat and dairy produce as it now produces.'[63]

The journalist was perceptive; over subsequent decades New Zealand agriculture reshaped itself to ship huge numbers of frozen sheep and cows overseas. As the meat export industry expanded, the very idea of New Zealand became associated with frozen meat. Refrigeration lead to 'revolutionary developments not merely in the economy but in New Zealand culture.'[64] Eating meat was not just about enjoying local produce; it became one's civic duty. In 1897, an *Otago Daily Times* columnist asked:

> 'If all the world becomes vegetarian, or if at least Christendom… what is to become of our frozen meat trade? I take it that it is every patriotic New Zealander's duty not only to eat meat himself, but to encourage the use of it by others. A fig for the vegetarians!'[65]

Eating our friends

Even as New Zealanders sent thousands of frozen animal bodies overseas, we worried about the welfare of domestic animals. New Zealand has a long history of compassion towards animals. According to Māori worldviews, animals are viewed as taonga, or treasures. They are beings with intrinsic value. Everything in the cosmos is interconnected—birds, trees, fish, people, the elements.[66] Humans and animals have a shared genealogy. Before going on a fishing expedition, one recites prayers to Tangaroa, the guardian of fishes, and the first fish caught may be given back to the sea.[67] In the nineteenth century, Māori concern about animal welfare took new forms, as King Tawhiao's Kingitanga parliament passed laws forbidding cruelty to animals.[68] When Pākehā arrived in New Zealand, they brought British traditions of sentiment towards domestic animals, especially cats, dogs and horses. The first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty To Animals (SPCA) was set up in Canterbury in 1872, and others formed around the country. [69]

How did this all sit with New Zealand as a meat-eating, meat-exporting country? Unfortunately, some early SPCAs did little for animals. In June 1886, a critical SPCA committee report concluded that the Wellington SPCA 'had been more interested in elevating homo sapiens than protecting animals from our species; more concerned with becoming a great nation…than with the welfare of poor dumb beasts.'[70] There was also the contradiction that many SPCA members condemned cruelty to animals while also munching on them. In March 1898 there was a lively debate

in the pages of the *Otago Daily Times* on this subject. 'An Animal Lover,' asked rhetorically:

> 'How can the animals be treated with kindness when they are slaughtered by thousands, ruthlessly overdriven on their way to the slaughter yards and made to suffer nameless tortures while there, at the hands of butchers heart-hardened by custom, before they are ready for the tables of the members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals?'[71]

The unknown writer asserted that animals were of value in themselves. They were not simply tools for humans:

> 'Judging by the tone of our newspapers one would almost think that to serve as food for us is the chief reason for the life of the brute creation…In God's name don't preach kindness to animals and then sanction and encourage the brutalities of the slaughter yard by going straight to a meal of flesh.'[72]

Then the debate erupted. *Otago Daily Times* columnist 'Civis' retorted that farmers were less cruel than nature:

> 'Would it not be more cruel to permit animals to multiply indefinitely and hark back to the laws of nature? If the animals are left, to the operation of the law which ordains that the fittest shall survive, what cruelties must be inflicted on the weaker…Most of us would step aside rather than tread on a worm; some would even open the window that a fly should escape; but we must stop at the ridiculously absurd.'[73]

Others weighed in on the side of the animals. 'Purun Dass' praised the original letter, agreeing that 'cruelty to our helpless-fellow creatures is the entirely logical result of the belief that they have been created wholly and solely for our use.'[74] A few days later, 'An Animal Lover' had the last word, countering that while nature could indeed be cruel, this did not justify the human exploitation of animals, or the breeding of vast numbers of sheep, cattle and game purely to be killed. 'A non-flesh diet,' he or she concluded, 'would not put an end to all cruelty to animals but it would be a very good beginning.'[75]

Meanwhile, the novelist Samuel Butler, a former Canterbury sheep farmer, was also pondering animal rights. Although no vegetarian, he explored the ethics of eating animals in the 1901 revision of his novel *Ere-*

whon. In Butler's ambiguous utopia, a prophet proclaims that it is wrong to kill animals for food and 'stringent laws were passed, forbidding the use of meat in any form or shape, and permitting no food but grain, fruits, and vegetables to be sold in shops and markets.'[76] However, the debate is reduced to absurdities, when a botanist argues that plants also have intelligence and souls. Only fallen fruit and leaves can be eaten with a clear conscience. Eventually an oracle declares that people should 'Eat or be eaten, Be killed or kill; Choose which you will,' and the country reverted to meat-eating.[77]

Others also felt that vegetarianism was impractical. In 1897 the *Hawke's Bay Herald* criticised the arguments presented at a vegetarian conference in England. The journalist tried to pick apart the contention that the 'sacrifice of animal life for any purpose is wrong, and even criminal,' arguing that it was vegetarianism that was wrong. Vegetarian ideals would even destroy civilised society:

> 'How would the squatters of Australia deal with the rabbit plague if such a doctrine obtained acceptance? Kittens and puppies would never be drowned, but permitted to multiply without stint. It is difficult to say whether any vegetarian has ever meditated on the condition of a country in which no animals would be killed for food or sport or clothing. Cattle breeding would be ruined, and the butcher spiritualised out of existence.'[78]

Recipes and cookery books

Vegetarians unconvinced by such arguments may have had a tough time finding suitable recipes. Popular cookbooks such as Isabella Beeton's *Book of Household Management* (1861) would have been little help. By the 1890s, however, some booksellers were importing cookbooks such as Mrs E.W. Bowditch's *New Vegetarian Dishes*; *Vegetarian Cookery, by a Lady*; and *Cassell's Vegetarian Cookery*.[79] Newspapers occasionally published meatless recipes, though sometimes these were odd concoctions of cabbage or carrots that had been dreamed up to mock vegetarian cuisine.[80] However in 1891 the *Bush Advocate* printed a recipe for savoury pea-soup, 'much liked by most vegetarians':

> '**Pea-soup (vegetarian)** Soak one cup split-peas for 12 hours in cold water. Boil together, adding a little more water, so that it is not too thick. Add turnips, carrots, and onions, cut up (one carrot is sufficient),

> a little turnip-top, dried mint, celery, thyme, two or three tomatoes, pepper, salt, butter, and half a cup of rice, stirred in gradually. Simmer five hours stir frequently. Very good and nourishing for either adults or children.'[81]

Such recipes suggest some interest in vegetarianism. They also reflect the bland and stodgy cuisine popular at the turn of the previous century. One chomped one's way through tomato and macaroni pie topped with hard-boiled eggs in white sauce, and vegetable Irish stew with parsnips, turnips and mushrooms, or fried potato rolls.[82] The veggie sausage has a long history. In 1905 the *Auckland Star* printed a recipe for 'vegetable sausages' of mashed carrot, parsnips and onions mixed with breadcrumbs and split peas.[83] They sound rather tasteless, though, to be fair, the addition of a 'small piece of garlic' was exotic and adventurous at the time.

Local cookbooks also included meatless recipes. *St Andrew's Cookery Book* (1905) included several vegetarian soups.[84] However, there were just two salads: a beetroot dish, and an orange salad.[85] The 1908 edition of Whitcombe and Tombs' *Colonial Everyday Cookery*, included a chapter of vegetarian recipes for dishes such as curried beans, vegetable marrow soup, and celery soufflé. The most sophisticated suggestion was 'bananas as a vegetable'—green bananas should be roasted, or simmered Pasifika-style in milk, seasoned with salt and pepper.[86]

The Canterbury Dietetic Reform Association

In the early 1880s a man identified only as Mr H. Satchell arrived from England to visit his son in Christchurch. He was one of several overseas visitors who helped raise the profile of vegetarianism in New Zealand. Satchell had been vegetarian for the previous two years, and believed that the change in diet had transformed his health. He and his son called a public meeting on January 16th, 1882 at the Metropolitan Temperance Hotel. The elder Mr Satchell took the chair, advocating 'the adoption of vegetarian principles as the only sure means by which the greatest of all blessings—good health—may be obtained.'[87] They found a name—the Canterbury Dietetic Reform Association—and made plans to distribute information on the 'all-important' subject of food reform.[88] Mr Satchell was optimistic that:

> 'This young offshoot may…become the stalwart oak, and so rescue multitudes from an untimely grave, for there is much sickness. I think

> I am within the mark when I say that more than two thirds of the people are suffering in some degree from ill-health, while the rate of mortality among the children is very heavy.'[89]

It was true that disease was rife in Christchurch. In the 1870s, alarmingly high numbers of babies died, and there were epidemics of typhoid fever and diphtheria. However, inadequate sanitation was more likely than poor diet to be the cause. The only sewerage system was the two rivers, and wells were contaminated by seepage from cesspits. The Avon River was heavily polluted with household slops, sewage, and discharges from slaughterhouses, tanneries and tallow works.[90]

The Canterbury Dietetic Reform Association's first meeting was reported around the country. The Christchurch *Star* gently satirised Satchell's 'unwavering faith in a purely vegetable diet':

> 'Who but a man of pluck and energy could possibly have taken the chair at such a meeting in this meat-raising, meat-devouring community? But, nevertheless, to the student of Shakespeare, proposals such as those of Mr Satchell are full of suspicious elements…Does not old John of Gaunt, "time honoured Lancaster" demand—almost with, his dying breath "and who abstains from meat that is not gaunt?" Let these be startling warnings to those who may perchance have had fleeting visions of making a parsnip do the duty of the brave sirloin, of baking carrot tarts, and pricking toothsome garlic patties.'[91]

Little is known about the Canterbury Dietetic Reform Association's activities, and it soon lost its meeting venue as the Temperance Hotel closed down in 1885. However Satchell junior later moved to Sydney, where he became president of the New South Wales Vegetarian Society.[92]

Blasphemous vegetarianism

It is unclear whether the Canterbury Dietetic Reform Association was still meeting when the controversial freethinking lecturer George Chainey toured New Zealand in 1887. Originally from Essex, in England, Chainey had trained as a minister in his youth, and eventually became pastor of the Unitarian Church in Evansville, Indiana. Unitarians follow no set dogma, and the Evansville worshippers listened tolerantly to the 'liberal, even radical' ideas in his sermons.[93] However, Chainey's beliefs became steadily more controversial. He studied Darwin's theories of evolution and John Tyndall's arguments for the separation of religion and science. On April

18th, 1880, he announced to his startled congregation that 'he was not a Christian, that he would not pray, that he despised the conventional idea of Jesus, and wanted the hymnbooks sold for wastepaper.'[94] He offered his resignation, generating 'a decided sensation and a great division of sentiment.'[95] Perhaps unsurprisingly, he had to leave the church, and turned to public lectures and writing to support himself.

Chainey drew large audiences to his lectures on topics such as 'Does death end all?' and 'The Clergy, or, the Priest and Prophet.'[96] In an era before films and television, public lectures were a popular form of entertainment. For six pence one could book a seat in Wellington's Opera House and listen to the latest speakers discussing subjects such as 'Homes and Haunts of Jesus' or 'Physiognomy: the Art of Character Reading.'[97] Chainey's unusual religious beliefs seem to have passed unchallenged. However, in meat-exporting New Zealand, his vegetarianism was a more disturbing heresy. In early August Chainey lectured on 'Meat and Morality' in Dunedin, criticising parents who fed meat to children. Newspaper reports suggest that he believed that eating meat led to bad behaviour. 'If children consumed meat largely, the animal tendencies would not be kept down although the Bible were read in the schools every day in the year.'[98] His arguments would sound strange to vegetarians today, particularly the pejorative use of the phrase 'animal tendencies.'

Otago farmers were outraged by Chainey's condemnation of meat-eating. A Taieri farmer 'Thomas Woolie' lampooned the notion that 'mutton gives the boys animal tendencies…our Sam's tendens are awl right.'[99] According to the *Otago Witness:*

> 'the bare mention in a mutton and beef-growing country of such doctrines is, it appears, flat blasphemy…Advocacy of the disuse of animal food is not profitable in Dunedin. We would rather pay to hear a lecturer who could explain how to bring about a rise in frozen mutton.'[100]

Escaping from the south of the country after a court appearance for unpaid bills, Chainey found more tolerant listeners in Wellington. On November 13th, 1887, he spoke at Wellington's newly opened Te Aro Theatre and Opera House. Here a large audience waited to hear the professor describe his impressions of New Zealand. Chainey praised the lovely forms of the land, but criticised 'the universal prevalence of meat diet,' regretting that 'the prosperity of the colony depends so largely upon its trade in meat.'[101]

May Yates and food reform

May Yates of the London Vegetarian Society received more sympathy when she argued for vegetarian diets in 1894. Officially, Yates had been invited to lecture on the advantages of 'a world-wide confederation of the English speaking race, including the improved cultivation of the land, co-operation, and the abolition of sweating and insanitary dwellings.'[102] However, she took the opportunity to argue that 'colonists consume too much meat, and would be all the better for a change of diet.'[103]

Yates had been a health food advocate for years. Born as Mary Ann Yates Corkling (her father objected to her dragging the family name into the public arena), she became convinced of the benefits of a plant-based diet after a visit to Sicily, where she noticed that the local labourers were splendid physical specimen. In an interview with Christchurch's *Star*, she explained that:

> 'I was struck with the sturdy, healthy appearance of the peasantry, and with the large amount of hard work they do upon a diet of wholemeal bread, haricot beans, macaroni, fruit, olive oil and milk. I was especially impressed with the value of wholemeal bread as an article of food.'[104]

Back in London, she started a campaign to make brown bread more available to working class people. In 1850 she formed the Bread and Food Reform League, and worked with the English Vegetarian Society to provide London school children with half penny meals. These consisted of a pint of thick vegetable soup, with wholemeal bread, and currant slices.[105] Her interest in vegetarianism grew, and she was appointed as organising secretary of the London Vegetarian Society in 1890.§

Yates arrived in New Zealand at a time of ongoing concern about meat safety. Her argument that vegetarianism was a more wholesome choice than eating animals 'suffering from ulcerating and granulating wounds' fell on receptive ears.[106] Eating meat was also 'opposed to the highest ideal of humanity, which is horrified at the thought of our daily food being associated with the bloodshed, cruelty, and death inseparably connected with the slaughter-house.'[107] She circulated a pamphlet listing twelve reasons to turn vegetarian. In a Christchurch lecture, she praised the nutritional val-

§ May Yates was still not vegetarian in 1890. However, her writings in New Zealand indicate that she had almost certainly turned vegetarian by 1894.

Yates' twelve reasons for vegetarianism

1. Eminent scientists are of the opinion that the internal and external structure of man clearly indicates his adaptation to a frugivorous diet.
2. Flesh meat contains nothing of value which may not be obtained from the vegetable kingdom.
3. The process of waste and repair constantly going on in the living system renders it impossible for flesh to be free of impurities.
4. Good authorities say that eight out of ten of the animals slaughtered for the public market are diseased, caused by immature breeding, etc., in order to fatten them and prepare them for sale.
5. Vegetarians enjoy comparative immunity from disease.
6. Observation and evidence of medical men who have given special attention to the cause and cure of the drink crave, prove that the desire for intoxicants is reduced in proportion to the abstinence from flesh meat.
7. The primitive injunction from God to man at the creation, as contained in Gen. i.29.
8. Beauty, as evinced by the women of the lower ranks in Ireland, whose diet consists chiefly of potatoes and milk.
9. The degrading influence of [the] butchering trade.
10. Land cultivated for grains, fruits, etc., employs more men than that used for grazing purposes.
11. Expense. Meat contains from 50 to 70 per cent of water, while pulse and grains contain but 14 per cent.
12. Muscular power, physical energy, and endurance. The Spartans were vegetarian, as well as the armies of Greece and Rome, at the time of their conquest. Athletes of ancient Greece, when training for public games, invariably adopted a vegetable diet.[108]

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ue of her beloved wholemeal bread, and recommended nuts, as 'especially valuable for their oil.'[109]

Initially, she met with some sceptical responses from those who:

> 'did not want to be told by a woman that they must not eat so much of their favourite mutton; why, if bread and vegetables were to be made to take the place of mutton, what on earth would become of our frozen meat trade? Bother the woman we don't want her doctrine of vegetarianism.'[110]

However, the *Auckland Star* praised Yates' 'plain, common-sense manner,' and agreed that it would be beneficial for New Zealanders to consume more fresh fruit and vegetables.[111] Letters of support began appearing in the papers, acknowledging that: 'as a rule, we eat too much meat in the colonies…Cancer is such an awful disease that one feels one would like to give up meat altogether.'[112]

Yates had the social status to make vegetarian ideas seem respectable; she was a wealthy, well-educated woman from an upper-class British family, and her social circle included politicians and aristocrats.[113] In New Zealand, she met rich and powerful figures, some of whom were sympathetic to her ideas about diet. Just before Yates returned to England, Wellington friends organised a banquet in her honour at the four-storey Trocadero Private Hotel in Willis Street. It was a dainty affair, attended by prominent citizens such as the former *Evening Post* editor David Luckie who welcomed the guests, reading a letter of apology from Sir Robert Stout, who had hoped to preside over the dinner, but was delayed in the South Island.[114] Mr. Cimino's string quartet performed, and the thirty-five guests examined a menu of over thirty dishes. This was entirely in French, so that a dish such as cauliflower in white sauce was listed as 'Choux fleurs a la Bechamel.' Some diners were mystified:

> 'Individuals could be seen in earnest consultation with their better informed neighbours, or, failing success there, with the waiters, and one old gentleman, who evidently desired to proceed warily for his stomach's sake, produced a note-book, and before each course solemnly asked the waiter to explain to him the genesis of the dish, and elaborately wrote down the information thus obtained, and laid it beside him for reference before venturing upon the mystery.'[115]

Flattering reviews appeared in many newspapers. Described as a 'sumptuous repast,' it was 'excellently served, and showed how much can be accomplished with vegetable resources alone'[116¶]

After the main course, Luckie stood up to compliment the food. He explained that though he himself was 'neither vegetarian, total abstainer, nor anti-tobacconist…much too much animal food was used by colonials, and especially was too much meat given to children.'[117] May Yates also

¶ The report is not strictly accurate, as eggs were also used.

spoke, praising the kindness and hospitality of everyone she had met. However, she:

> 'greatly regretted that so much of New Zealand was given up to the raising of meat, and comparatively so little to the raising of fruit, which she contended would give much greater profit. She had seen an orchard of five acres in New Zealand realising £400 a year; lemon trees five years old producing £1 each per annum, and walnut trees producing £10 to £17 worth of nuts annually.'[118]

Yates left New Zealand a few days afterwards, but her visit had raised awareness of meatless diets. In December 1894, the Auckland Food Reform League began planning vegetarian picnics, though a sceptical reporter from the *Observer* preferred a banquet:

> 'Picnic lunches are usually cold. Has the A.F.R.L. the temerity to think of a cold vegetarian lunch? Surely this would be inadvisable. It would require a very enthusiastic vegetarian to fortify the inner man with cold cabbage and cold boiled potato sandwiches. Far better would it be to give a vegetarian banquet and do the thing properly.'[119]

Harold Williams and vegetarianism in the 1890s

Whether or not May Yates made many converts is unclear. However the vegetarian arguments appearing in magazines convinced at least one young New Zealander that 'animal food is unnecessary.'[120] In the 1890s Harold Williams, a Christchurch teenager, stopped eating meat after reading articles in the *New Review* and *Nineteenth Century* magazine.[121] Williams' experiences were not unlike those of Mary Richmond, forty years earlier. He endured criticism, social disapproval, and sometimes inadequate food. Yet Williams was less isolated than Richmond. He had vegetarian friends, and also meat-eating friends who did their best to cook tasty meals for him. Unlike Richmond, whose concern was chiefly for animal suffering, Williams came to vegetarianism in the course of a teenage exploration of political and social ideals.

Williams first decided to experiment with a meat-free diet around 1891 after reading 'First Step,' an article by Tolstoy in the *New Review*.[122] The Russian novelist argued that an ethical, Christian life was incompatible with eating animal flesh:

> 'Once, when walking from Moscow, I was offered a lift by some carters who were going from Serpouhof to a neighbouring forest to fetch wood…On entering a village we saw a well-fed, naked, pink pig being dragged out of the first yard to be slaughtered. It squealed in a dreadful voice, resembling the shriek of a man. Just as we were passing they began to kill it…When its squeals ceased the carter sighed heavily. "Do men really not have to answer for such things?" he said. So strong is man's aversion to all killing. But by example, by encouraging greediness, by the assertion that God has allowed it, and, above all, by habit, people entirely lose this natural feeling.'[123]

Williams was also influenced by a piece by a nonagenarian minister of religion who attributed his long life to a vegetarian diet, and by an article by Walburga, Lady Paget in *Nineteenth Century* magazine.[124] Paget was appalled by the trucking of cattle to slaughterhouses, and concluded that it was wrong 'to take life in order to feed one self, when there is plenty of other available food which will do just as well.'[125] At the age of fifteen or sixteen Williams decided to stop eating meat—a difficult choice for a young man still living in his parents' home. As one settler commented, 'from the average colonial menu meat is never absent, and the ordinary colonist consumes it in some form thrice, and often four times daily.'[126] On Williams' first attempt he managed to remain steadfast for just six months before the 'forces of the surrounding world' crushed his resolve.[127] Just after his eighteenth birthday in April 1894, however, he embarked with more success on a meat-free diet, arguing that:

> 'i) It is wrong to kill animals for food, not only on the animal's account but also on the slaughterer's.
>
> ii) Animal food is unnecessary. All the nutrient qualities of animal food can be found in the vegetable kingdom.
>
> iii) Animal food is unhealthy, and it is hard to conceive conditions under which it was produced so as to be nearly as healthy as the vegetarian food.
>
> iv) Vegetarian diet if it does nothing else at least improves one's temper. I speak from experience.'[128]

Social disapproval was the most difficult part of being vegetarian, and at times Williams' desire to fit in almost persuaded him to start eating meat

Harold Williams, J Carthy Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, F- 76286-1/2

again.[129] Yet he remained steadfast, reflecting that his vegetarian identity was 'no longer a series of resolutions, but a part of my nature.'[130]

Williams was accepted as a probationary Methodist minister in 1896, and spent the next two years preaching in Christchurch's St Albans circuit. Here he met other vegetarians, such as Will and Jennie Lovell-Smith of Upper Riccarton. Will and Jennie and their children were interested in socialism, vegetarianism, and feminism. Williams often visited the Lovell-Smith family home in Upper Riccarton, entertaining the younger children with stories and Māori haka.** He discussed Tolstoy's ideas with the older family members, and became close friends with Will's vegetarian sister Lucy Smith, and his vegetarian daughter Macie.[131] Williams wrote a four-page article describing his conversion to vegetarianism. This may have been New Zealand's first ever vegetarian poster—the Lovell-Smiths pinned it to the wall of the dining room where they crunched on their raw vegetables.[132]

** Harold Williams spoke Māori fluently, and several other Polynesian languages. Eventually he became fluent in somewhere between thirty and fifty languages.

Life became both less and more complicated once Williams moved away from Christchurch. In March 1898 he was sent to Waitara in the Taranaki District, where many of his days were spent tramping long distances over wet winter roads to visit his parishioners. Instead of discussing Tolstoy's ideals, he made awkward conversation about the weather, farming, and cows. Sometimes there was no formal church for holding services. At Purangi he preached in a small galvanised iron shed, a former store, leaning against the counter, while his sixteen listeners balanced on boxes.[133] At least Williams had plenty of time for thinking. While cycling to visit his parishioners, he tried to work out his personal politics, concluding that:

> 'I am beginning to hold Communism as part of my religious faith, and I must say that I am fast inclining towards Anarchism…sometimes there come to me moments of insight when it seems to me to be the only Christ-like, the only divine way to remedy the world's evil to cast aside all fainthearted trust in violence, the weapon of evil, and to believe with all one's heart in the spiritual power of love.'[134]

Williams' superintendent, the Rev. W. G. Thomas was utterly baffled, unable to fathom 'the problem [of] how a youth with such a heterodox library…can do the work of a Methodist minister.'[135]

Vegetarianism was certainly a heterodox concept in rural Whanganui. Williams lodged with a local family, the Turners, but was too considerate to ask his hosts to prepare special meals. He sometimes went hungry, writing to a friend that 'my sermon on giving and receiving did not go well, because I had hardly had a breakfast.'[136] Mrs Turner had little idea of how to prepare a nutritious meat-free diet, and served up plates of marrow, pumpkin, cabbage, and potatoes.[137] The potatoes were badly cooked, and for the rest of his life Williams loathed boiled potatoes. The cabbage may have been little better. Popular cookbooks, such as the 1897 edition of Whitcombe and Tombs' *Colonial Everyday Cookery* advocated boiling cabbage and cauliflower for at least twenty to thirty minutes. The authors advised adding a 'piece of washing soda the size of a pea' to prevent colour loss, or a piece of charcoal 'to stop the objectionable smell.'[138]

However, other Taranaki folk tried hard to supply Williams with appetizing dishes. One kindly farmer's wife ferreted out that the young man enjoyed brown bread, and she began experimenting with wholemeal flour. Unfortunately her attempts met with little success; she produced a dense

loaf that her husband 'cruelly described' as 'a deep sea sinker.'[139] Williams did enjoy some tastier meals. The day after the brown bread debacle, he rode through mud and pouring rain to call on a young couple who 'treated me to an appetising lunch of apple pie and scones and cream.'[140] Williams did not stay long in Taranaki. He was not a natural preacher; he suffered from a nervous stammer, and his ideas were too unconventional for his audience. After delivering a sermon in Inglewood, an elderly man came up to him and gently advised that 'we are homely people here, and we like things plain.'[141] In Easter 1899 Williams left the Waitara circuit, abandoning the idea of a career in the Methodist church. He decided to study philology in Berlin, and in early 1900 he and his brother sailed for Europe on the *Konigin Louise*, bearing the addresses of two London vegetarian restaurants. ††

A changing society

Perhaps Mary Richmond and Harold Williams lived a little too soon. Vegetarianism was slowly becoming more acceptable. Whitcombe and Tombs' *Colonial Everyday Cookery* commented in 1908 that 'the popularity of vegetarian cookery is on the increase…in large cities special restaurants are being opened to meet the demand.'[142] As the nineteenth century drew to a close, there was a ferment of new ideas across the British Empire:

> 'The eighties and nineties witnessed a proliferation of cults and movements which promised to reorder a fragmented existence. Positivists and Socialists, theosophists and Spiritualists…even the more extreme adherents of vegetarianism and anti-vivisectionism, were participating in a common quest for a new unity amid the bewildering change of modern life.'[143]

Such ideas were woven through conversations that offered the possibility not just of different ways of eating, but of a different kind of society. In particular, it is a pity that Mary Richmond did not live longer, into a time where she could discuss the ethics of killing animals for food with sympathetic listeners, or banquet on asparagus and Italian-style pasta at the Trocadero Hotel. Or perhaps journey north through the kauri forests to Kaeo,

†† Williams abandoned vegetarianism not long after leaving New Zealand. In autumn 1900 he moved Germany to study philology where he found it difficult to maintain a vegetarian diet, in part because he was very short of money. Eventually he began eating meat again, though his conscience troubled him [Altson, Charlotte, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 37].

a rural town just south of the Whangaroa harbour. Here one could shelter from the Northland sun under the veranda of Miriam Gibb's general store, and share a glass of fruit juice with Christians who argued that God called his followers to adopt a meatless diet.

2

Perials of the flesh

Seventh Day Adventists and pure foods

The diet appointed man in the beginning did not include animal food. Not till after the Flood, when every green thing on the earth had been destroyed, did man receive permission to eat flesh.
—U.S. Adventist leader Ellen White, 1905[1]

Today Kaeo is a tiny, impoverished rural town in Northland, and there are few clues that vegetarian Seventh Day Adventists once lived here. The main street of prim refurbished colonial buildings conceals a bleak history of poverty and unemployment. Many of those lucky enough to have a job work at the Sanford oyster-processing factory.[2] However, there is still a vegetarian centre of sorts in the far north. A short drive south of Kaitaia you will find Shangri-La, a valley of orchards, where vegan gardeners with names such as 'Love' and 'Butterflies' tend hundreds of organically grown fruit and nut trees: mandarins, oranges, avocados, pears, plums, nectarines, blueberries, macadamias, walnuts and almonds.[3] Birds, fish and invertebrates such as the giant snail Powelliphanta are the only carnivores around.

The term 'vegan' had not been coined in October 1885, when a small party of Europeans rowed up the tidal Kaeo river from the Whangaroa Harbour. The group included Stephen Haskell, an American Seventh Day Adventist preacher, who had arrived in Auckland just ten days earlier, on a mission to market *The Bible Echo* and *Signs of the Times*.[4] He was a vegetar-

ian who considered that 'the meats God created for food are fruits, grains, and nuts.'[5] For Haskell, health, compassion for animals, and the wrath of God were intertwined; he once wrote that 'God has never forgotten to avenge the blood of animals slain for food. He uses various agencies to fulfil His word, as cancers, tumors, ulcers, consumption, etc.'[6] In Auckland Haskell stayed at a boarding house run by Edward Hare, and immediately got to work converting those around him, including his landlord.[7] Hare was so excited about his new faith that he invited Haskell to come and visit the Hare family in Kaeo, a town of three hundred people in the 1880s.[8]

The travellers went straight to Edward Hare's family homestead, a pit sawn timber cottage at Kukupae, about a kilometre south of the main township. Here Haskell met Edward's father Joseph Hare, Joseph's second wife Hannah, and some of their numerous children. Haskell felt at ease with his hosts, observing with satisfaction that 'only one of their number uses tobacco in any form, and all of them are temperate people.'[9] That evening, he preached to the family. After an all-night vigil of study and prayer, Joseph Hare decided to convert to the Adventist faith.[10] His family soon followed suit, adopting the Seventh Day Adventist principles of vegetarianism and abstinence from tobacco and alcohol.[11]

Adventism and vegetarianism

Steven Haskell and Edward Hare's journey to Kaeo marks the arrival of the Seventh Day Adventist movement in New Zealand. It is also a milestone in vegetarian history. Haskell and other Adventist missionaries from Australia and the United States advocated a 'hygienic' or meatless diet, considering that 'it was a religious duty for God's people to care for their health and not violate the laws of life.'[12] Unlike many of the vegetarians in this book, Adventists tended to be socially and politically conservative, concerned about health and purity rather than animal rights or social justice. The Adventist faith derives from conservative evangelical Protestantism, and believers are guided by Old Testament dietary principles.[13] The church leader and visionary Ellen White taught that Adam and Eve followed a vegetarian diet in the Garden of Eden. Humans only started eating meat after the time of the Flood.[14] Vegetarianism was healthy and virtuous; it was the diet that God had initially planned for the human race. Eating pork was particularly sinful, because:

> 'the tissues of the swine swarm with parasites. Of the swine God said, "It is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their

> dead carcass." Deuteronomy 14:8. This command was given because swine's flesh is unfit for food. Swine are scavengers, and this is the only use they were intended to serve.'[15]

Adventist preachers such as Haskell recruited new believers and gently encouraged them to stop eating meat. This must have been an awkward message in New Zealand, as many families kept a pig to fatten in their garden plot, alongside chickens, and perhaps a cow.[16] Yet some were open to changing their diet. Edward Hare's descendant Helen Smith describes Kaeo as the 'vegetarian capital' of New Zealand in the 1880s.[17] There were incentives to abstain, as a meat and alcohol-free lifestyle set one morally apart from one's less puritanical neighbours. In Kaeo, hard drinking, meat-eating loggers and gum-diggers made up about a third of the town's population. The Kaeo Hotel was closed for months in 1883 because of 'drunkenness', and when the Templar's Lodge boarding house refused to sell beer, angry bush workers smashed all the windows.[18] For Adventists, meat was also diseased and unhealthy. The vegan Adventist doctor Daniel Kress argued:

> 'Eat the food which is the purest and freest from disease, and take it in its purity, directly from the lap of mother Nature, not at second hand. The idea that we must feed these pure foods to animals and then eat them is erroneous. In some way people imagine they must shed blood and eat these lower creatures in order to be strong. The fact is the strongest and most useful animals we have feed on the natural products of the earth.'[19]

As some believers continued to eat meat, the size of the vegetarian Adventist community is uncertain. The significance of Adventism lies rather with the doctors and missionaries who endorsed vegetarianism as a safe, respectable, and Christian way of eating, and the Adventist businesses that created a kind of infrastructure for vegetarians. The Sanitarium Health Food Company factories produced wholegrain cereals, coffee substitutes, tinned fake meats, and peanut butter.[20] These offered convenient, easily prepared sources of protein in a time when tofu was familiar to only a few Chinese immigrants, vegetable oil was hard to obtain, and the range of vegetables was limited. Sanitarium published vegetarian cookbooks with nutritional information, and Adventist cafés opened in Auckland (1901), Wellington (1906), and Christchurch (1907), enabling vegetarians to eat out more easily. Often Sanitarium restaurants also acted as health food

outlets, selling wholemeal bread, Marmite, dried fruit and nuts.[21] There was even a vegetarian nursing home in Christchurch in the early twentieth century.[22]

Arthur Daniells and food reform in Napier

Long before the first Sanitarium health food cafés opened, Edward Hare's brother Robert and the American missionary Arthur Daniells travelled to the Hawke's Bay to spread the Adventist faith. Their mission included vegetarian propagandising.[23] In 1888 Daniells pitched a vast tent in the south-west end of Napier's new Clive Square, next to the Temperance Hotel, creating a canvas church that could seat three hundred people. Here he installed a new American pedal organ, and Miss Gribble, a musical local resident, prepared to lead the singing with her 'fine and cultivated contralto voice.' [24]

The Seventh-Day Adventists faced stiff competition for new recruits. The Salvation Army (which also had links to vegetarianism) was vigorously campaigning in Napier, and some Salvationists were arrested for blocking roads with their prayer meetings, or for organising unauthorised marches.[25] Adventists, however, appealed to a more middle-class demographic, and drew good-sized crowds. Daniells preached every night on topics ranging from food reform to the evils of the Catholic Church. His lectures on temperance and healthy diet were especially popular. The tent was crowded with local people, 'eagerly studying the Kellogg health charts which were used to illustrate the subject matter.'[26] They could also take away literature explaining the 'benefits of nourishing vegetarian foods, and the evil effects on the human body of smoking and the consumption of alcoholic beverages.'[27] His converts included Margaret Caro, a Napier dentist and former slaughterhouse inspector.[28] A muscular woman, reportedly over six foot tall, she was known for her strength and skill at extracting teeth. She was an impressive advocate for vegetarian diets.[29] Caro was so enthusiastic that she joined the Christchurch Vegetarian Society after it formed in 1899, even though she still lived in Napier. At the 1902 conference of the National Council of Women she argued:

> 'Henceforth, you, my hearers obey or disobey the original command "Thou shalt not kill!" with a fuller knowledge of its meaning, and I, who know the better way, have endeavoured to do my duty toward you in directing your feet into the pathway of life, peace, and the universal fellowship of created sentient beings.'[30]

The established churches were sceptical about Daniells' lectures, perhaps fearing to lose members of their own congregations. Rev. J. Edwards of the United Methodist Free Church suggested that Daniells' health lectures disguised a more sinister religious agenda:

> 'He insinuates this new teaching into the minds of the unwary, and these health lectures and side shows are as much intended to mollify the distracted minds which revolt from the audacity of the positions he takes up as to heal dyspeptic stomachs.'[31]

Ellen White visits New Zealand

After Haskell's and Daniells' successful missions, the Adventist leader Ellen G. White made at least two trips to New Zealand. White was responsible for the Adventist church's pro-vegetarian stance. Born in 1827 on a small farm near the village of Gorham, Maine, she converted to the Adventist faith as a young woman, and experienced over two thousand visions. In 1863, she had a revelation about the relationship between physical health and spirituality, and became convinced that believers should avoid flesh foods, and in particular abstain from pork. At once she cut meat and butter out of her diet. Her previous troubles with faintness and dizziness vanished, and her appetite improved. The vision appeared to her as a 'great light from the Lord,' given to her to pass on to others:[32]

> 'It was not always easy. I suffered keen hunger, I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach, and said: I will not taste a morsel. I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all… When I made these changes I had a special battle to fight.'[33]

White convinced others in the Adventist Church to stop eating meat, and the church began a health education program, putting out a series of pamphlets entitled *Health, or How to Live*. These argued that Adventists should keep their bodies pure and vigorous by abstaining from harmful drugs and foods. White wrote extensively about vegetarianism in *The Ministry of Healing* (1905). Much of her domestic advice seems surprisingly contemporary:

> 'All should learn what to eat and how to cook it. Men, as well as women, need to understand the simple, healthful preparation of food…The relation that exists between the mind and the body is very intimate.

> When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health to a far greater degree than many realise.'[34]

Although primarily concerned with health, she expressed concern for suffering animals. She exhorted believers to 'think of the cruelty to animals that meat eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God![35]

White's views on the links between diet and sexuality were less enlightened. Masturbation rendered girls 'languid and dispirited, with but little vigour.'[36] In boys, self-love led to glassy eyes, trembling hands and shaking knees![37] To curb the 'animal passions', she recommended a vegetarian diet based on grains, fruit, and vegetables.[38] Such theories, reprehensible as they seem today, were not uncommon at the time. At the Burnham Industrial School, near Christchurch, Dr William Henry Symes tried to 'cure' boys who masturbated through a regime of hard beds, cold showers, and a meatless diet.[39]

During White's visits to New Zealand, she met other vegetarians. White first arrived at the Auckland docks from Sydney on December 3rd, 1891, and rode with her friends straight to local Adventist leader Edward Hare's house, where they enjoyed a vegetarian lunch of 'delicious strawberries, oranges, bananas, and more substantial viands.' After the meal Edward took his visitors for a ride in the country. The 'fresh, sweet air, filled with the fragrance of wild roses, sweetbriar, and new-mown hay' reminded White of summer back home in the United States.[40]

In 1891 White only made a brief visit to New Zealand, but in 1893 she toured the country for nine months, and spoke at New Zealand's first major Adventist convention in Napier. Enormous tents were erected, including a 'tastefully appointed' dining tent, where the organisers served vegetarian dishes. White recommended that 'no meat be found at our restaurants or dining tents, but let its place be supplied with fruits, grains, and vegetables. We must practice what we teach.' However, she preferred a tactful approach when promoting vegetarianism, suggesting that: 'when sitting at a table where meat is provided, we are not to make a raid upon those who use it, but we should let it alone ourselves, and when asked our reasons for doing this, we should in a kindly manner explain why we do not use it.'[41]

At the Napier Adventist conference, it rained continuously for a week, but the delegates listened with 'good heart and spirit' as the speakers tried to make their voices heard above the rain drumming down on the canvas

tent roof. Most of the audience made 'but little complaint' about the soggy surroundings, and duly turned up at the vegetarian dining tent at mealtimes. Only a few asked for meat, though White suspected that 'more than half those present had not for years been half so long a time without eating of flesh.'[42]

Maui Pomare, Seventh Day Adventism, and health

During Ellen White's stay in Napier, church officials introduced her to Maui Pomare, 'a very promising young man', who had recently converted to Adventism. White befriended the seventeen-year-old boy, and offered financial support towards his plans for further study to become a medical missionary.[43] Pomare was to become an influential doctor and political leader. Although he later left both the church and vegetarianism, Adventist ideas about health, diet and well-being shaped his medical philosophies and informed his work with Māori communities.

Maui Pomare, of Ngāi Mutunga with Te Ati Awa affiliations, was born in 1876 in Taranaki. In November 1881 he was staying at Parihaka when John Bryce's armed constabulary invaded. Pomare, aged five, joined a welcoming party of dancing children, carrying a loaf of bread as a gesture of peace and goodwill. A trooper's horse trampled the small boy, crushing one of his toes.[44] Nonetheless, Pomare became sympathetic to Pākehā beliefs and ways of life. At the age of thirteen he became a boarding student at Te Aute Māori Boys' College in Hawke's Bay, where he met an Adventist cook known only as Everson, who worked in the school kitchen. Pomare joined Everson on his Saturday train trips to worship at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Napier and eventually converted. Ellen White and Margaret Caro subsequently promised to support his medical studies overseas. On August 6th, 1893, he left for America on the S.S. *Takune* to study at the Adventist Battle Creek College in Michigan.[45]

At Battle Creek College, Pomare met John Harvey Kellogg, a surgeon and health educator who taught that:

> 'good nutrition required a variety of fruits, nuts, greens, and vegetables in the diet, that it was essential to drink only pure water, and to use it liberally to keep clothes and premises clean and…[students] carried with them his concern for proper ventilation, posture, and healthful clothing.'[46]

Maui Pomare, while a student at Battle Creek College, in Michigan, USA, in 1899, Alexander Turnbull Library PUBL-0094-001

Kellogg thought Pomare, a 'remarkably bright young man,' and was impressed with his enthusiasm for Adventist health teachings. He gave Pomare personal tuition, and came to 'love and admire him.' Pomare studied Kellogg's theories on hydrotherapy, natural remedies, and vegetarianism, and followed a meatless diet for a time.[47] When short of money, Pomare supported himself by delivering public lectures on Māori history and culture. Confident and articulate, he became a popular speaker, and occasionally the topic of vegetarianism came up. The Battle Creek *Moon* magazine published an account of Pomare's talk that drew on racial stereotypes:

> 'Mr Maui Pomare, a young chief of the Te Atiawa tribe of Maoris [sic]…gave a very interesting and instructive talk concerning his people, their religion, manners and customs. Mr Pomare is a sturdily built, sunny-faced young man, a pleasing speaker, bubbling all over with good nature; a lineal descendant of those gentlemen who, in times past, were said to have had an extreme fondness for the missionaries—stewed, fried or toasted.'[48]

Pomare was quick off the mark. With gentle humour, he quipped, 'but you need not be afraid of me—I am a vegetarian!'[49]

On Pomare's return to New Zealand, he left the Adventist Church, but remained a firm advocate of Adventist health principles. As the first Māori Health Officer, he travelled through New Zealand lecturing on sanitation, hygiene, and healthy living. He advocated a return to traditional practices such as building villages in the drier air of hilltops, properly constructed latrines, two balanced meals a day, and the use of massage and steam baths.* As Minister of Health, he worked to improve the diet offered by psychiatric hospitals, condemning the 'deleterious effects of meat in certain cases', and calling for the employment of professional dieticians.[50] His Adventist medical training had helped him gain a holistic view of health. Pomare believed that health 'was not something that could be prescribed by the doctor, but something that should arise from within communities.'[51] Health advocates should not be doctors or nurses, but community leaders who could influence lifestyles and living conditions. Pomare's record in improving sanitation, housing, health education, and vaccination rates 'stands unparalleled' by any health worker since.[52] In 1927, Pomare wrote to John Kellogg to thank him:

> 'for the vital principles which I absorbed from you during my sojourn in your country. Many of these principles I have carried out in my own life and I have no doubt that the success which attended my efforts among my own people was largely due them.'[53]

Nettie Keller and the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium

In the early twentieth century, doctors were divided about the merits of meatless diets. Some physicians argued that vegetarians were frail and susceptible to disease, while others were more sympathetic.[54] Adventist doctors in particular endorsed vegetarian diets, and some even ran vegetarian hospitals. In 1900, the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium opened in Christchurch. Set in seven and a half acres of gardens, this was an Ad-

* Pomare also lobbied for the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907, which later came to be regarded as an attack on Māori knowledge and methodologies. Pomare could not have foreseen that the New Zealand government would use the legislation for political purposes. His own aim was to ensure that Māori communities had access to more scientifically-based forms of health care. [Mason Durie, *Ngā Kāhui Pou: Launching Māori Futures* (Wellington: Huia, 2003), 40.]

ventist nursing home that could care for twenty or so patients.[55] Here the inmates enjoyed or endured 'vapour and hot air' baths, and 'fomentations, salt glows, Swedish shampoos, packs, sprays, douches' and massage.[56] Although today such treatments would fit into the realm of 'alternative' or holistic medicine, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was less separation between orthodox and 'alternative' medicine. Some registered doctors used homeopathy, herbalism, and massage.[57]

Despite its small size, the hospital actively promoted vegetarianism, selling health foods through a small shop, and offering health lectures twice a week to patients and their guests.[58] It gained respect outside Seventh Day Adventist circles. The *White Ribbon* temperance magazine published an enthusiastic review of the hospital, noting that 'flesh foods will find no place in the dietary ordered,' but that 'with milk, eggs, grains, vegetables, and nut preparations to draw upon, a table may always be spread bountifully as well as healthfully.'[59] Particularly admirable was the atmosphere of 'quiet cheerfulness' and 'ready helpfulness' pervading the home, and the hospital philosophy that 'health-getting and life preserving is not a matter of magic or pill-swallowing but rather of training and education.'[60]

Medical staff at the Sanitarium included Nettie (Florence) Keller, an American doctor who came to New Zealand through her friendship with Maui Pomare, whom she had met while studying at the American Medical Missionary College in Chicago. On his return home Pomare invited Keller and her husband Martin to New Zealand and helped the couple obtain registration as doctors.[61] Keller encouraged meatless diets, though she felt that only vegans deserved the term 'vegetarian', once commenting that: 'I don't allow that anybody who touches animal products at all, even eggs, butter and milk, can claim to be a vegetarian.'[62] She herself did not identify as a vegetarian.[63] Many Adventists were careful not to push their beliefs about diet too forcefully. Often they preferred to talk about 'health foods' or 'pure foods', worrying that the word 'vegetarian', was 'apt to convey a wrong meaning.'[64] Australian historian Edgar Crook argues that Adventists generally wished to disassociate themselves from the 'crankish or un-Christian wider vegetarian movement.'[65]

A vegan doctor visits New Zealand

Dr Daniel Kress had fewer reservations about preaching vegetarianism. An American based in Australia, he enthused about the physical and spiritual benefits of a plant-based diet during his visits to New Zealand. He

and his wife also put together a cookbook. As a qualified, if unconventional, physician, he spoke with authority, and his ideas met with both ridicule and respect.

Kress and his wife Lauretta had both trained at the Adventist Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, and they believed that a vegetarian diet improved well-being and helped rid patients of the desire to drink and smoke.[66] Kress taught that butter, eggs, and milk should be avoided as well as meat. Plants, he was convinced, contained 'all the elements needed for the human body.' [67] Kress seems to have first travelled to New Zealand in 1901, where he worked for a while with Nettie and Martin Keller at the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium. During his visit, he lectured at the Christchurch Art Gallery on temperance and food reform, condemning both alcohol and meat consumption. Flesh, he contended, 'created a craving for alcoholic drink.'[68] He emphasized the health benefits of vegetarianism, cited examples of famous vegetarian athletes, and argued that 'animal tissue must contain a quantity of waste and poisonous matter…a strong reason for abstinence from animal flesh was the great prevalence of disease among animals.'[69] Critics mocked him as a faddist. The *Otago Witness* testily asked 'why it is that monkeys, considering the purity of their diet, don't live to the age of Methuselah…Cranks, cranks, cranks.'[70] Kress must indeed have cut an unusual figure in the streets of early twentieth century New Zealand—a vegetarian American teetotaller and Adventist, who believed in walking erect 'with shoulders back…throw some life and energy into it.'[71]

Kress made at least two more trips to New Zealand. In 1905 he lectured in Gisborne on 'How to live [to] a century.' The key to longevity, he proclaimed, was 'regularity of diet, simplicity of diet and temperance.' A keen disciple of Ellen White, he announced that 'flesh-eating shortens life.' Better by far was a simple diet of fruit, grains, seeds and nuts, as enjoyed by Adam and Eve in Paradise:

> 'When God created man at the beginning, he placed him under conditions most favourable for health, happiness and longevity. His home was the garden, where he could have the benefits of moderate exercise, pure air, and sunshine. He was surrounded by trees bearing all manner of fruit, pleasant to the sight, and good for food, and God said to him, "Of every tree thou mayest freely eat." He also gave him the seeds or grains and nuts. This was the meat provided for man in the beginning.'[72]

Kress was insightful in his condemnation of tobacco smoking as a cause of cancer. Smoking was 'also a crime to the community, as it poisons the air.'[73] He recognised that drinking tea with iron-containing foods could exacerbate anaemia.[74] Kress lived to the age of ninety-four, only a little short of his goal of a hundred years.[75]

Cookbooks and recipes

Adventist vegetarian cookbooks offer a picture of what Adventists might have put on their plates. Today New Zealand vegetarians can enjoy tastes from Asian, South American, and Middle Eastern cooking traditions. A hundred years ago, meatless meals tended to be bland and stodgy—often a vegetarian adaptation of 'meat and three vegetables,' with slices of tinned Sanitarium soy, gluten or nut-based protein substituting for meatloaf or sausages. The flavours were muted, with little use of spices or salt, lest these 'inflame' the passions, creating a thirst for alcohol. According to Kress, pickles, mustard, pepper and spices were 'not designed to be fed into the human body:'

> 'Why, the hog—with the exception of man…would turn up his nose and refuse to eat such stuffs as most people called luxuries. The desire for these ingredients was acquired by cultivation, and they were responsible for bringing about a number of bodily ills…Why were hotel bar luncheons so liberally bespattered with pepper, mustard and salt? For no other purpose than to create a craving for drink!'[76]

Thankfully, fresh herbs, fruits and vegetables added some zest to the menu. In the early 1900s the *New Zealand Health Journal*, edited by the Adventist physician Edgar Caro (son of Margaret), featured some crisp and tangy raw salads, such as 'tarragon fruit salad…Add about one teaspoonful of chopped fresh tarragon to one half-cup of the lemon dressing, and serve it over cherries, strawberries, currants, raspberries, ripe tomatoes, bananas or oranges.'[77]

Margaret Caro, Edgar's mother, put together a weekly menu of seven dinners designed to 'afford nourishment and variety enough to satisfy an average working man,' and published these in the *White Ribbon* temperance magazine.[78] These included vegetable haricot (a lentil and carrot stew), a savoury lentil loaf, and nut plum pudding (with brazil nuts instead of suet).[79] Flavourings were limited—salt, pepper, onion or parsley.

The Latest Meatless Meal Cookery Book (Auckland, N.Z.: Dorcas Society, 193-?), Alexander Turnbull Library

In 1906 Daniel and Lauretta Kress published the *Good Health Cookery Book*, a compilation of meatless recipes based around fruits, vegetables, and cereals, accompanied by 'a treatise on general dietetic principles.'[80] The Kresses advised just two meals a day, preferably at seven a.m. and two p.m. As doctors, their rationale for vegetarianism emphasised nutrition and digestion: 'Flesh foods, on an average, require three times as long a period for digestion in the stomach as is required by ripe fruits and properly prepared cereals…Flesh meats, when boiled or fried, are extremely indigestible.'[81] They suggested Nutmeat or Protose (a mixture of nuts and gluten) as substitutes for meat. Keen vegetarians could import crates of Protose from the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Sydney. The book received mixed reviews. The *Otago Witness* felt that many of the recipes:

> 'really sound inviting, and we think many housewives might derive valuable hints on the best ways of cooking vegetables, preserving fruit, etc…Many persons nowadays, from humane and sentimental considerations, as well as the disquieting revelations frequently made

> as to the sources of their meat supply, are well inclined to adopt a modified vegetarianism.'[82]

However, the reviewer was sceptical of the two meals a day regime, and the evils of sugar, tea, coffee and hot chocolate. The writer hoped that 'none of the disciples of vegetarianism who are being guided by it will carry their adherence so far as to injure their children's health and their husbands' tempers.'[83]

In the mid-1920s, *Sanitarium Health Food Recipes* appeared, possibly New Zealand's first entirely vegetarian recipe book. It was followed by many other Adventist cookbooks. After I stopped eating meat in 1986, I bought *Table Talk Vegetarian Cookery,*[84] compiled by the Royal Oak Seventh Day Adventist Church in Auckland. Some of the recipes were memorable, notably the rubber-like gluten steaks, which I simmered in a broth of Marmite until they turned pink and slippery. It did not put me off vegetarianism, but I did move on to other recipe books.

Adventist influences were sometimes evident in cookbooks that were not directly sponsored by the church. In the 1930s the Auckland Dorcas Society (a charitable society run by women) published *The Latest Meatless Meal Cookery Book*, a fundraising book that aimed to help impoverished or destitute Aucklanders. Elizabeth Hare, the wife of Edward Hare was president of the Dorcas Society at the time. The book promoted Sanitarium products, with advertisements for Weet-Bix and Marmite. It emphasised ersatz meat dishes, with instructions for vegetable beef tea, mock salmon balls, fake fish made with peanuts, and soups made with legumes 'which possess all the nourishment of meat without its poisons.'[85] At odds with the thrifty, vegetarian ethos, the book included an advertisement for fur coats from the Canadian Fur Co. Ltd., Manufacturing Furriers.[86] As most Adventists were preoccupied with health and purity rather than animal suffering, vegetarians might still wear fur and leather. In 1940, a young couple married at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Wellington. After a reception at the Vegetarian Café in Willis Street the bride left for her honeymoon wearing an 'ensemble of midnight blue with navy accessories, and a Peschaniki fur coat.'[87]

The Sanitarium Health Food Company

Vegetarianism was not just about home-cooked lentils and beans. By the beginning of the twentieth century, one could buy meat substitutes and breakfast cereals manufactured by the Adventist Sanitarium Health Food

Company. Although today these might seem rather unappealing (aside from being a coeliac's nightmare), they did offer some variety, as the range of vegetables was much more limited than it is today. Modern staples such as broccoli, capsicums, olives, aubergines and avocados were unavailable or little known a hundred years ago.[88]

Weet-Bix advertisement, *The Latest Meatless Meal Cookery Book*

Sanitarium was started by Edward Halsey, a Seventh-day Adventist baker, who made the voyage from Sydney to Christchurch in December 1900 to cook for the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium. Halsey had trained at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. He moved to Australia in 1897, where he manufactured health foods first in Melbourne, and then in Cooranbong, New South Wales. Just eleven days after arriving in New Zealand, Halsey set up shop in a red-painted wooden shed on the corner of Langdons and Harewood Roads, and began preparing wholemeal bread, granola, and Caramel Cereals, a coffee substitute made from an oven-roasted mixture of toasted bran and malt.[89] Ironically, Halsey's wholemeal rolls 'found favour with the riders in the hunting field, for when the riders had a spill, the rolls did not break.'[90]

The bakery flourished, evolving into the Sanitarium Health Food Company, which had a yearly turnover of thousands of dollars each year by 1914. In 1920, a much larger factory was built opposite the Papanui railway station, and manufactured new lines such as Nutmeat, Nuttolene, and Frucerea (a drink made from cereal extracts and caramelised date juice).[91] These were sold in grocery stores around the country. One Taranaki store, 'C. Carter's, the People's Grocer,' advertised Sanitarium products with the ambitious claim that eating shredded wheat, gluten, and nut butters would generate 'vitality as quick as the lightning flash…to save the nation from physical decay' and build 'strong and vigorous manhood and womanhood.'[92]

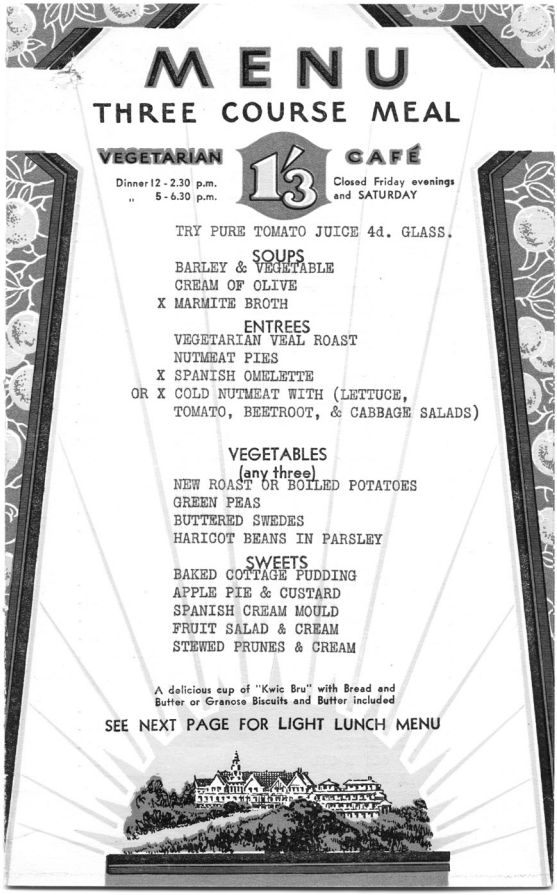
Vegetarian cafés

How did vegetarians cope when dining out? In the early twentieth century, vegetarian restaurants began opening. The first to open its doors was Ernest Hadfield's 'Health Food Café—No meat served' at the foot of Wellesley Street in Auckland. In 1901 Hadfield offered snacks ranging from graham bread and biscuits to a three-course vegetarian dinner that cost one shilling.[93] A shilling seems to have been a standard price for a good cheap dinner—the Empire Hotel in Taranaki, for example, also advertised a 'Shilling dinner daily' in 1900.[94] Hadfield was a Seventh Day Adventist, who hoped to attract Auckland office workers and businesspeople.[95] Unfortunately, he went bankrupt in 1906. The Observer told the sad story:

> 'For one summer it seemed as if the experiment was likely to prosper. The number of permanent converts, however, was small. Though many of the dishes were tempting imitations of familiar meat foods, the colonial was disinclined to forego for long his beef and mutton, and soon drifted back to the old-style dining rooms.'[96]

However, in September that year Sanitarium opened a 'Vegetarian and Pure Food Café' at 37 Taranaki Street in Wellington.[97] After being forced to move several times because of fires, this became established in 1912 in an upstairs room at 83 Willis Street—the twelve tables could seat fifty customers. This was fine vegetarian cuisine. The chefs used olive oil imported from Italy, gourmet raisins from California, grape juice from California and New South Wales and clover honey from local apiaries.[98] New Sanitarium restaurants also opened in Auckland and Christchurch, and thrived. If one walked into the Auckland cafe in 1933, one could choose from a long list of dishes, including cream of olive soup, Marmite broth, vegetarian veal roast, and vegetable brawn on lettuce. The food contained eggs and milk but no cheese—a substance called 'nutcheese' appeared instead. One could buy supplies of fresh or dried fruits and the menu offered health tips such as, 'All green leaves are rich in the vital food element, iron, and it is from this source that the needed supply for our bodies should be obtained.'[99]

Such restaurants weren't just aimed at vegetarians. They offered a healthy and economical meal, in safe and respectable surroundings, and provided a wholesome alternative to the hotel bars that catered to the 'six o'clock swill' of workers hurrying to gulp down their beer before alcohol sales stopped at six.[100] Often they were associated with health food shops,



Vegetaian café menu, 1933, Alexander Turnbull Library, Eph-B-DINING-1933-01

which sold supplies such as vegetable and nut oils—difficult to obtain in a land where the usual commercial cooking fat was lard.[101] Their counterparts in England had a lower-middle class clientele of clerks, dressmakers and shop assistants, many of whom were not vegetarian, but sought a cheap and decent dining place. They were safe places for women to eat alone.[102]

Vegetarian dining, of course, was not to everyone's taste. One sceptical Auckland gentleman stayed well away, recalling that he had once munched unhappily on vegetable marrow and gravy at an English vegetarian restaurant, leaving 'rather hungrier than when I sat down.'[103] However, many reviews were positive.[104] In 1926 the *Auckland Star* published a glowing account of the Auckland café, applauding the 'bright and well appointed dining rooms,' and the freshness of the kitchen 'due, of course, to the ab-

sence of animal fats, which are entirely dispensed with in preparing food for vegetarian tables.' Meals were prepared according to 'really scientific lines,' and the menu emphasised seasonal produce:

> 'The visitor can select from a diversified bill the most savoury preparations such as cream roasts, vegetable patties, nut meat pies, walnut fondant, green pea roasts, lentil turnovers, protose pie…and the fruit salads are delicious.'[105]

It was enough to make one consider giving up meat, 'for the rest of the summer, at any rate.'[106] Other restaurants began adding less meaty options to their menus.[107] On Auckland's Queen Street, the Broadway Tea and Grill Rooms supplied a 'fruit and nut lunch' as an alternative to the standard grill, while the John Court's department store tea rooms advertised 'dainty suppers, delicious ices and sundaes, iced drinks made from the purest fruit syrups, fruit salads, fruit with cream, etc.'[108]

Adventism and social issues

Though many Adventists preferred not to eat meat or bear arms, such concerns did not extend to support for labour rights or social justice. Unlike many of the vegetarians in this book, they sought to live pure lives within the world, rather than trying to change it. They preferred not to question the existing political or economic structures, arguing that believers should 'be loyal to the Government, and go as far as possible in obeying all civil requirements, for "Government is of God."'[109] Adventist leaders encouraged members to register for military service, and to perform non-combatant service during the First World War.[110]

There were rare exceptions. In 1917 the *Auckland Star* reported the case of Andrew Jackson, an Adventist who refused to be conscripted, citing the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill.' When asked if he would slaughter a pig, Jackson replied that 'this was beside the point, and in any case he was a vegetarian.'[111] There were also Adventists who were active in the women's rights movement. Dr Nettie Keller of the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium was a feminist who rode a bicycle. She once lectured the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union on 'the folly of women wearing high heeled boots, long skirts, and rigid corsets.'[112] Conventional dress, she warned, was 'a thing to be avoided.'[113]

However, as conservative Christians, Adventists were deeply antagonistic towards labour unions and workers' rights. Church members were

not allowed to join trade unions. Adventist leaders objected to the introduction of compulsory unionism in 1936, worrying that labour unions were too political and militant.[114] Employees in the Sanitarium cafés and factories worked long hours for little pay; they were encouraged to believe that they were labouring in service of a higher cause. As Australian Sanitarium director G.T. Chapman commented:

> 'Those engaged in the business [in the early years] did so believing they were "doing God's service," and so they were. They worked long hours with very meagre facilities, and often could not get their small wages till months after they were due. But they laboured on, content to "spend and be spent."'[115]

The memoir of Margaret Forbes Stevenson gives a feeling for café working conditions. Stevenson was born into a poor Seventh Day Adventist farming family in Pahiatua in 1920. She left school at the age of fifteen to cook and nanny for a farmer's wife, but around 1937 she travelled to Wellington to work at the Sanitarium Health Food Vegetarian Café. The teenager was excited to arrive in the capital city, feeling as if she had discovered 'the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.' Soon she started waitressing at the Sanitarium café, under the supervision of the manager, Mrs Haddock, a 'very motherly soul.'[116]

It was exhausting work, with long hours and low wages. Mrs Haddock may have been kindly, but she drove the young waitresses hard. By the time the weekends came, they wished 'for nothing more than to spend them in bed sleeping. The café workers circulated a vegetarian version of a labour rhyme popular at the time:

> *A waitress stood at the Pearly Gates, her face was worn and old.*
> *She meekly asked the man of fate admission to the fold*
> *'What have you done' St Peter asked, 'To ask admission here?'*
> *'I worked at the Vegetarian Cafe on earth for many and many a year'*
> *The gate swung open sharply as Peter tolled the bell*
> *'Come in' he said 'and take a harp, you have had enough of Hell.'*[117]

Clearing tables late on winter evenings, Stevenson felt she had exchanged 'one kind of slavery for another.' She lived with a girlfriend in a succession of cheap rented rooms, including a one-room bach in the backyard of the St. George Hotel: 'Every night there was a continual stream of drunks wending their way home past our door. Actually, we lived in terror.'[118]

One of the regular café customers was a young man named Bob Woods, who arrived for lunch every day with a friend. Bob started a conversation with Stevenson as she waited on their table, and asked her out. Eventually he converted to Seventh Day Adventism and the couple married, holding their reception at the Vegetarian Café. Stevenson was grateful to abandon the hard, monotonous labour of waitressing.[119]

Vegetarianism beyond the church

Cautious and conservative as they were, Adventist missionaries and doctors helped spread the vegetarian message in early twentieth century New Zealand. Though Adventist vegetarianism was sometimes mocked, it also enjoyed respect among those New Zealanders who were open to alternative ways of living. A 1904 report in the *Taranaki Herald* noted approvingly that Adventists held 'advanced ideas of vegetarianism…from their food factories come forth granose, protose, maltose, cromose, granola, nuttolene, nut butter, granut, fruitnut, etc. These foods are very palatable, and are made from combinations of nuts, cereals and fruits. Perfect substitutes are thus produced for meat.'[120] Strange as such products might sound today, health food factories made life easier for all vegetarians. In 1927 the Weet-Bix breakfast cereal was launched; it became a familiar breakfast food for thousands of New Zealand children.

Adventists also spread their ideas about health and meatless diets through their links with feminist and temperance organisations. Adventist doctor Nettie Keller spoke at gatherings of the National Council of Women, and in 1915 she became superintendent of 'purity and moral education' for the Women's Christian Temperance Union.[121] The Napier Adventist Margaret Caro wrote articles on vegetarian diet for the *White Ribbon* temperance magazine, and advocated vegetarianism at the 1902 conference of the National Council of Women.[122] In turn, the *White Ribbon* endorsed the vegetarian Adventist hospital in Christchurch, and noted its influence, observing that 'not a few housewives, while guests, have, through the courtesy of those in charge of the culinary department, gained an insight into the principles and methods of vegetarian cookery.'[123] In health food restaurants, and at women's rights and temperance meetings, vegetarian arguments were slipping into daily conversations.

3

Is meat-eating a necessity?

Women's rights, temperance and vegetarianism

The fact is, so long as animals are killed for food, there must be cruelty and there must be callousness…It is a question for all women whether we can defend our individual complicity in a traffic which inflicts untold pain on the lower creation.
—J.M., correspondent to the White Ribbon, 1908.[1]

On April 13th, 1896, the National Council of Women held its first annual congress in the old stone Provincial Council Chambers on the corner of Gloucester Street and Durham Street in Christchurch. The twenty-five delegates took off their hats and gloves, and prepared for business. They had won the right to vote, but what next? Socialism? The nationalisation of land?[2] Prison reform?[3] Prohibition of alcohol, and an end to the misery and family violence associated with alcohol abuse? Vegetarianism? Suffrage leader Kate Sheppard opened with a speech asking delegates to work for the 'attainment of justice and freedom for women and all that makes for the good of humanity.'[4] The meeting elected officers; Sheppard was voted president, and Ada Wells, a masseur and natural healer, became secretary. The poet Jessie Mackay read aloud verses dreaming of a future in which:

> 'The jewel of womanhood glitters, the age-long assoiling ended;
> When to be born but a woman is heritage noble and splendid,
> Where mothers are sworn unto peace, and the children hate naught

> that is human; When Pole to the Pole shall be knitted by the love of the woman for woman.'[5]

Winning the vote was a sign that they lived in remarkable times, where anything might be possible. Professor Alexander Bickerton, a male guest speaker, advocated communal living in 'unitary homes' where life would be more fulfilling, and Lady Anna Stout hoped that 'women would unite and resolve to sweep wrong and injustice from the land.'[6] Over the following days, the conference discussed a minimum wage, and wages for housework. Wilhelmina Sheriff Bain, a Christchurch librarian, condemned the sweatshop conditions in which many workers laboured. She argued for an eight-hour day, and a minimum employment age.[7] Resolutions were passed in favour of prison reform, and against capital punishment.[8]

Although the women activists were few in number, their work sent ripples throughout New Zealand society. Ultimately, they helped changed the way that we view the world today. Their causes included women's and children's rights, peace, temperance, animal rights and vegetarianism. Many lived in the Christchurch area, where they could participate in groups such as the National Council of Women, the Canterbury Women's Institute, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Such organisations offered the chance to discuss politics, and also how to live more meaningful lives.

The struggle to win the right to vote overshadowed debates about vegetarianism and food reform. Yet there have long been links between the women's movement, vegetarianism, and animal rights.[9] 'Civis,' a correspondent to the *Otago Witness*, grumbled in 1893 that his feminist wife was pushing him to read animal rights and vegetarian literature:

> 'I am required to make myself acquainted with…the Vegetarian Journal, and with the publications of the Humanitarian League—as, for instance, "Royal Sport, or Some Facts Concerning the Queen's Buckhounds," by the Rev. I. Stratton; "Rabbit Coursing, an Appeal to Working Men," by R.H. Jude, B.Sc.; "The Horrors of Sport," by Lady Florence Dixie; "Vivisection," by Edward Carpenter and Edward Maitland and "Behind the Scenes in Slaughterhouses," (Ugh!) by H. F. Lestor. Being a woman's [sic] franchiser is not all beer and skittles, I can assure you.'[10]

In 1908, the English suffragette Maud Joachim was locked up in Holloway Gaol, where she pondered the 'strange fact that the ranks of the militant suffragettes are mostly recruited from the mild vegetarians.' There were

National Council of Women, 1896, Alexander Turnbull Library, F- 41798-1/2

enough vegetarians in prison that the authorities provided a special meatless diet. Joachim was grateful that the food supplied was 'mostly good quality.' However meals were 'terribly monotonous, as the only change is that one day one has carrots, and the next day one has onions.'[11]

Some New Zealand suffrage campaigners also explored vegetarianism—either out of compassion for animals, or because they valued a simple, healthy, and natural life, or because they hoped it might stop the thirst for alcohol.[12] Their lives and work were more politically focused than those of Seventh Day Adventist vegetarians. Adventists tended to be rather conservative, and primarily interested in health and purity. In contrast, the women in the suffrage movement took a broader perspective, questioning social norms, and campaigning for a just, compassionate and non-violent society. Vegetarianism was a small but significant part of a worldview that sought fundamental social change.

'Do everything'—vegetarianism, feminism and the temperance movement

According to a popular saying, there were only two causes of death in nineteenth century New Zealand—'drink, and drowning as a result of drunkenness.'[13] Many settlers drank heavily, and alcoholism contributed

to family neglect, domestic violence and destitution. However, some physicians believed they had found the solution. The New York-based doctor James Jackson claimed to have cured ninety-eight out of a hundred alcoholic patients by putting them on a meatless diet.[14] If drinking led to misery, violence, and poverty, a meat- and alcohol-free lifestyle was one way to protect women and families. Temperance and vegetarianism became feminist issues. Kate Sheppard believed that 'strong meat' encouraged alcoholism and should be avoided.[15] Reformers viewed temperance as 'a highly serious cause. In their attempt to liberate man and society from enslavement to the god of drink, they saw themselves as heirs of the great humanitarians of history.'[16]

The international temperance movement had a much wider brief than campaigning for a liquor ban. In the United States the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) endorsed vegetarianism and set up a Department of Mercy to campaign against animal experiments.[17] Its leader, Frances Willard, advocated a 'Do Everything' policy that linked temperance reform to a wide range of causes.[18] Willard's mantra was adopted, in theory at least, by the New Zealand WCTU, which argued that 'no work where woman's hand is needed is unfit for the W.C.T.U.'[19] This work could include promoting vegetarianism and animal rights,[20] as this 1908 letter to the *White Ribbon* temperance magazine suggests:

> 'It is a question for all women whether we can defend our individual complicity in a traffic which inflicts untold pain on the lower creation, and lowers morally the agents who must supply at first hand the demands of our appetite.'[21]

However, the extent to which the WCTU's ambitious (and arguably unrealistic) 'Do everything' policy was put into practice remains unclear. Vegetarianism was a sensitive topic in a meat-eating nation. The association between temperance and vegetarianism was sometimes labelled a fad, or a puritanical attempt to prohibit all forms of pleasure. In 1911, a correspondent to the *Poverty Bay Herald* complained that if alcohol was banned, gambling, smoking, and meat-eating would be next on the list:

> '[Prohibitionists] will cheerfully support the Vegetarian Society and help them to prohibit meat-eating and encourage the peanut and Chinese industry…It is only reasonable to suppose that a body of busybodies, who have become so fanatical on interfering with the people's private habits, will have to find some outlet for their peculiar

> propensities when they have wiped out everything worth drinking. All other reforms, and every group of cranks and faddists, will feel the benefit.'[22]

The New Zealand WCTU leaders were wary of such criticisms, and took care not to antagonise meat-eaters.[23] They did not explicitly endorse meatless diets. The *White Ribbon* advertised meat products as well as vegetarian recipes, and the WCTU meal booths at the Christchurch Agricultural and Pastoral Show served both meat and vegetarian options.

The Lovell-Smiths

The Lovell-Smiths were a Christchurch family of temperance activists, who also worked for women's suffrage. They eagerly explored natural remedies and meatless diets. Will and Jennie Lovell-Smith, their five daughters, and Will's sister Lucy appear to have followed vegetarian diets for many years, though their five sons continued eating meat.[24] They lived as an extended family in 'Arcadia,' a wooden cottage surrounded by vegetable gardens and an orchard. In summer, the family enjoyed outdoor meals in the garden.

Historian and descendant Margaret Lovell-Smith has described the lives and ideals of the Lovell-Smith family members in detail in *Plain Living, High Thinking*. Jennie, the mother of the family, was a cheerful, curly-haired woman with 'bright pink cheeks, blue eyes, and a very sweet smile.'[25] She had little confidence in conventional medicine, but occasionally consulted Arthur Brandstater, the medical superintendent at the vegetarian Seventh-day Adventist hospital in Papanui.[26] Jennie encouraged breast-feeding and vegetarianism through her work for the WCTU. For indigestion, she recommended a vegetarian diet consisting of 'brown bread, porridge of all kinds, dried peas, beans, lentils, rice, fruit, eggs, cheese and milk.'[27]

Macie, Jennie's eldest daughter, became particularly enthusiastic about vegetarianism. Macie worked in the Lovell-Smith family printing firm as a clerk from the age of fourteen, but craved new ideas and intellectual discussion. She was a thoughtful, unconventional young woman who often slept out of doors in summer—she and her four sisters made their beds in the periwinkles that grew under the garden trees.[28] As a teenager in the 1890s, Macie became friends with Harold Williams, a young vegetarian Methodist minister. As discussed in the first chapter, Williams became a regular visitor to the Lovell-Smith household. She joined his 'Select Circle',

a group of young people who discussed new ideas, including Tolstoyism. As historian Irene Zohrab explains:

> 'They were all strict vegetarians, abstained from liquor, were very high-minded about relations between the sexes, and sought salvation in socialism, pacifism and communities. The girls considered themselves emancipated and rode on bicycles.'[29]

In 1898 the Select Circle started putting out its own monthly magazine. *Light Ahead* discussed vegetarianism, the power of thought, socialism, and intentional communities. The editors planned a series on great reformers, entitled 'Messengers from Utopia.' Unfortunately, no copies survive, and *Light Ahead* flickered out after four issues.[30]

The Lovell-Smith family followed a largely meatless diet well into the twentieth century, to the bewilderment of some of their friends. An ex-employee of the family printing firm, Bryda Wood, visited the family in the 1920s, and was taken aback to find them munching on raw peas and cauliflower at dinner time.[31] Macie Lovell-Smith never married, but worked in the family printing firm for most of her life. Perhaps she preferred to be independent; there was a story that she and her four sisters had a notice on their bedroom wall that read 'Do Not Marry.'[32] For many years she campaigned for the WCTU, and argued for the economic independence of married women, and the right of women to stand for Parliament and sit on juries.[33]

Lucy Smith

In 1894 Macie's aunt Lucy Smith listened to a lecture by May Yates from the London Vegetarian Society. Smith found it very interesting, and wrote a detailed report of Yates' visit for the *Prohibitionist* magazine, explaining that, far from being a fad, vegetarianism was based on 'very good reasons.'[34] For Smith, a keen temperance activist, the theory that vegetarianism prevented alcoholism was particularly compelling. She prepared a four-thousand word paper on 'Food Reform' for the May 1901 meeting of the National Council of Women in Whanganui. Meat-eating, she argued, led to alcohol abuse, and she quoted the English doctor and theosophist Anna Kingsford:

> 'The use of flesh food, by the excitation which it exercises on the nervous system, prepares the way for habits of intemperance in drink, and that, other things being equal, the more flesh is consumed, the

> greater is the temptation to make use of strong pungent drinks, and the more serious is the danger of confirmed alcoholism.'[35]

Smith also cited other arguments for vegetarianism—compassion towards animals, health, and the liberation of women from the kitchen. She pointed out the moral advantages of a diet 'which does not involve the taking of life,' supporting her arguments by describing the suffering of animals transported to slaughter: 'The mere descriptions of the torture in the way of thirst, starvation, overcrowding, heat, cold, terror, exhaustion and neglect of all kinds undergone by dumb creatures, are such as to haunt one for days.' Animal welfare groups such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals were powerless to intervene.[36] In the early twentieth century, the bloody facts of animal slaughter were more visible than they are today. Flesh did not arrive in tidy, plastic-wrapped supermarket packages, and butchers displayed large joints of meat.[37] Women, Smith believed, had a special interest in vegetarianism:

> 'What right thinking mother but would hesitate to let her child witness all the processes to be gone through between the sheep quietly browsing in the field, and the appearance of 'a steaming joint on the table? Need she have any such hesitancy in allowing her delicately reared little girl to not merely see but help in the work pertaining to the growth and preparation of that needed to supply a vegetarian meal? And how many a woman, on taking up housewifely cares, has shuddered and shrunk again and again from the loathsome task of preparing the various flesh foods!'[38]

Smith listed vegetarian celebrities, with more enthusiasm than accuracy—she included Socrates, and Isaac Newton, who may not have been vegetarian. She emphasised that a vegetarian diet was healthier and more economical, and concluded with advice for those embarking on a meatless regime. 'Do not begin by attempting to live on white bread, cabbage, and pastry. Such was the usual bill of fare meted out to a vegetarian friend. Needless to say, he did not flourish on it.'[39] The 'vegetarian friend' seems to have been Harold Williams, who found it difficult to obtain a nutritious diet while working as a minister in Taranaki.[40]

In the early 1900s Smith reportedly took onion sandwiches every day to her work as a proof-reader at Smith, Anthony, Sellars & Co., the family printing factory in Hereford Street.[41] She had already helped produce an almanac that was a treasury of garden hints, household tips, and vegetar-

ian recipes. As well as working in the printing factory and looking after her bedridden mother, she edited the *White Ribbon* temperance magazine from 1903 to 1908. Her brief went much wider than prohibition. Under the banner 'For God, Home, and Humanity,' she published articles advocating equal pay for equal work, wages for housewives, professional education for girls, vegetarian diets and dress reform. Women should discard their corsets, and wear comfortable clothes. She supported the author Ellice Hopkins's view that women should be taught about sex as a 'great wide-open law running right throughout animated creation.'[42]

The Christchurch Vegetarian Society

Around eight p.m. on August 10th, 1899, a group of Christchurch vegetarians filed into the coffee rooms in Toneycliffe and Carey's Buildings on the corner of Gloucester and Colombo Streets. By the end of that winter evening, Christchurch had a new Vegetarian Society with thirty members.[43] There were three main tenets: 'first, that animal food is injurious to the human system; second, that man can live on vegetable food alone; and third, that to kill unnecessarily is cruel.'[44] Some of the Lovell-Smiths became active members. Winnie Lovell-Smith was elected onto the committee, and Lucy Smith joined up, as did Macie, who kept a maroon linen scrapbook labelled 'Vege[tarian] quotations from great writers etc.,' into which she pasted extracts from authors such as Ovid and Montaigne.[45]

The group grew swiftly. Nearly a hundred members and their friends turned up to sample vegetarian dishes and listen to piano and violin solos in January 1900.[46] They imported vegetarian literature, voted to affiliate with the London Vegetarian Federal Union, and organised monthly public talks.[47] First on the list was finding supplies. The Society decided 'to ascertain what bakers supplied genuine whole meal bread and to let members know where it might be obtained.'[48] The Metaphysical Club rooms on Gloucester Street became the venue for cooking demonstrations and socials.[49] At the Society's February 1900 meeting, Macie and Winnie Lovell-Smith prepared an 'ideal breakfast table' of vegetarian dishes.[50] In 1901, Kate Sheppard announced the affiliation of the Christchurch Vegetarian Society with the National Council of Women, observing that:

> 'The science of human dietetics…is completely ignored in most households, and there are few subjects of greater importance, or more worthy of study by those to whom is entrusted the care of children. It

> is only in a healthy body that we may reasonably expect to find a clear and vigorous intellect.'[51]

The new society was sympathetic to the temperance movement, and invited the Adventist vegan doctor Daniel Kress to give a public lecture on 'Food reform and temperance.' Kress emphasised that 'flesh…created a craving for alcoholic drink, and the great meat-eating countries were the most intemperate."[52] Nettie Keller from the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium also expounded on the detrimental effects of meat and alcohol.[53]

The Christchurch Vegetarian Society seems to have petered out in the early twentieth century. Nonetheless, it was becoming easier to be a vegetarian. In 1920 *The White Ribbon* observed that 'most of the principal restaurants now cater quite creditably for those who prefer a diet in which animal flesh is not included.' A diner 'may now call for a dinner without meat and receives prompt, respectful and intelligent response, instead of the once pitying smile and doubtful shake of the head.'[54]

A vegetarian stall at the Christchurch Agricultural and Pastoral Show

In November 1907, Christchurch was holding its annual Agricultural and Pastoral Show, during the same week as the major horse races. Also known as 'Carnival Week,' the fair was a major social and economic event that showcased the agricultural industry. At the 1907 show, farmers shared tips, purchased supplies, and watched demonstrations of two new types of milking machine.[55] There were prizes for the fattest stock, the finest cheeses, dressed poultry, honey, and cured and preserved meats.[56] There were competitions for the spectators too—a Mr. W. Scarlett of Wainui correctly guessed the weight of a fat bullock, and won a Singer sewing machine.[57] Meanwhile, food stalls dished up refreshments to the hungry crowds. Towards lunchtime, Canterbury farmers entering the WCTU tent were startled by the sight of a 'Vegetarian Table' set with platters of Sanitarium nutmeat, bowls of lentil stew, lemon pies and dishes of custard decorated with spring flowers. [58]

It was a most unusual context for vegetarian propagandising, and the first people to arrive eyed the vegetarian dishes uncertainly, preferring to patronise tables that served more conventional fare. The Lovell-Smiths, who had organised the vegetarian stall, waited in 'magnificent isolation.' A helper identified only as Netta worried that 'the dread scroll, "Vegetarian

Table"…is equivalent to a plague sign, and whether we are to stand all day like Lot's wife and watch from afar a carnivorous world gorging itself on corned beef.'[59] Eventually, two farmers approached the table, but:

> 'Alas! ere we can fly to their succour, one of them spies the warning scroll. His jaw drops, he clutches his fellow with a trembling hand. Both spurn back their chairs, as if the wood were red hot, and fly for their lives, pursued in fancy by the Erinnys of the New Woman, bent on choking them with fried eucalyptus bark!'[60]

Fortunately, a young city lad eventually arrived, and consented to patronise their stall:

> 'We are conscious that he is looking [at the] ham out of an appealing blue eye, but we gently put down a sumptuous plate of savoury and salad, and watch developments. They are entirely satisfactory; as we float round him with brown bread and condiments, he opens up his heart to us. The whole of his life, we understand, has been leading up to that plate of nutmeat, and, gastronomically speaking, he is ours forever. We brim his cup over with smiles and cereal coffee: a patron is something, but a convert is more.'[61]

Business improved. Some worldlywise young men queued up at the table, 'shouting cheerfully "Good old proto! Proto, please! We've come to sample the proto."'* Netta concluded that 'moral victory is ours; we are scoring through all the babble. Fools who came to scoff remain to eat. Our fame goes forth.'[62] Plates were emptied, and the volunteers had aching feet. Against all the odds the 'Vegetarian Table' was a success. The Lovell-Smiths organised a vegetarian stall in the WCTU tent at the Christchurch Agricultural and Pastoral Show for years afterwards.[63]

Strong and healthy bodies

In many New Zealand households, women were in charge of buying food and planning meals, a role that carried surprising power with it. As one correspondent to Milton's *Bruce Herald* argued, 'one of the most important functions of women is the preparation of wholesome food, which really exercises an enormous influence on human life and happiness.'[64] In the early twentieth century, some authorities believed that meat was harm-

* Protose was a Sanitarium meat substitute (see the previous chapter).

Advertisement encouraging the eating of fruit, ca. 1920s, K M Wildgoose Donation, Alexander Turnbull Library, Eph-D-MORAN-1920s-01

ful for children, as their immature digestive systems could not cope with such strong food. Children should enjoy 'plenty of outdoor life, even in cold weather, without meat, cake, pastry or sweets, clothing that permits perfect freedom in the making of mud pies.'[65] The temperance advocate Lucy Smith agreed, worrying that in most homes 'no effort was made to build up the bodies of the children scientifically.' A healthy vegetarian diet was vital:

> 'The work of the caterer or cook may be a mere pandering to the lower part of our nature, or a reverent ministering to God's most wondrous creation—it may be a means to retard the development of the race, or a channel through which health may flow to every part of human nature.'[66]

Ada Wells and natural healing

The women's rights advocate Ada Wells worked for peace, temperance, the protection of children and orphans, and supported conscientious objectors.[67] However, her interest in vegetarianism was more closely linked to her belief that nature was the 'true physician.'[68] Wells immigrated to New Zealand as a child, arriving in Christchurch in 1873. After a brief period of university study, she taught at Christchurch Girls' High School. In 1884, she married Harry Wells, an organist, and they had four children. However, Harry drank and had a violent temper.[69] He could not hold down a steady job, and Wells supported the family through her work as a teacher and healer. Some patients believed that her hands 'possessed a healing touch that came from the depths of her spirit.'[70]

Wells believed that the right diet promoted health and helped combat disease. Humans, she concluded, were naturally vegetarian, and a meatless diet promoted physical and spiritual well-being. At the 1897 conference of the National Council of Women, Wells argued that most diseases were best treated by putting the patient on an ovo-lacto vegetarian diet. 'Eminent naturalists,' she stated 'are unanimous in the opinion that the anatomical structure of the human body as compared with other animals places man among the frugivorous or herbivorous animals.'[71] In pieces such as 'A plea for vegetarian diet,' she quoted the arguments of Russell Trall, a New York doctor who advocated a meatless diet for children:

> 'Those mothers who force their little children, even before they are capable of masticating a particle of it, to swallow flesh, and thus develop an early appetite for it, are little aware of how seriously they are injuring the organisation [sic] and corrupting the whole nature of the future men and women.'[72]

Wells edited the Home Page in the *White Ribbon* temperance magazine, publishing articles that highlighted health issues, vegetarianism, and natural remedies.[73] Conventional doctors, she complained, administered drugs to 'cure mere symptoms, leaving the causes which produced those symptoms altogether overlooked and unmolested.'[74] Instead, health and vitality could be ensured through 'fresh air, sunlight, cleanliness, exercise, simplicity of life.'[75] To Wells, animal experimentation and vaccination were 'false healers' and moral evils. She argued in the heightened language of the period that:

> 'By these methods [vivisection and inoculation] nature will never reveal her inmost secrets, for the adherents of such have their faces turned from the light; they walk in the region of the valley of the shadow, where Apollyon remains ever on the watch for unwary travellers.'[76]

Ettie Rout and physical fitness

Like Ada Wells, Ettie Rout was interested in a healthy and natural life. A socialist and union activist, Rout is best known for her work to educate New Zealand and Australian soldiers during the First World War and her promotion of sexual health. According to her biographer Jane Tolerton, she was not a strict vegetarian, but took a passionate interest in a wholefood diet, eating at the Sanitarium Vegetarian and Pure Food Café in Cashel Street with union activist Jack McCullough.[77] Though Rout was childless, and far too unconventional to take on the role of a domestic housewife herself, she argued that women in general had a responsibility to provide healthy meals for the rest of the family.

'The body is sacred, and the food that goes into the body should be regarded as sacred; and the production and preparation of that food is noble work…The very fact that the members of the household eat what is put in front of them, imposes a trust on the housewife to place before them only what she knows will keep their bodies comfortable and in good working order.'[78]

Physical fitness went along with healthy food. Rout enrolled in exercise classes in 1904 at Fred Hornibrook's School of Physical Culture on Cathedral Square.[79] Macie Lovell-Smith of the Christchurch Vegetarian Society was also attending classes there. In early twentieth century Christchurch following Hornibrook's exercise programme was the 'thing to do for people who thought of themselves as forward thinking.'[80] At evening classes for 'business girls,' Ettie Rout and Macie Lovell-Smith took off their corsets and skipped and lifted dumb-bells, wearing navy bloomers, cream men's pullovers, and sandals. Rout also hiked in the Port Hills in the weekends, shocking some Christchurch residents by donning men's trousers. She eventually married Hornibrook, the gym instructor. He himself followed an austere diet, and was sympathetic to vegetarianism, deploring the 'Australasian habit' of combining meat eating with tea drinking.[81]

During the First World War, Ettie Rout travelled to France, where she campaigned to prevent venereal disease among soldiers, handing out pro-

Ettie Annie Rout, passport photograph, 1918, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-4832

phylactics, and directing soldiers to Madame Yvonne's Paris brothel, where they could have safe sex.[82] Less controversially, she organised nutritious army meals in Egypt, serving soldiers gigantic barrels of fruit salad made from dried fruit, sago pudding, and lemon squash.[83] Later she moved to London, where she joined the New Health Society's Health and Empire Foods committee, and called for a vegetarian Britain, nourished on root vegetables grown in terraced gardens.[84] In 1926 she published a health food cookbook. *Native Diet* was allegedly based on the dietary principles of the 'Ancient New Zealand Maori' and other indigenous peoples. In fact, the book promoted Rout's own ideas about nutrition, recommending foods such as soybeans, tofu, soymilk, wholemeal bread, and bean sprouts. 'Flesh foods,' she advised, 'undoubtedly promote constipation and obesity, and various other civilised ailments; they are seldom necessary, and are often harmful.'[85] Rout advised that fruit, especially oranges and lemons, should be eaten every day, and included instructions for preparing taro, fern root, cassava, artichokes, and salads.[86] In March 1929 she organised a luncheon at the Hotel Metropole 'with a view to stimulating the cultivation of the Soya Bean in the British Empire.'[87] She also became enthusias-

tic about wholemeal bread, and soon put out another health food book, *Whole-meal: With Practical Recipes*.[88]

Voluntary simplicity

The suffrage leader Kate Sheppard was also interested in dietary reform and a simple life. Historian Margaret Lovell-Smith believes Sheppard was probably vegetarian for many years.[89] In the early twentieth century the idea of 'simple living' was rather fashionable among artists and progressive thinkers in England, and often this involved avoiding meat.[90] London's Caxton Hall hosted a 'Simple Life Conference' in 1913, which featured a vegetarian feast, without menus or waiters, eaten off paper tablecloths by guests who sat on the floor.[91]

There were reasons why meatless meals seemed attractive. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century New Zealand kitchens were much more basic than they are today. Cooking and washing up were laborious, backbreaking tasks. There were no refrigerators, electric stoves, or modern detergents to clean the fat from greasy plates. Housewives laboured for hours over smoky cast-iron coal ranges, and it was difficult to keep meat from putrefying in summer.[92] The Lovell-Smiths' Christchurch home 'Arcadia' had a typical late-nineteenth-century kitchen with a concrete floor, heavy black iron cook pots, and a black kettle for tea.[93] With ten children to feed, vegetarian dishes with plenty of raw fruit and vegetables must have been easier to prepare and to clean up after. The labour journal *Maoriland Worker*, edited by Ettie Rout from 1910 to 1911, pointed out that vegetarian meals were 'a great saving of labour, since in addition to simple preparation the absence of greasy washing up is a great recommendation in the eyes of many housewives.'[94] Vegetarianism helped liberate women from the kitchen and scullery.

In the 1880s Sheppard ran a kind of political salon on Saturday afternoons at her home on Clyde Road. Here progressive thinkers discussed Fabian socialism, vegetarianism, sensible dress and a simple lifestyle.[95] Sheppard argued that one should streamline one's life while cultivating one's mind. She admired Thoreau, who felt that 'there is something essentially unclean about…all flesh…I believe that every man who has ever been earnest to preserve his higher or poetic faculties in the best condition has been particularly inclined to abstain from animal food.'[96] Sheppard argued that:

> 'The life is more than meat, let us therefore dispense with elaborate cooking and be content with very simple fare…Thoreau dispensed with ornaments, because the time occupied in dusting them deprived him of spare time for intellectual occupations. So we too must be content with simplicity of life'[97]

Labouring in the kitchen over unnecessary pies and stews could be compared to the dusting of unnecessary vases. A spare diet and unmaterialistic lifestyle could allow a woman more time for intellectual pursuits, as 'every individual has a right to a broad, breezy, intellectual life.'[98]

Sheppard had vegetarian contacts overseas, and on an 1894 visit to London she lunched at 'a celebrated vegetarian restaurant in Little St., Martin's Lane.' She met vegetarian feminists such as Margaret Sibthorp. Sheppard was impressed that Sibthorp was 'a lover of animals and so is an anti-vivisectionist… she is strongly opposed to vaccination, [and] is a vegetarian in practice as well as theory.'[99] Perhaps Sheppard's own vegetarianism was sometimes in theory rather than in practice. She did not always live out her beliefs, and despite her ideals of vegetarianism and voluntary simplicity, she dressed elegantly, wearing a fur stole on occasion.[100]

Wilhelmina Sherriff Bain and the peace movement

In 1897 the National Council of Women (NCW) condemned war as a 'savage, costly and futile method of settling disputes.'[101] Peace and international co-operation emerged as feminist issues. Some of the women who campaigned for peace also followed meatless diets. Wilhelmina Sherriff Bain was a vegetarian who once declared that she 'would live, and die, for Peace.'[102] Born in Edinburgh in 1848, she travelled to New Zealand with her family as a child, initially living in Invercargill. She taught in the far south for over a decade, but by 1896 she had moved to Christchurch, where she worked as a librarian. She presented a speech on 'Peace and Arbitration' at the 1897 NCW conference, arguing that:

> 'War is the method adopted by rulers for the settlement of disputes… With individuals as with nations, the appeal to force never decides which is right. It does not even make the pretence. The consideration is, Which is stronger? and the issue is the acknowledgement of might, leaving the rancours of hatred and injury to prepare for retaliation at a convenient period. For what can war but endless war still breed?'[103]

More controversially, Bain condemned the militarism of the New Zealand state during the Boer War. New Zealand was the first British colony to volunteer to send troops to South Africa after war was declared in 1899. The mood of the mainstream media was jingoistic; civil servant J. Grattan Grey was sacked for criticising the war in a letter to a newspaper.[104] At the NCW's 1900 conference, Wilhelmina Sheriff Bain argued for peace and arbitration between the Boers and the British. She described how 'poor British boys were led through the black night, stealthily—pantherlike, that they might bayonet to death Boers slumbering within their tents.'[105] Many New Zealanders were outraged. A letter to the *Otago Daily Times* described Bain's speech as a 'rigmarole of nonsense and falsehood…What a poisoned vinegar mind to utter such rubbish!'[106]

The rationale for Bain's meatless diet is not clear, though it is plausible that vegetarianism formed part of her ethical world-view. Little is known about her personal life, but she was interested in spiritualism and in the Baha'i faith, both philosophies that encourage vegetarianism.[107] It is also unclear how strict her vegetarianism was. Her great-niece Florence Cook remembered that 'Aunt Minnie [i.e. Wilhelmina] was a vegetarian & as the meat was carved at the table she requested the juice from it, 'I'll have the juice Florrie & you have the meat.'[108] Bain certainly hated hunting, condemning 'that lust of destructiveness which impels youth to shoot the tern and other seabirds that grace Aparima Estuary with their loveliness. Targets might be erected…which could not be doomed to linger through long agonies of death most cruelly delayed.'[109] In 1904, Bain attended a meeting of the International Council of Women in Berlin; this included a session on animal experimentation, and she noted that 'some terrible truths were laid bare, and it was proved that scientists are opposed to each other regarding the utility of vivisection.'[110] She denounced the connections between the meat industry, international trade, and war in a speech to the NCW in 1898:

> 'Some tell us that a European war would be good for trade, it would boom our frozen mutton…What is good for trade may be good for Mammon and Moloch, but it is bad for humanity. What is trade? The organised warfare of man against man, against woman, against child…of the strong against the weak, making the rich, richer, and the poor, poorer, flaunting on its banner the motto, each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.'[111]

Jessie Mackay and animal rights

There were ties between animal protection and the women's rights movement in the second half of the nineteenth century, both in Europe, and in New Zealand.[112] The International Women's Congress, held in London in 1899, featured a session on 'Murderous Millinery,' during which there was a heated discussion about animal rights:

> 'Mrs Lemon read a poetical paper on "Dress in Relation to Animal Life," appealing to women not to lose pity when they came to power, and describing the atrocities that were committed in the slaughter of birds, especially egrets, to minister to women's vanity. Mrs Charles Mallet followed, and Sir Edward Gray with references to reason and the illogical point of view of the sportsman, and eventually we drifted into a debate on the natural rights of wild animals, vivisection, and vegetarianism, hisses and counter applause being freely indulged in.'[113]

The meat industry also caused animal suffering. In Christchurch, Lucy Smith commented that 'the life of an ox from the pasture to a butcher's shop will not bear looking into.'[114] The poet and women's rights advocate Jessie Mackay was particularly outspoken about animal rights, and her vegetarianism stemmed from her hatred of cruelty and oppression. The daughter of dispossessed Highland crofters who settled in New Zealand, Mackay was born in a sod hut on a remote high country farm, and spent her childhood playing in the tussock. Her brother told of how once she came home with shining eyes, explaining that she 'had been talking to God.'[115] According to fellow poet Alan Mulgan, she wrote as a 'freelance crusader.'[116] In poems such as 'The charge of Parihaka' and 'Henare Taratoa' she condemned Pākehā greed and violence towards Māori. Compassion for animals also featured in her poems. One of Mackay's earliest efforts, 'The boundary dog's complaint,' was a protest on behalf of the farm dogs, who were chained around farm boundaries as a cheap substitute for putting up fences:

> 'Know the tale is the same as ever—That men adore the Mighty Dollar—And follow it on through flood and flame Pity talks to ears that are deafened—When it's a matter of shillings and pence—And so I must stand, half-mad and tiffened—Fretting out my life at a boundary fence.'[117]

As an adolescent and young adult Mackay studied in Christchurch, attending Kate Sheppard's bible class at Trinity Congregational Church. The two women apparently became friends.[118] After Mackay's mother died, she worked as a journalist and taught literature at Inveresk School in Christchurch to support her younger sisters. She continued to think about human and animal suffering. In the early twentieth century she stopped eating meat because of her compassion for animals. Biographer Nellie Macleod believes this was not until around 1911. However the 'J.M.' who wrote a letter 'Is meat eating a necessity?' to the *White Ribbon* in 1908 may have been Jessie Mackay. The writer argued that:

> 'it is a question for all women whether we can defend our individual complicity in a traffic which inflicts untold pain on the lower creation…The sacred traditions of all nations unite with our own scriptures in declaring flesh-eating originally foreign to man in his early state of purity…Since then the whole ghastly business is a reparable [sic] consequence of our wandering from God's plan, is it not time to begin repairing that consequences in our own individual cases by refusing to have part or lot in it?'[119]

Mackay and her sister Georgina moved in 1911 to a cottage of their own in New Brighton, where they kept a vegetarian house. Mackay also refused to wear fur and feathers, and pointed out sealskin coats were cruelly wrenched from butchered seals:

> 'She, living in temperate countries, demands that the ice-floe, instead of a home, becomes a hell to the kindly, innocent seal-folk, felled in family companies; the butchers in such haste that the skin is often dragged from a living, writhing body. It is not so pictured in the showroom, but you have been told the hideous story again and again. Women in the very bravado of cruelty walk the street with a little furry head drooping over the place where they say their hearts are!'[120]

There was some public debate in the early twentieth century about the ethics of hunting and trapping seals for fur coats and birds for feather hats. Overseas animal rights groups such as the British-based Humanitarian League campaigned against the fur trade, and their arguments filtered through to New Zealand. In 1900 the *Timaru Herald* reprinted an article entitled 'The Tragedy of Fashion,' deploring the fact that humans 'have built up a huge trade on hideous cruelty and unspeakable suffering, for

Jessie Mackay, Patrick Lawlor Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-6260-2-01234567890

no other purpose than to indulge our vanity by decorating ourselves… Every plume of an egret, gull or bird of paradise means a tragedy such as this—the slaughter of the mother bird and the starvation of the young.'[121]

In 1918 Mackay and Georgina moved again, this time to 'Corrie,' a wooden villa that looked westward over the slopes of the Cashmere Hills across to the Southern Alps.[122] Here the sisters welcomed visitors with cheese sticks and peanut butter sandwiches. The same year, a baby niece Iona or 'Tat' came to live with Mackay and Georgina, who raised her as a vegetarian. To the astonishment of Nellie Macleod, Mackay's friend and biographer, Tat 'throve wondrously upon a meatless diet. Plump, clear-skinned and rosy-cheeked, she was, as we say, the picture of health.'[123] Mackay, who was rather thin, joked that 'if we kept a restaurant, we'd have to put Tat at the door—not me!'[124] Mackay herself was not particularly interested in food, once commenting humorously that 'this eating is a parlous custom. If you have a family you must feed it and I find the whole universe

caught up on the crest of a cauliflower until the golden moment goes.'[125] The little family ate simple meals, much to the disappointment of Sunday visitors such as the poet Wallace Elliott, who seems to have been less than grateful for a plate of peas and potatoes, or macaroni cheese.[126]

The sisters were always short of money. Georgina worked during the day, while Mackay took on the role of 'a rather unmethodical but earnest house-wife,' looking after baby Tat, and trying to find spare moments in which to write her newspaper columns for the *Lyttelton Times* and the *Otago Witness*.[127] Often she wrote through the night until the milk cart arrived in the early morning. During the day she found it hard to stay alert, sometimes nodding off to sleep at church or in mid-conversation. 'Oh Dorothy,' she begged one friend on the way to church, 'if you see me dozing off, do give me a pinch.' 'Oh, but Miss Mackay,' Dorothy remonstrated, 'you'd be black and blue!'[128]

Mackay constantly campaigned against injustice through her newspaper columns. As Alan Mulgan put it, when she felt strongly about something, she 'struck with a strong arm and a sharp sword.'[129] At a speech contest, she supported direct action by the militant suffragettes in England, arguing that 'the average man must have his parlour windows broken before he realises that the growing mass of public opinion is more than a passing zephyr.'[130] After visiting Ireland in 1922, she wrote articles supporting the Irish revolution of 1921, reasoning that 'there is a sharp line to be drawn between the sporadic violence of unlearned, angry, injured men and the deliberate policy of a great power crushing the legitimate aspirations of a small, wronged, vassal state.' An angry reader replied that she was 'a professional agitator and sedition-monger.'[131] For Mackay, peace could only be achieved through justice, and she wrote that 'we must talk peace, think peace, live peace, all of which means talking, thinking, and living truth.'[132] Mackay's vision was radical but never doctrinaire—the only socialism she acknowledged was 'not made out the dim inane of the blue ether, but should answer to the modifying influence of sun and rain, smoke and ozone, in our slowly-changing human atmosphere.'[133]

In the early 1920s Mackay began condemning animal experiments and blood sports in her newspaper articles. She described the suffering of bobby-calves trucked to slaughterhouses, and pointed out that 'man is the only animal sickened by the sight of his food [slaughtered animals] being prepared for him.' In the early 1930s, letters from Mackay about vivisection and animal rights regularly appeared in the *Christchurch Times*.[134] An

international dental research competition was particularly horrifying to her. The contest specified 'a series of disgustingly cruel experiments on the teeth of dogs, which were to be infected with septic poison from human teeth, after extraction of the nerves and separating of the root tips.'[135] Mackay hoped that 'no New Zealand dentist has degraded his profession by entering for the competition.'[136]

Animal rights was still a freakish cause, and Mackay's compassion for animals met a lukewarm response. During the depression year of 1929, a correspondent calling herself 'Humanity First' expressed surprise that 'so splendid and forcible a writer as Miss Mackay should waste her ability exposing the sufferings of animals when the sufferings of a large number of children are more deserving of pity.' Mackay replied that:

> 'Work for animals tortured and slain for our supposed benefit is not 'wasted'…When the shadows lengthen in the west, and one must choose what earnestly remains to be done, one does not look where the many are working, and the conscience is publicly awake. One looks for the young, the unpopular, and the unlovely causes. Is there one younger or more unpopular than anti-vivisection?'[137]

As Mackay grew older and her health deteriorated, she was saddened at 'a world falling to pieces' and worried that 'what was once easy is easy no more.'[138] Nonetheless, she continued arguing for animal rights and for the freedom of ethnic minorities; she was particularly active in the Scottish Nationalist Society.[139] The year before her death, she wrote as a 'convinced vegetarian' to the feminist magazine *Woman Today*, and condemned hunting and the fur trade. Women, she believed, had a particular responsibility to promote compassion, as 'Eden will never be seen on earth till women arise and instruct the merciful generation.'[140] For Mackay, human and animal suffering were part of the same cruel continuum. As she once wrote, 'the miseries…[in the world] do not come to us by chance, but by a system of utterly false relations of people to one another and towards the animal creation.'[141]

By the late 1930s, most of the women mentioned above had died. Wilhelmina Sherriff Bain was alive but elderly—she eventually died in 1944, at the age of 99. Ettie Rout died in 1936 in the Cook Islands, from a quinine overdose. Macie Lovell-Smith still lived in the family home with her unmarried sisters, and worked for the Women's Christian Temperance Union. After many years of inactivity, the National Council of Women

met again, but rarely mentioned vegetarianism. The group worked to improve the economic status of women, and argued for the right of women to serve on juries and as police officers. In the years preceding the Second World War, peace became an important concern. The National Council of Women promoted peace through arbitration, and called for women to support the League of Nations 'to stop war, to provide justice, to organise peace, and to promote international understanding and friendship.'[142] President Helen Benson drew connections between motherhood and the desire for peace, but not between animal slaughter and war.[143] It is likely enough that there were vegetarian women involved in feminist and anti-war groups, but, if so, they have left little trace. The 1930s feminist magazine *Woman To-day* occasionally mentioned vegetarianism. One writer argued for vegetarian hospital diets in 1937, appalled that 'hospital patients are given steaks, stews, and rehashed meats for breakfast.'[144] Jane Noble was an Auckland vegetarian pacifist, and her story will be told in the following chapter.

We know a little more about male pacifists in the 1930s and 1940s, in part because men bore the brunt of conscription, and vegetarian prisoners tended to stand out in detention camps. As an elderly woman, Mackay wrote letters to the *Christchurch Times* praising the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society's work to protect animals.[145] The group's president, Norman Bell, was a vegan who wore plastic shoes, and a man of peace who spent two years of the First World War in prison. For Bell and his fellow pacifists, a non-violent diet offered a path towards a peaceful world.

4

The kinship of all living beings

peace, vegetarianism and animal rights

I feel the two 'No More War' & Animal Rights
have to link together and by doing so we will gain lasting
peace and man himself will become a higher being
—Jane Noble, peace and anti-vivisection worker,
Auckland, 1931.[1]

Imagine Christchurch, October 4th, 1935, around 7.30 p.m. in the evening. It was the Friday before Animal Sunday, and those listeners who tuned their large wood-cased radios to station 3YA heard the pips of the time signal, followed by a half-hour speech on 'The cause of the animals.'[2] In the 1930s, radio was a relatively new technology, and on that particular spring evening the ideas explored would also have been new to many. The voice on the radio deplored human violence towards animals, questioning the logic that 'might makes right':[3]

> 'Suppose for example, there came down from the planet Mars, beings as much more powerful than Man as Man is more powerful than the other animals on the earth. Suppose that these visitors then proceeded to treat Man in exactly the same way as Man has treated the animals. Would Man be satisfied with this treatment? Am I wrong in saying that he would protest most vigorously? But could he expect a more kindly treatment when he did not show it himself in dealing with those weaker than himself.'[4]

The broadcaster, Norman Bell, was the president of the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society (HAVS), which agitated against meat-eating, animal experiments, hunting, trapping, the fur trade, zoos, and circuses—radical aims indeed in the 1930s.[5] Bell was a brilliant scholar, whose academic career collapsed after he was jailed during the First World War. For Bell, peace and vegetarianism were inseparable:

> 'Pacifism means not merely refraining from the killing of men, but also from the killing of any form of life. The pacifist in recognising that his pacifism applies to animals as well as to men can decrease by his own actions the area of death and exploitation and increase the area of life and kindliness. Here is a real training ground in self-government, the practice of a pacifist, a vegetarian way of life.'[6]

Bell was not alone in his beliefs. James Forbes, the founder of HAVS, also promoted peace, vegetarianism, and animal rights. Described as 'a true mental and social pioneer,' he campaigned against war and for animal protection in the early decades of the twentieth century.[7] Bell, Forbes, and their fellows were loyal to higher ideals than serving King and country, whether that meant refusing to join the army, or criticising industries of national importance. Bell argued that 'pacifism is a doctrine that is universally applicable to the individual, to human society, to all terrestrial life. The animals are the kindred of man.'[8] The peace and animal rights movements were intertwined.

Peace, animal rights, and vegetarianism

Perhaps such connections are not too surprising. In Britain, there was a significant crossover between the anti-war and vegetarian movements in the first half of the twentieth century, inspired by thinkers such as Leo Tolstoy and Mohandas Gandhi.[9] The Vegan Society in England was founded by conscientious objector Donald Watson in 1944. Also in England, the journal of the No More War Movement published advertisements for vegetarian products, and condemned 'the carnage of the slaughterhouse.'[10] Vegetarian pacifists believed that animal slaughter logically lead to human violence. Abstaining from meat could be part of one's commitment to a more peaceful world.[11] British writer Beverley Nichols felt that a vegetarian diet should be compulsory for delegates to disarmament conferences:

> 'What must be their condition, after the heavy meals which I had seen them devouring in their hotels?…I think of old hearts wearily

> pumping the over-sugared blood through hardened arteries, the hearts that have also to fight against choking lungs. And suddenly, I want to stop the conference, and bundle all the delegates by force, into vans which would take them up on to the mountains, and keep them there on a diet of orange juice for a fortnight before they began to make any more speeches…These are no wild speculations, unworthy of record. Man is what he eats and drinks and breathes. There is too much eating and drinking and too little breathing at Geneva…even the shortest sojourn at a disarmament conference makes one feel that the world will never know peace until it is run by vegetarians, and until its business is conducted in the open air.'[12]

The stereotype of the vegetarian peacenik has a long history. In 1919, a grumpy letter in Auckland's *Observer* recast the same argument in negative terms, denouncing vegetarianism as a first step to the dangerous ideologies of pacifism and socialism:

> '40 per cent of the conscientious objectors lived on nuts (this, with other startling statements in this article, is a fact)…You cannot be a vegetarian and a patriot, because one of the first baneful effects of cabbage-juice is to create the illusion of universal equality. Vegetarianism destroys all faith in your fellows, all sense of decency, all enterprise. A man may open his world-oyster with a sword, never with a nutcracker.'[13]

There were vegetarian conscientious objectors in Britain during the First World War. Some died in jail from harsh treatment and starvation. After abstaining from prison rations of meat, gravy and suet (which was often mixed with the rest of the meal), there was little left to eat.[14] Edward Puller collapsed in the workshops at Pentonville and became the first vegetarian prisoner to receive supplementary rations.[15] Eventually, after Fenner Brockway of the Independent Labour Party led a hunger strike at the Wormwood Scrubs prison, the management temporarily agreed to provide a suitable diet.[16]

There were also connections between militarism and meat. In 1914, New Zealand politicians were swift to offer troops to support Great Britain, in part because the country's prosperity depended on selling milk, meat and wool to Britain, and keeping the sea trade routes open seemed vital.[17] The British government promised to buy unlimited quantities of New Zealand meat during the First World War, and the New Zealand au-

War and the export trade in the twenty-first century

The links between war and meat and dairy exports continue today. In 2002 a senior Labour MP commented that sending elite SAS troops to Afghanistan was the price of trade access to United States markets. 'When asked if he meant 'bombs for butter,' he said, 'No, it's bombs for meat.'

After the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, Prime Minister Helen Clark hoped for 'a stable Middle East' that would be 'good for a meat-producing nation like New Zealand.'[18] A leaked cable indicated that Clark's decision to send military engineers to Iraq stemmed partly from fears that the dairy company Fonterra might lose a lucrative dairy supply contract in Iraq associated with the United Nations Food for Oil program.[19]

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thorities challenged farmers to 'produce all the meat you can.'[20] Meat companies thrived, and the 1915 annual meeting of the Wellington Meat Export Company drew the newspaper headline, 'A Fat Year.'[21] War also led more directly to animal suffering. During the First World War, tens of thousands of horses and a corps of trained dogs were sent to the frontline. Many were injured on the battlefield and endured excruciating pain without receiving any form of veterinary care.[22] By the 1930s, scientists had begun testing the effects of chemical weapons on animals. In 1932 an unnamed New Zealander from the HAVS attended a Geneva disarmament conference, and listened with horror as Nina, Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon, condemned experiments on dogs with poison gases.*[23] Although New Zealand did not conduct military experiments on animals, around eighteen thousand New Zealand horses were sent overseas to the Boer War or the First World War. Of these only two animals ever returned home. Many died of overwork, starvation, disease or wounds, while others were sold to local farmers or foreign armies.[24] Emily Phipps, an English supporter of the No More War Movement, was horrified at the unjust suffering of animals:

> 'One of my reasons [for joining the No More War Movement] is the hideous cruelty war inflicts on animals, particularly horses. Whatever the dispute which is the pretext for war, it is not the animals' dispute; they are entirely in our power, and we have no right to cause them suffering in the settlement of our quarrels.'[25]

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* Nina, Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon, was the founder of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Vivisection

Animal rights groups saw pacifists as potential recruits. The World League against Vivisection and for Protection of Animals produced leaflets such as 'An appeal to peacemakers,' arguing that 'there can be no true peace on Earth unless man also is prepared to outlaw war against the animal kingdom.'[26] In 1937, the League sent a form letter to Charles Mackie of the Peace Council in Christchurch, asking him to promote World Day for Animals 'as a worker for peace and brotherhood…No doubt you feel, as we do, that the connection between peace and animal protection is very close and vital.'[27]

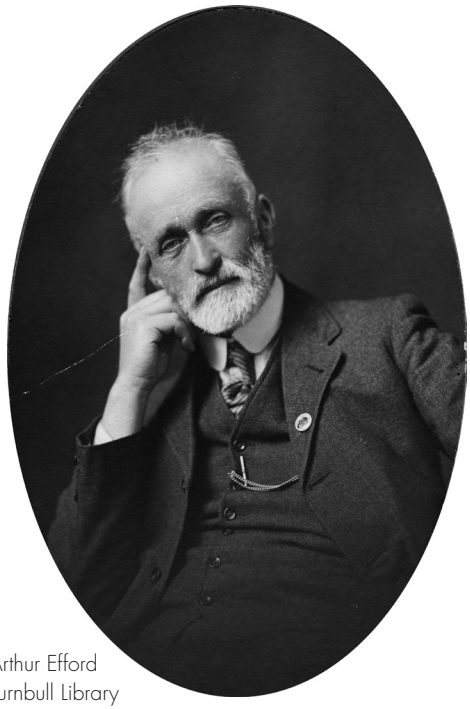
James Forbes

For James Forbes, an elderly bookseller in Gore, the links between peace and animal rights were especially close and vital. A former bank employee from Scotland, Forbes ran a bookshop in Gore in the early 1900s.[28] At the time Gore had a busy social and intellectual life with libraries, debating societies, and literary clubs.[29] In 1902, the *Otago Witness* optimistically described Gore as a 'go-ahead' town, and 'The Chicago of the South.'[30] In his spare time, Forbes campaigned for the temperance movement, the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and became president of the Gore Young Men's Temperance Mutual Improvement Society.

However, in 1906 Forbes gave up temperance work and started a peace group, the Gore International Arbitration and Peace Society. Anti-war viewpoints were not very popular in small towns such as Gore.[31] In the years leading up to the First World War, many New Zealanders felt that war was both just and inevitable and applauded proposals for compulsory military service. Undaunted, Forbes campaigned vigorously against militarism, and his bookshop became the unofficial headquarters of the peace group. Fellow pacifist James Stephens remembered:

> 'He had a number of kindred spirits gathered around; quite a lot of men drifted into the shop not so much to buy books as to have a word or two with Mr Forbes. He had a little square room at the back with three or four chairs in it and in this room he would very frequently have a visitor…They were all men of intelligence and reading and went a good deal of the way with Mr Forbes in support of his causes.'[32]

An outspoken pacifist and a vegetarian, Forbes did not really fit into the Gore community. Stephens wrote that 'many who had maintained that Mr



James Forbes, 1913, Lincoln Arthur Efford Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library

Forbes was cranky in his opposition to beer, now were sure of it when he was opposed to guns.'[33]

In 1910 Forbes retired from his bookshop and moved to Sawyers Bay, Port Chalmers, 'to grow his own vegetables for his exclusively vegetarian diet.'[34] Temperance and SPCA friends presented him with a garden spade and a pair of binoculars to assist him in his new life.[35] His retirement was in name only—he continued to work for the SPCA, campaigning unsuccessfully for an 'Animals Home' to care for animals left behind by owners during the summer holidays, and against the coursing of hares.[36†] Before long, he was involved in Dunedin's Food Reform and Humanitarian Society, a pro-vegetarian group that advocated 'a simple and pure system of diet,' and opposed inflicting 'avoidable suffering on any sentient being.'[37] The Society promoted humane education, and discussed prison reform and the temperance movement; it organised public lectures on topics such as 'Eating for health,' which recommended a diet based on 'peas, beans, lentils (red and brown), nuts, oils, ripe olives, cream, eggs, potatoes, rice,

†Hare coursing was a 'sport' in which hounds were set on a hare, and tested on their speed in running down, overtaking and turning their prey.

and fruits and vegetables of all kinds.'[38] Forbes also became secretary of the Dunedin Peace Council, which campaigned in support of a group of teenage boys who were imprisoned on Ripapa Island in Lyttelton Harbour because they refused to register for military training.[39] They faced noisy opposition—peace meetings were disrupted by rowdy young pro-military 'hoodlums' who interrupted the speakers with 'almost constant hooting, groaning, playing of instruments, and other disgraceful proceedings.'[40]

After the 'disastrous and abominable' war ended, Forbes and his wife Jessie moved north to join their son in Oamaru, a rural town that was dominated by meat companies and woollen mills. Five miles to the north, the Waitaki Farmers' Co-operative Freezing Company ran the Pukeuri freezing works, where over 190,000 sheep were killed in 1923.[41] The Forbes moved from house to house, finally settling in Wansbeck Street, just down the road from the Oamaru railway station. Oamaru was at the junction of four railway tracks, and trains ran through the town, hauling refrigerated wagons laden with sheep carcasses to the ports of Timaru and Port Chalmers.[42] It was a quiet, conservative neighbourhood, and Forbes grumbled that 'Oamaru is a benighted place and sadly needs stirring up.'[43] Family life was tense. His own son was a militarist who belonged to the Returned Services Association. In 1922 Forbes junior persuaded the Oamaru RSA to pass a resolution urging sports clubs to ban former conscientious objectors from participating in rugby, cycling or athletic events. Rather sadly, Forbes and his son ended up debating this 'wretched, tyrannical, and unprincipled boycott' in the pages of the *Otago Daily Times*.[44]

In the aftermath of war, Forbes pondered how to prevent violence in general, and cruelty towards animals in particular. He wrote his peace correspondence on letterhead printed with the banner 'Be kind to animals' and imported postcards at five cents per dozen from the American Humane Education Society in Boston. These encouraged horse-owners to 'water your horses frequently, then there will be no danger of them drinking too much'.[45] There was no local peace group, so Forbes handed out anti-war literature to those whom he felt needed political education, especially clergymen who had supported the First Word War. He encouraged friends to subscribe to *Foreign Affairs*, a 'splendid illuminative paper,' and was sad to find that 'those who should read it are not the ones who do so.'[46] He also helped organise the local Band of Mercy, a SPCA youth group and discussed peace and politics with the young people who attended.[47]

In the early 1920s Forbes learned about England's Animal Welfare Week, an annual celebration of compassion to animals, and was inspired to organise a similar event calling for 'kindness and justice toward all dumb and defenceless creatures.'[48] New Zealand's first Animal Welfare Week, held in the first week of December 1923, was a success. It became an annual event, supported by churches and the SPCA. Ministers preached sermons debating whether animals had souls, and teachers organised a 'Humane Day in Schools,' during which school children wrote essays 'on the rights of animals and their usefulness to mankind.'[49]

However, Animal Welfare Week did not satisfy Forbes' urgent desire to promote animal rights. Under the auspices of the SPCA, it emphasised sentimental love for domestic animals. For Animal Week 1926, children were asked to write the names of their dogs on postcards, and the organisers then read aloud a 'Roll-call of Pet Dogs' on the radio.[50] Forbes was already impatient with the conservatism of the SPCA—back in Dunedin he had complained that SPCA meetings were 'dull and formal,' and that new ideas were 'treated with indifference, at any rate with silence.'[51] He longed for a more radical movement that would campaign against all forms of animal exploitation. In 1927 he proposed to form a Humanitarian Society that would oppose:

> 'all blood sports, performing animals in circuses, imprisonment of wild animals and birds, wearing of furs and feathers, vivisection of animals, and use of animal flesh for food…The R.S.P.C.A. does not touch these aspects of the want of humane treatment of our younger brothers.'[52]

Advertising in magazines such as *Theosophy in New Zealand*, he appealed to all animal lovers to work 'wisely yet zealously, against these sins against love.'[53] In the 1920s, such goals were ambitious indeed. It seems likely that Forbes was inspired by the Humanitarian League, an influential English animal rights group that opposed 'all avoidable suffering on any sentient being.'[54] Henry Salt, the founder, was a vegetarian pacifist and socialist.

Animal rights began to take up most of Forbes' energy. He wrote to Charles Mackie of the Peace Council in Christchurch, apologising that he had little time left for anti-war activities. Concern for non-human animals, Forbes argued, was an 'important factor in the promotion of peace, harmony, love and sympathy in this foolish world of strife.'[55] He began sending

articles about animal rights and vegetarianism to peace magazines such as the Greymouth-based *International Sunbeam*:

> 'The necessity of impressing upon boys and girls that fact that animals have certain rights should never be lost from sight…Then there is the killing of animals for food…I have been a non-flesh-eater for 18 years and looking back I am indeed surprised at the progress the cause has made in this country alone. It is always a puzzle to me how people who profess to be fond of animals can be a party to their killing to gratify their appetites.'[56]

Eventually Forbes' new group formed as the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society. It included a youth wing—a 'Kind Deeds Club' that encouraged children to perform acts of compassion to animals.[57] It had ambitious aims that ran as follows:

> 'A. To help foster a more sympathetic and better informed public opinion in regard to man's treatment of animals generally. B. The abolition of the following particular forms of cruelty to animals: 1. The practice of vivisection. 2. The custom of removing animals from their natural environment to imprison them in cages, circuses, and zoos. 3. The hunting and killing of birds and animals for sport. 4. The trapping of birds and animals for commercial purposes. 5. The use of feathers and furs for dress or ornament.'[58]

HAVS began campaigning against vivisection. In 1931 the group sent a circular letter to all political candidates, surveying them as to whether they would oppose animal experiments by physicians. A Sydney doctor had recently imported monkeys for glandular experiments, and anti-vivisection activists feared that the New Zealand medical establishment might follow suit.[59]

Much of HAVS's work centred on promoting humane slaughter methods. Rather ironically for a pro-vegetarian group, the members raised money to donate a humane killer pistol to the Sockburn abattoirs, just southwest of Christchurch.[60] This compromise probably reflected the urgent need to ameliorate the horrific slaughter methods common at the time. In the 1920s and 1930s, there were no regulations requiring animals to be stunned before their throats were slit. Often cattle were 'pithed' by ramming a steel rod into the brain. If the worker was tired, inexperienced or careless, the animal might die slowly, in agonizing pain. At slaughter-

Norman Bell, Christchurch City Libraries, ANZC Archives

houses such as the Pukeuri freezing works, sheep and lambs were kept in stockyards without food for at least twenty-four hours, then driven up a sloping ramp for 'catching and sticking,' followed by bleeding, skinning and evisceration.[61] City pounds used rough and inhumane methods to kill stray dogs. After James Forbes died in 1929, the Society honoured him by donating a lethal gas chamber to the City Council of Oamaru pound; a grim memorial for a man devoted to saving animals.[62]

Norman Bell

Although it is unclear whether James Forbes ever met Norman Bell, they certainly shared many beliefs. Bell was a Christchurch pacifist, socialist and educator who believed that, 'all life forms but one family, and we know further than [sic] an injury to one part of a whole is really an injury to all parts.'[63] He advocated vegetarianism and animal rights over the radio waves, and within the peace movement. Born in 1887, Bell grew up in Lyttelton and Christchurch. An exceptionally gifted scholar, he was dux of the Anglican boys' school Christ's College, and then completed a master's

degree with first class honours in Latin and Greek at Canterbury College.[64] Bell was also active in university debates and interested in animals; at a 1908 meeting of Canterbury College's Dialectic Society he and another student argued that animals could indeed reason, perhaps showing as many signs of logic as human beings.[65]

In 1909, Bell was the first ever Canterbury student to be awarded a Trinity College scholarship at Cambridge University, and in August he left on the *Athenic* steamer to study in England.[66] He graduated with first class honours degrees in classics and theology, then returned to Christchurch and began teaching at Canterbury College. Yet in 1917 he vanished from the academic world, as abruptly as if he had stepped into another dimension. In a sense he had. On October 13th, 1917, the young man, once described by his professors as 'a type of the very best of the young manhood of New Zealand,' was sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour at His Majesty's Prison Roto Aira.[67]

While he was in England Bell began to question the 'unreasonable and therefore criminal conduct' of the Allied Powers during the First World War.[68] He became a pacifist and a socialist, though it is unclear whether he was vegetarian at this point.‡ Not long after his return to New Zealand he was called up for military service. He refused on Christian and socialist grounds, and was court-martialled and imprisoned as a military defaulter in October 1917. By 1918 he was doing hard labour, building roads at the Roto Aira camp on the Waimarino plains, a prison designed for 'habitual criminals.'[69] Rather ironically, the president of the Prisons' Board at the time was Sir Robert Stout, a vegetarian freethinker and supporter of women's rights.[70]

Digging roads in a prison gang was dispiriting work, and Bell was clearly glad to receive a letter of support from Charles Mackie of the Peace Council. He wrote a long letter of thanks, reflecting that it was vital to stand up for:

> 'not only the freedom of nations but the freedom of individuals to live out their own destiny…The coming of peace depends on the peacemakers who try to show the folly of capitalo-imperialistic nationalism…Prison life leads to much thinking (I would the whole world were thus in prison) [and] tends to make one moralise.'[71]

‡ It is difficult to tell exactly when Norman Bell turned vegetarian. He first began campaigning for vegetarianism in the pages of *Cosmos* in the early 1930s, but it is quite possible he was introduced to vegetarian ideas during his years in England, or even earlier.

In 1919 Bell was released from jail, and he returned to Christchurch to live with his parents. As a former conscientious objector he had no civil rights; he was banned from voting, or from working for government or local bodies, for ten years.[72] Unable to obtain a formal teaching position, he eked out a meagre existence coaching students for their University of Canterbury examinations, offering tuition in German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Māori.

However, much of Bell's time went to socialism and peace. In the *Press* and in the socialist *Maoriland Worker*, he denounced the 'whole capitalistic, imperialistic, and military system' and pointing out that 'behind profiteer and censor stands nothing but the tottering pillars of an effete and obsolete Parliamentary system.'[73] He also helped edit a monthly newsletter, the *International Sunbeam*, which promoted independence for India and Samoa, peace, and socialism; the contributors included pacifist vegetarian James Forbes from Oamaru. Bell also joined the Peace Council, and became one of the leaders of the New Zealand No More War Movement (NMWM) when it formed in 1928. NMWM members pledged never to support armed conflict. Their aims included 'abolishing classes, barriers between the peoples, and to creating a world-wide brotherhood, founded on mutual service.'[74]

A journal of pacifist thought

The *International Sunbeam* petered out in the late 1920s, and Bell started a quarterly magazine entitled *Cosmos: a Journal of Pacifist Thought*, sending it out free of charge. For the editor's column, he drew a banner with careful scrolls incorporating Marx's dictum 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.' *Cosmos* argued for the abolition of corporal punishment in schools, and for pacifism, sex education, socialism, and political education through radio broadcasts. In the 1930s radio was a new, exciting way of communicating, and Bell enthused about the potential of 'educative wireless' to encourage political debate.[75] He campaigned for independence for Samoa, occupied by New Zealand since 1914, and hoped for an end to the British Empire, acquired through so much 'violence, bloodshed, and theft from other peoples.'[76]

He found it harder to come to a position on the Spanish Civil War. He sympathised with the communists and anarchists on the Republican side, but felt distressed at the killing of 'brother by brother.' The pages of *Cosmos*

presented a range of viewpoints. Fred Jones, a young vegetarian socialist, outlined the dilemma faced by left-wing pacifists:

> 'If we stand aside [from the Spanish Civil War] we help the opponents of progress. If, in this instance, we support the forces of progress we help, indirectly, the pursuit of military aims…I do not know what I would do in a revolutionary situation, but I face the possibility that I would abandon my pacifist principles in support of the revolutionary party.'[77]

Cosmic pacifism

On a summer morning in December 1930, Bell woke early. He had been fasting for the past two days, inspired by Gandhi, who fasted on occasion as a symbolic act of love, as 'both a penance and a prayer.'[78] He had also been studying theories of evolution, and reflecting on the kinship between animal species. It had been an exhausting year—he and other members of the small No More War Movement had stretched themselves, collecting fifteen thousand signatures for a partly successful petition against compulsory military training.[79] Yet as the dawn light filtered into his Christchurch bedroom, Bell felt a sensation of 'extraordinary well-being,' as if everything superfluous had drained out of his body. Thirsty, he got up for a drink, and padded towards the pantry, still in his pyjamas. As he reached the kitchen, the feeling of wellbeing became quite overpowering. 'I am saved,' he said to himself. Just then, he heard footsteps in the passageway, and Bell exclaimed 'I am saved,' and ran to his father.[80]

As Bell later recorded in detailed notes describing his experiences, his father replied 'You are what?' 'I am saved,' Bell repeated. Somewhat alarmed, Horace Bell led his middle-aged son into his wife's bedroom, where Annie Bell was still in bed. Both parents watched in consternation as Bell experienced a kind of hallucinatory fit, during which he suffered four paroxysms, lost his pyjama bottoms, and accidentally hit his mother on the nose.

When he woke up, he was lying in Annie's bed, trouser-less, with his mother stroking his forehead. He lay back, weak and overwhelmed with his vision of 'the universal scheme of things…the most diverse things fitting neatly into their places.' Finally he understood 'the salvation of plants, animals & men…the whole creation without any exceptions whatsoever.'

He also had an impression of meeting God face-to-face, and observed that the divine countenance resembled his mother's face.[81]

The revelation took a physical toll. After a few days Bell wrote a note in a shaking hand to Charles Mackie of the Peace Council, giving his apologies for the next few peace meetings.[82] Concerned, Mackie wrote back, expressing his regret at missing Bell's 'happy face and matured thought' at meetings, and hoping for a quick recovery.[83]

As his health improved, Bell continued to think about evolutionary relationships, reflecting on the duties of humans to their animal kin, who 'too feel the joy of life and pain of death.'[84] Through *Cosmos* Bell developed a theory of 'cosmic pacifism' that held that:

> 'The first and primal concern of the pacifist is not with righteousness, but with fraternity…Pacifism is applied not only inside and between men, but in relation to all other forms of life, both those we call less developed than man, viz., the animals, and those whom we should consider more developed and call supermen or angels. Cosmic pacifism is an universal way of life.'[85]

Bell hoped that 'all exploitation of living beings by other beings will eventually become repulsive to man.'[86] The vegetarian Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti visited Auckland in 1934, and Bell discovered that Krishnamurti's philosophy mirrored Bell's own beliefs about the kinship between all beings:

> 'I am the stone in the sacred temple. I am the humble grass that is mown down and trodden upon. I am the tall and stately tree that courts the very heavens. I am the animal that is hunted. I am the criminal who is hated by all. I am the noble man who is honoured by all. I am sorrow, pain and fleeting pleasure; the passions and the gratifications; the bitter wrath and the infinite compassion; the sin and the sinner. I am the lover and the very love itself. I am the saint, the adorer, the worshipper and the follower. I am God.'[87]

Vegetarianism and animal rights became part of Bell's peace activism. As he explained in the pages of *Cosmos*:

> 'How to decrease force? How to increase love or its visible sign, co-operation? I answer, by becoming, to begin with a vegetarian and an Esperantist! In exploiting animals, whether for sport, food, ornament

> or science, we are practising force all the time: in voluntarily refusing to do those things any more, we are decreasing the kingdom of force.'[88]

He also read overseas animal rights magazines such as the *Anti-Vivisection and Humanitarian Review*.[89] Everywhere Bell looked, he found animal suffering. He contemplated the fate of male dairy calves, separated from their mothers and trucked to slaughter, and resolved to 'drink no milk, or eat no product made from milk, nor wear no leather.'[90] Finding leather-free footwear was not easy in the early 1930s, but Bell cut out paper patterns of his shoe size, and mailed these to Messrs Dawson and Owen in Hertford, England, who posted back synthetic shoes 'which no-one would take to be anything else but made of leather.'[91]

Bell began campaigning on behalf of animals. In a letter to the Christchurch *Star*, he urged readers to consider alternatives to Christmas ham or roast turkey:

> In our pursuit of sport, food, adornment or knowledge, how much consideration do we give to the rights of animals or plants…Could we not rejoice if we made our Christmas bloodless? Sir, I venture to suggest that the voluntary abstention from a blood-shedding diet at this season will add to, not detract from, our happiness.[92]

Bell explored the ethics of animal experiments, meat-eating, and the fur trade, discovering with horror that as many as eighty minks might be killed to make a single coat.[93] A pacifist way of life, he argued in *Cosmos*, was also a vegetarian way of life.[94]

One spring morning in 1936, Bell walked along Lichfield Street looking in the shop windows. He was pleased to see fake furs displayed in the shop fronts of the upmarket D.I.C. department store. Beaths on Cashel Street also stocked various grades of artificial furs, imported from Furreen Ltd, a London company that supplied fake fur 'wraps, capes, coats, collars, gloves, all made of innocent substitutes for the animal product.'[95] However, the New Zealand government later limited synthetic fibre imports to protect local wool producers, and it became harder to find imitation fur.[96] In 1937 he was delighted that shoes made of American cloth and rubber were now available locally, 'shoes which look as neat as they are innocent.'[97] He discovered that soya beans were available in New Zealand, and recommended them to others 'who use a vegetarian diet, particularly those who do not use butter, milk, cheese or eggs.' He pointed out that soya beans were forty-three per cent protein, and that soya milk contained more pro-

tein than cow's milk.[98] *Cosmos* offered further practical advice; one should keep a dish of water for the birds beside the strawberry patch in the garden, and take care to avoid stepping on the worms on the footpaths after heavy rains.[99] As the Canterbury autumn mornings grew frosty, and shooters cleaned their guns in preparation for the duck season, Bell thought of the wild birds and the hunters who 'maim and kill, it may be the wild duck on Lake Ellesmere, for the mere pleasure of maiming and killing.'[100] Today, hunters still hide at dawn on the banks of New Zealand lakes during duck season, and animal rights activists still protest against duck-shooting.

Bell joined the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society, eventually becoming president. In 1936 HAVS moved into the former headquarters of the No More War Movement in Chancery Lane, just down from the hub of tramlines encircling Christchurch Cathedral.[101] Initially the Chancery Lane office was only open from two to four p.m. on weekdays, but within a few months volunteers managed to staff it Monday to Friday from 10 a.m.[102] They distributed leaflets on animal welfare, planned radio debates on vegetarianism and animal experimentation, and sought the release of a wild sea lion captured for Wellington Zoo.[103] Many people dumped unwanted cats and dogs in Hagley Park or at New Brighton, and Bell tried to organise a re-homing scheme through the HAVS office.[104] It is uncertain whether he met the vegetarian poet Jessie Mackay, who was also a HAVS supporter. Mackay, who was then almost seventy, wrote letters to the *Christchurch Times* in 1933 praising HAVS' anti-vivisection work, but there is little evidence that she was actively involved in the group.[105]

Norman Bell's animal rights columns in *Cosmos* perplexed some readers, and his 'meatarian friends.'[106] An Auckland reader wrote in, explaining that even though she was opposed to violence, she believed that humans needed to kill rabbits to prevent damage to farmland. Bell replied that such issues were scarcely the rabbits' fault:

> 'It was Man who brought the rabbits in the first place to New Zealand…If he now finds them disadvantageous, surely he should have mercy on them, seeing it was primarily his fault that they are here at all…So we must find some way of allowing, nay, helping, all the rabbits actually born to have an equal opportunity to live as we live ourselves.'[107]

The Second World War

Late in the 1930s, war seemed inevitable. The fascist General Franco seized power in Spain, Mussolini annexed Abyssinia and Albania, and Hitler invaded Austria and Czechoslovakia. In New Zealand, Bell worried that, as a taxpayer, he was complicit in war. He calculated the proportion of his income tax that would go to the army, and deducted this from his annual tax return. The sum in question only came to five shillings, and he sent a postal note to the Commissioner for Income Tax, along with a letter suggesting officials donate the small sum to the Department of Health, or to the 'Native Department' in acknowledgement of 'the great wrongs done through militarism in the past by us whites on the native race.'[108] In July 1940 the Commissioner of Taxes threatened Bell with a court summons if he did not pay the full amount of tax. Bell wrote back, refusing to pay 'despite regret at causing the dept. so much trouble…[however] there can be no compromise over the question of directly handing over money by me to the State for war i.e. to say murder-purposes.'[109] Fortunately, the Commissioner decided not to prosecute.

On the 1st of September 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, and New Zealand, Britain and Australia declared war two days later. Labour Prime Minister Michael Savage promised to support Britain, declaring that, 'with gratitude for the past and with confidence for the future we range ourselves without fear beside Britain. Where she goes, we go; where she stands, we stand.'[110] In Christchurch, young men in khaki or blue uniforms marched through the streets, and factories switched to producing thousands of uniforms for the armed forces. People covered their windows in blackout exercises, and the authorities dropped leaflets all over the city, asking rhetorically, 'If this was a bomb, where would you be?'[111] It took courage to speak out for peace. In January 1940, the Christchurch City Council voted to ban pacifist meetings, and angry crowds threatened to throw an anti-war clergyman into the Avon River for his 'unpatriotic views.'[112] Pacifists were not allowed to speak on the street, and were harassed when they tried to distribute peace literature. Only a handful of supporters made their way to No More War Movement meetings in Christchurch.

'Disloyal and seditious propaganda'

As the war progressed, the government passed laws enforcing conscription and restricting freedom of speech and the rights of workers to organise. The authorities shut down left wing journals such as *Tomorrow* and

The People's Voice. Early in the war, three men were sentenced to a year's hard labour for distributing Communist Party literature.[113] Politician C.J. Carrington denounced *Cosmos* as 'disloyal and seditious propaganda' and demanded that Bell be jailed.[114] Luckily, this was not legally possible, but in June 1940 the police shut down the Christchurch Co-operative Press, a small press run by pacifist Lincoln Efford; it printed *Cosmos* and other anti-war and political pamphlets.[115]

Bell was determined to continue distributing *Cosmos*. He managed to obtain a duplicating machine and produced a homemade version of *Cosmos*, typed on newsprint paper. The police were evidently keeping a close eye on him, for detectives raided his house in early 1941, and seized his printing equipment, serving Bell with a letter from the Attorney-General declaring his publications were 'subversive.'[116] Undeterred, Bell purchased a hektograph and put out a hand-written version of *Cosmos*.[117] He also produced six leaflets calling for peace and decolonisation, and a single-sheet newsletter densely hand-written in purple ink, entitled *The Road to Peace: Freedom, Equality, Fraternity*.[118] Paper was expensive, and he tried to crowd as many words as possible onto the pages. During the winter of 1940, Bell distributed approximately ten thousand leaflets door to door in Christchurch, trudging through the pot-holed streets in his plastic shoes.[119] The pamphlets included 'The causes of the war,' 'How to end the war' and included a petition demanding independence for India.

On January 22nd, 1942, the government announced the Emergency Reserve Corps, ordering all men between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five years who were not already serving in the armed forces or the Home Guard to report for service. In the main centres, men were sent to one of six first-line units—Wardens, Fire, Medical, Works, Law and Order, or Communications. Bell wrote to the Warden of the Emergency Reserve Corps, refusing to enrol, and denouncing conscription as 'a further fascisation of our democracy.'[120] It was a courageous letter. He was in his fifties and he did not want to go to jail; he remembered prison only too well. Fortunately, the authorities did not prosecute, and Bell continued to walk through the Christchurch streets distributing leaflets and petitions.

After the war

By the time war ended in August 1945, the No More War Movement had dwindled into a tiny group of friends. However, Bell refused to let the group amalgamate with the Peace Council, explaining that 'one or two can

do more than twenty or thirty at times…and I want to retain the NMWM identity.'[121] He continued to campaign for peace. The writer and peace activist Elsie Locke met Bell in the 1950s, in the course of organising stalls in Cathedral Square to collect signatures for a petition against the manufacture, testing and use of nuclear weapons.[122] She noted with surprise that he would not use 'any product which involves the slaughter or exploitation of animals. His shoes are a sort of plastic, and he will not touch food containing milk or eggs.' Locke was not interested in animal rights, and she was married to a slaughterhouse worker. Nonetheless, she found Bell's conversation engrossing:

> '[He is] not just a crank, and is highly educated and widely read, in fact so much so, that the simple task of deciding where to put the petition forms when it suddenly comes on to rain, took the two of us nearly an hour, for the practical issue was interspersed with Aristotle, Pantheism, and what would be the next problem to tackle when the fear of war is gone from the world.'[123]

By July 1962 Bell was seventy-five, and in poor health, but still taking in private pupils to earn a little money through tuition fees. He worried about his income tax, the coal bill, and his medication, carefully recording a regime of 'red, black, and yellow' potions. Thinking about his own mortality, he reflected that:

> '[death] must re-unite self with humanity. A man who dies on the earth is followed sooner or later by a man born somewhere else… Whether death is painless I do not know, but probably shall in time.'[124]

He did not have long to wonder. He died on August 5th, 1962, and the NMWM died with him. Bell had a private funeral, without flowers or religious service, but he left money to fund monthly animal rights advertisements entitled 'No More Slaughterhouses,' in two Christchurch newspapers for the following thirty years.[125] On the day that he died, the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society organised a hunt for Canada geese at Lake Ellesmere, where Bell had denounced the shooting of wild ducks thirty years earlier. Over five hundred hunters assembled at the lakeshore, and tried to scare the birds into the air with boats and by 'buzzing' them with light aircraft. The geese were wild and canny that day, and few were killed. It is oddly fitting that on the day of Bell's death, up draughts over

Lake Ellesmere allowed the geese to wing to safety, far beyond range of the hunters.[126]

Vegetarian voices for peace

There were other vegetarians who spoke out against war in the first half of the twentieth century. These included overseas visitors, notably the elderly dramatist George Bernard Shaw, who toured New Zealand in 1934. Along the way he answered questions about disarmament, the League of Nations, and vegetarianism, quipping that New Zealand should 'stop producing butter and…start producing brains.'[127] Anti-vivisection activist Margaret Jones remembers that Shaw stayed with her and her communist parents in Stratford. Jones' mother cooked chicken for him, but he refused to eat it, and they wondered 'how he grew to be such a big tall man without eating meat.'[128] Travelling as a vegetarian had its challenges. Like the rock stars of more recent times, Shaw issued a rider to hotels explaining his food requirements. He did not eat meat, game, fowl or fish, but relished 'oranges and salads and nuts—especially walnuts.' For dinner he suggested dishes such as gnocchi, pease pudding, curried chestnuts, or 'rice, savoury or Milanese (NO ham), or curried with haricots or eggs or nuts, raisins etc.'[129]

Local pacifists who were interested in vegetarianism or animal rights included the composer Alan Heathcote White, who visited peace groups in Europe in the 1930s; he later founded the Upper Hutt Animal Rescue Society, which sought justice for all animals, domestic, farm, or wild.[130] When called up for military service in 1941, White declared, 'I would rather be killed than kill another person.'[131] Harold Hansen of Taupiri, along with six of his brothers, was imprisoned for refusing to fight during the Second World War. The story of the Hansens will be told in the next chapter. Aucklander Jane Noble was another notable vegetarian pacifist. In February 1931 a postman knocked on Noble's door, and grinned as he handed her a large parcel of anti-war material from the National Peace Council. The wrapping was wrongly addressed, but the postman was used to delivering animal rights correspondence to her house, and had no trouble tracking her down. Noble undid the parcel, and examined with interest the peace leaflets and papers, which included a stack of back issues of the *No More War* journal. She made up a mixed package of anti-war and animal rights literature, and carried it with her to distribute to her friends and acquaintances 'for sometimes if people are not interested in one subject perhaps they will be in another.'[132]

Noble had not always been a pacifist. She arrived in New Zealand in 1914, the first year of the First World War, and regretted that her two young sons were not old enough to fight:

> 'Even had they been killed I would have felt I had done my part and given my all for the country, the lads felt the same at the time…When I used to see the soldiers going away I used to envy the relations to think they were able to send them.'[133]

However, after learning about the human suffering in the trenches during the First World War, her point of view completely changed:

> 'How different my ideas now, and also my two sons…War to me is licensed murder, we have no right to take the life of another. We must look ahead and keep the picture in our minds of a world that has reached the state of brotherly love. Brute force will not accomplish peace.' [134]

War and violence towards animals seemed part of the same problem:

> I feel that animals will also play a large part in peace & harmony reigning, think of the fearful slaughter daily of animals, are not these vibrations going forth…then again the horrors of vivisection, when such are practised and allowed we much expect all the horrible deeds we read of in our daily papers. These are God's other children only different form.'[135]

Noble became vice president of the SPCA, and wrote to the papers imploring humans not to be 'deaf and indifferent to the cry of the dumb creatures for justice and mercy to be given them, but…[to] awaken and bestir themselves with a determination to eliminate all suffering, cruelty, agonies, horrors and degradation imposed on animals, and redress their wrongs in every way.'[136] As she walked through the Auckland streets, she befriended animals such as Nugget, an elderly carthorse, who 'follows her whenever they meet in the street.'[137]

Noble also campaigned for the World League Against Vivisection and For the Protection of Animals, an international organisation with similar aims to those of the Humanitarian and Anti-Vivisection Society; it opposed 'vivisection research, the fur trade, hunting and shooting, capturing and caging and training for circuses.' She distributed animal rights literature for the League, and spoke at events such as World Animal Day.[138] In

1931 she tried to recruit pacifist Charles Mackie of the Peace Council, arguing that 'the two 'No More War' & Animal Rights have to link together and by doing so we will gain lasting peace and man himself will become a higher being.'[139] She posted him anti-vivisection leaflets.[140] Whether he joined or not is uncertain. Perhaps she did convince him, for alongside his peace correspondence Mackie kept copies of *The Animals' Champion*, a newsletter from the World League Against Vivisection. Noble certainly made some useful converts. Sometime in the 1920s, she gave anti-vivisection literature to Florrie Sinton, a sensitive young animal-lover who 'cried for days.' Sinton resolved to work for 'the complete abolition of vivisection,' and became a leader of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (now the animal rights group SAFE).[141]

There seem to have been a number of vegetarian pacifists in Christchurch. The suffrage worker Ada Wells was a member of the National Peace Council, and helped support conscientious objectors during the First World War.[142] As we have seen, she had a strong interest in natural health and meatless diets. James McCombs, a Labour Party politician, opposed conscription during the First World War and demanded civil rights for conscientious objectors; he was a former president of the Christchurch Vegetarian Society.[143] Although McCombs believed that eating meat was 'unnecessary for the well-being of the human race,' he appears to have retained a 'weakness for saveloys'—rather embarrassing for a Vegetarian Society leader.[144] Fred Jones was another Christchurch vegetarian who wrote articles for *Cosmos*.[145] His sister-in-law was the artist and pacifist Rita Angus. Little is known about Jones' vegetarianism, but we know somewhat more about Angus. Early in the Second World War Angus stopped eating meat, despite the disapproval of her mother. Ethel commented dismissively in a letter to Angus' sister Jean: 'Rita is vegetarian now, s'pose she'll get fixed of it—after a bit'.[146] In 1943 Angus moved into a sunny cottage on Clifton Hill, overlooking the Christchurch suburb of Sumner. Here she painted, slept, and planned 'two cushions embroidered in fish & animals, this is vegetarian propaganda.'[147] One afternoon a stray nine-month old kitten, 'elegant and beautifully graceful,' arrived at her door. Angus took the waif in, and it slept on her bed at night.[148]

Under the wartime regulations all women between the ages of eighteen and forty without dependent children could be called up for essential work to contribute to the war effort. In 1943 Angus started receiving letters from the Industrial Manpower Committee, ordering her to report to a

rubber factory for war industry work. She ignored the orders. In October 1944, she was summoned to appear before the Industrial Manpower Committee of the Magistrates Court. She prepared a statement explaining that, 'I am a conscientious objector to war, and, as an artist, it is my work to create life and not to destroy…I am opposed to any direction, as direction is supporting the war effort.'[149] Her appeal was disallowed, but before she could be prosecuted, the law changed so that women could no longer be imprisoned, and she received a fine instead.[150]

Angus remained vegetarian throughout the 1940s, but sometimes suffered from poor health. She lived alone, and was desperately short of money, surviving mainly on biscuits, coffee and vegetable soup, and self-medicating with bromide.[151] After a physical and mental breakdown in 1949, she returned to her parents' home to recover, and began eating meat again.[152] Family pressure may have played a part. Her mother Ethel was sure that meat was essential for health, and worried terribly about her other daughter Jean, who was married to the vegetarian pacifist Fred Jones. Ethel's anxious letters to the pregnant Jean give a feeling for conventional views about diet in the 1940s:

> 'Are you feeding yourself enough, do you get yourself some meat?… Make yourself some beef tea…[take] plenty of nourishing food ½ lb. steak & 1 kidney put in the oven covered dish low heat—cut up with an onion & carrot sprinkled with a dessertspoon flour, salt (a little) & enough water to just cover, mix up so no lumps in flour—or liver and bacon…Have substantial food or make a stew of lamb chops… but perhaps you are having something like and Fred doesn't mind you not being vegetarian does he?'[153]

Strangely enough, there were vegetarians who saw no contradiction in serving in the army. At a Vegetarian Society meeting in Auckland in 1918, one member proudly reported that his son had 'gone through the war without violating his principles.'[154] The former Prime Minister Sir Robert Stout, an enthusiastic vegetarian, also enthusiastically supported the National Defence League, a pressure group that lobbied for compulsory military training during the years leading up to the First World War.[155]

On the whole, though, vegetarianism was associated with non-violence rather than militarism. It brought a deeper moral dimension to the anti-war movement. Although James Forbes, Norman Bell and Jane Noble may have seemed eccentric, or ahead of their times, they persisted in pro-

moting vegetarianism and animal rights both within and beyond peace groups. Noble's relations complained that she was 'too far ahead,' but she was still optimistic, determined that, 'I have seen the most beautiful pictures of the world in peace and harmony and I am going to hold and cling to them.'[156]

5

Spuds, parsnips and swedes

vegetarian conscientious objectors in detention from the Second World War to the Korean War

Beeville was also vegetarian in a country of meat-eaters, and pacifist in a country with a horrendous record of treating its war objectors — Lyman Tower Sargent.[1]

On the December 18th, 1945, Harold Hansen sat in Auckland's Mount Eden Prison, writing a letter home to his disabled brother Dan:

> 'I think it is six weeks now since [there was] anything but laundered cabbage besides spuds for 'veges', and that was when the last of the strychnine flavoured brown rot parsnips petered out! I suppose one could live on spuds (whole), cheese & milk for years actually… without starving for any essentials.'[2]

Mount Eden was a dismal place to spend the Christmas season. Deliberately designed to inspire fear and dread, the prison was built on a radial pattern with wings radiating out from the centre like the spokes of a wheel, allowing the guards to monitor the inmates from a central guardhouse.[3] With its high stone walls, it resembled England's Dartmoor Prison. Living conditions were basic, and so was the diet—a ladle of porridge for breakfast and a 'dixie' tin of meat and vegetables at noon. At 4.30 p.m., there was another dixie of porridge, semolina or rice, accompanied by bread, milk, and sugar. Then at five p.m., the men were locked in for the night.[4] The

death penalty was still in force, and men were executed at Mount Eden. Others, labelled as 'habitual criminals' were serving indefinite sentences.[5] There was another category of inmates who had no known day of release—conscientious objectors. Among these was Harold Hansen, a young man from the Waikato, who had been meat-free his whole life and who believed strongly in non-violence and individual liberty. He had spent the past three years in prisons or detention camps for refusing to fight. Friends were attracted to his 'spontaneous enthusiasm and friendliness.'[6] For Harold, life was still an adventure, 'even in the mouldering atmosphere of a concentration camp.'[7] He loved fresh fruit, especially grapefruit. However, such luxuries were not on the menu here, and he felt 'absolutely ravenous for fruit and raw things.' He begged the prison doctor to let him have the vegetable water from the kitchen so he could drink the liquid for extra nutrients.[8] The war was over, but he was still in prison.

Around eight hundred young men were imprisoned during the Second World War for refusing to fight. Conscription was introduced around ten months after New Zealand declared war on the third of September, 1939. On July 22nd, 1940 the War Cabinet passed regulations requiring all men between the ages of eighteen and forty to register for military service. Although there was only a small anti-war movement in New Zealand, the authorities were deeply suspicious of dissent. They treated conscientious objectors harshly—in fact more harshly than in Britain, which faced a much more direct threat from the Axis powers.[9]

Around five thousand New Zealanders initially refused to enlist, and the authorities established regional Armed Forces Appeal Boards to assess whether the objectors held 'a genuine belief that it was wrong to engage in warfare in any circumstances.'[10] In fact the system was strongly stacked against war resisters, and only around twenty per cent of conscience appeals were judged genuine.[11] Reasons for rejection could be flimsy. Morgan Slater, a Jehovah's Witness, admitted that he had spent a year in the bush shooting deer for a living, and the judges told him that he could not have a genuine hatred of bloodshed.[12] A Timaru gardener also had his appeal disallowed. The judges, delighting in their own wit, informed the gardener that if he was willing to harm rose bushes by pruning them, he could not reasonably object to injuring human life in war.[13] Some young men eventually succumbed to the intense pressure and joined the army, while others performed non-combatant service. Those who still refused were sent to prison or to detention camps. Around eight hundred young

New Zealand men were confined for the duration of the war; an indefinite sentence at the time. There were five main detention camps, four of them in the North Island. Conditions at the camps were more severe than in the army, but less rigorous than in conventional prisons. By day the young men laboured at tasks ranging from clearing scrub and weeding flax bushes, to poisoning rabbits, and logging a pine plantation.[14]

There were vegetarians who refused to fight; notably the Hansen brothers of Beeville, an experimental community near Taupiri in the Waikato. Harold and six of his seven brothers were fined or imprisoned as objectors during the Second World War. The prison food was dull, sometimes inadequate and badly cooked. Ian Hamilton, a pacifist farmer, grumbled that 'it's only about once in a blue moon you get food in which you could possibly take any interest, let alone pleasure.'[15] Breakfast was a tin of porridge that was often burnt, and a 'hash' of left-overs that tasted of varnish.[16] Refusing meat restricted one's menu even further. It makes one wonder, how did vegetarians cope? Fortunately, we know quite a lot about how they managed. Inmates tended to describe their meals in detail—there wasn't much else to write about, and letters were heavily censored. The Hansens contrived ways to get extra food, and the camp supervisors sometimes let them receive food parcels of honey, wholemeal bread, nuts, fresh vegetables and dried fruit from friends and family. They shared their extra food with the other inmates, a few of whom also abstained from meat for health, religious or ethical reasons. Vegetarians were also allowed extra cheese in lieu of meat. Creativity helped—Harold saved his orange peels, mixing them with honey to improvise a kind of marmalade.[17] He also kept a jam tin in his pocket, and collected 'extra bits' as he spotted them during the day to add to his meals.[18]

After being released from prisons and camps, the Hansens returned to Beeville, their vegetarian pacifist community in the Waikato. During the following decade Ray Hansen's older sons went to prison after refusing to register for military service during the Cold War era of compulsory military training. The Hansens continued to live unconventional lives, exploring Eastern religions, and setting up an alternative school based on 'love and understanding between teacher and pupil.'[19]

The beginnings of Beeville

Harold and his brothers grew up on a Waikato dairy farm, in a vegetarian family of freethinkers.[20] The eldest brother, Ray, explored theosophy and

Alan Armstrong, Owen and Dan Hansen at Beeville, 1937, Dan Hansen Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-9142-01

the teachings of Krishnamurti as a teenager, and dreamed of setting up a centre where 'Universal Brotherhood Teaching' could be realised in daily life.[21] In 1927 he and his brother Allan built a honey shed on an acre of land at the far edge of their father's 250-acre dairy farm, and this became the nucleus of the Beeville community. Ray and his family set out to create a society without authority, power or the domination of one person by another. Teacher Tim Jones, who visited Beeville in the 1960s, commented that the Hansens hoped that 'Beeville would become a utopia, with infinite possibilities of extension and enrichment, and that it would give encouragement to the founders of other utopias.'[22]

The entire Hansen family was vegetarian for health, ethical and spiritual reasons, and Ray was particularly appalled by animal suffering. In the early 1930s, he wrote letters to the *Waikato Times* opposing animal experiments and criticising the dairy industry.[23] Like the Christchurch pacifist Norman Bell, he sensed an essential unity between human and animal life, as 'life in all living things is one, [and] to ill-treat God's creatures must result in an evil harvest in our own natures.'[24] He also saw parallels between the treatment of farm animals and the slave industry, asking 'who would come forward and say slavery should never have been abolished,

just because it had been sanctioned so long?'[25] As the dairy season began, he described the anguish of young dairy calves sent to the freezing works:*

> Many calves are sent on their way without having tasted milk for about two days, some probably not since they were born. These calves as they ride along, stand up crying continuously for the milk which has thus been mercilessly withheld from them, until exhausted they are forced to sink down beneath the trampling feet of others…A community which ignores animal feeling simply because the handling of animals has become commercialised, cannot be rightly considered to live close to the Heart of God, because the animal is as much a divine creature as we are, and is susceptible to similar physical suffering.[26]

In March 1934 the Indian philosopher Krishnamurti visited Auckland, to the great excitement of the Hansen family. Ray and his brother Dan bolted a large hand-painted sign 'Krishnamurti, World's Great Exemplifier of the Perfect Life,' onto their Ford farm truck, and drove up to Auckland.[27] Although the New Zealand authorities banned Krishnamurti from the radio, he managed to deliver lectures at the Town Hall, and at the theosophist Vasanta Garden School in Epsom.[28] Though a vegetarian, he does not seem to have discussed the meat industry. However, he denounced nationalism, 'the modern business man' and religious faith as 'organized evils.'[29] Dan Hansen was only about sixteen at the time, and was particularly struck by Krishnamurti's remark that 'patriotism is poison.' He remembered the philosopher's words nearly fifty years later.[30] Krishnamurti argued that:

> 'All nationalities are a means of war…The barbarian is the patriot. To him his country is more important than humanity…You will not solve your problems, this economic and nationality problem, so long as you are a New Zealander. You will solve it only when you are a real human being, free from all nationalistic prejudices, when you are no longer possessive, and when your mind is not divided by beliefs.'[31]

Dan and Ray returned home with fresh resolve to speak out for peace. Throughout the 1930s, Ray sent letters to the *Waikato Times* opposing war,

* A farmer wrote back, arguing that self-interest alone compelled farmers to treat their animals well, 'as otherwise they will suffer in pocket.' There was no evidence that the calves were suffering, and if they cried, this was only because 'young calves taken from their mothers naturally bleat.' [Logic, 'The Calf Industry', *Waikato Times*, July 1931? In: Hansen, Raymond Ernest. Papers. Scrapbook, 84-204-24, Alexander Turnbull Library]

conscription, and compulsory military service.[32] He and Dan disseminated anti-war poems and pacifist literature.[33] His younger brothers Harold and Owen were strongly influenced by their elder brother, treasuring Ray's anti-war poems.[34]

The Hansens in detention

After conscription was introduced early in the Second World War, Harold was the first brother to be called up for military service. He was just twenty years old, and asked to be recognised as a conscientious objector. However, the Appeal Board judges dismissed his case, and sent him to detention.[35] On June 5th, 1942, Harold arrived at the Strathmore detention camp, on the central plateau of the North Island, halfway between Rotorua and Taupo.[36] Here he found an eight-foot barbed wired fence surrounding a huddle of prefabricated huts.[37] Strathmore was one of the largest camps, and most of the inmates worked in gangs grubbing manuka, thistle, ragwort and fern, digging drains, or planting shelterbelts. There were quarter-hour smoko breaks, and half-hour lunch breaks.[38] In winter the detainees shivered in unheated huts, eight foot wide by ten feet long. On some mornings the ice on the puddles was half an inch thick.[39] The men slept on straw mattresses, with four or five army blankets that were often old, thin or holey.[40] The quality and quantity of food rations in the camps varied, and often there were shortages of fresh fruit and vegetables. Breakfast was typically 'a dixie of burgoo [porridge] and one of hash,' with a dinner of 'meat and vegies followed by steamed duff or water semolina.'[41] The prisoners also received rations of bread, milk, butter, golden syrup, sugar, and cheese.[42] Some men refused to work, and were transferred to even harsher prison camps.

It took determination to stay true to one's vegetarian ideals in detention. The camp food was bland, and lacking in fruit and fresh vegetables. The cook was infamous for 'tricks like putting a handful of soda in the cabbage to make sure it would be ready on time, which didn't do much for the flavour.'[43] However, Harold was an inventive young man. He contrived to make a grater out of a tin lid, and sprinkled raw grated swede, turnip and carrot on top of his meals.[44] He also quickly investigated whether he could receive food parcels, and was relieved to discover that he could get anything 'except tinned stuff.'[45] His parents sent him quantities of onions, which he ate raw, and a box of apples. Vegetarianism was not always a sac-

rifice; during hot weather, the camp dinner meat was occasionally crawling with maggots.[46]

As spring arrived, fresh vegetables became more available. Some detainees worked in a market garden attached to the Strathmore camp, and took pride in the quality and size of the vegetables they were growing. Detainee Alan Graham was 'quite proud of the cabbages I grew on my plot. I recall one huge sackful that contained only about eight cabbages all measuring about 35 centimetres across.'[47] Unfortunately Harold never got a chance to enjoy the spring vegetables. Suddenly the authorities shifted him to the Hautu Detention Camp, just south of Turangi. Known as 'the bad boys' camp,' Hautu was surrounded by two tall barbed wire fences with a patrol track in between. The bush-covered hills contained sentry boxes and huge searchlights.†[48] The climate was bitterly cold in winter and the soil poor, making it difficult to raise vegetables—particularly distressing for vegetarians. Harold wrote in dismay 'there seems to be nothing edible growing wild in this barren hole.'[49]At the time he arrived, the inmates received no greens at all, and Harold begged his family to send him lettuce, silver beet, sultanas, dates, nuts, and bran.[50] They obliged, and, much to his delight, they included some wholemeal bread and grapefruit. The groceries arrived shortly before his twenty-first birthday, and the taste of the grapefruit from home 'surpass[ed] my powers of description.' For fresh greens, he planted cress and mustard seeds in a box, and asked his parents to send him a couple of wholemeal loaves every week.[51] Meanwhile, Harold's older brother Dan was still living at Beeville, and feeling anxious about his brothers in jail—he himself was not conscripted because he was disabled; he had become paralysed from the waist down after a farm accident. Dan, also a vegetarian, sent tins of honey and molasses to all the camps, visited as often as possible (once breaking in to visit his brother Owen) and organised transport to help friends and relations visit imprisoned objectors. On one such trip, Dan picked up Jack Rolley, a vegetarian hitch-hiker from Kaeo, who was avoiding conscription. Rolley followed a vegetarian diet of two meals a day, a diet rather similar to that advocated by Daniel and Lauretta Kress in the early twentieth century. Dan complained 'I was in the habit of 3 meals a day, and boy, I sure was hungry by

† The searchlights actually made it easier for inmates who wished to escape. As David Grant explains, they could watch the movements of the patrolmen, and plan their path of escape. [David Grant, *Out in the Cold*, (Auckland: Reed Methven, 1986) 188]

Hautu Detention Camp, ca. 1944, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-9142-13

5pm.' However, Dan does not specify whether or not Rolley was a Seventh Day Adventist.[52]

Despite the harsh conditions, morale was good at Hautu. Objector Alan Graham felt that the camp contained 'almost all the best educated and brightest detainees from our part of the country that you could find anywhere in detention…The weather was mighty cold, but the company was congenial.'[53] However, just as Harold settled into Hautu, he was transferred again, this time to Whitanui Camp, near Foxton. Here he worked in the camp kitchens, and introduced some improvements to the 'devitalised & denatured constipating diet.' He managed to reduce the time that the cabbage was boiled to an hour and a quarter, down from three hours.[54] Harold also saved the vegetable water so the inmates could drink the nutritious liquid, and made salads from the radish tops and outer lettuce leaves that were usually thrown away. However, he was too much of a 'non-conformist on matters of diet' to escape censure. One lunchtime he set dishes of raw green peas in their pods on the table. The men savoured the juicy peas, but dropped pods all over the floor—just as an official party arrived to inspect the mess hall. Harold was sacked from his kitchen duties, and sent out to the swamps to hoe endless rows of flax bushes.[55] It was pointless, soul-destroying labour, as the presence or absence of weeds made little difference to the growth of the flax.[56]

In December 1942, Harold's younger brother Owen was called up. Owen wrote a letter to the Army Appeal Board, explaining that even as a school child he had avoided fights, believing that 'the solution to the problem of settling our differences could not be found through the use of force...[I] am strong in my convictions that war is against the principles of truth and cannot bring peace.'[57] However, the judges were unsympathetic, and he was sent to the Strathmore camp where he started a radio hobby class (he was a trained radio serviceman). He built clandestine radios, using basic equipment from the hobby class, and bits and pieces around the camp. Eventually he ended up in the Hautu camp with his brother Harold.

Non-cooperating vegetarians

As the months and years in detention went by, Harold, Owen and other objectors decided to stop co-operating with the authorities by refusing to work. In part this was because many tasks seemed useless and degrading—they cleared land, and then scrub swiftly grew back on it. At the Strathmore camp, six men dug a 200-yard drain over a two month period, but overnight a rainstorm eroded the slopes on either side, and totally destroyed the drain.[58] Other objectors felt that it was wrong to comply with a system that aimed to 'maintain conscription, stifle cries for peace, misrepresent the conscientious objector stand, silence voices, and disarm public opinion.'[59]

Those who would not work were put in solitary confinement on reduced rations, or sent to conventional prisons.[60] In the winter of 1944, Harold refused to work, and was sentenced to solitary confinement in the Red Compound of the Hautu detention camp.‡

Historian David Grant has described the Red Compound in detail:

> 'It comprised two lines of brick-red, sunless solitary confinement huts, six feet by four feet…Each hut had one small window covered with iron bars, and a bolt on the door. Men were confined for twenty three and a half hours per day, the remaining half-hour being spent walking around the narrow compound as exercise. Each inmate was given reduced rations—some were on bread and water only, with an occasional cup of hot cocoa to warm them on freezing nights. At 6 am, all the blankets except one were removed, and the beds and

‡ The Hautu detention camp was adjacent to Hautu Prison Farm.

> paillasses screwed into the wall, leaving a three legged stool and a small table.'[61]

Harold lasted less than two weeks there—he became ill with the cold, and was placed in the care of the camp nurse. Owen was better able to cope with solitary confinement. By January 1945, he had been transferred to Rangipo Prison, where he and six others decided to stop work until they were allowed a second chance to appeal against their detention.[62] They considered that they were legally equivalent to prisoners on remand, and should not be obliged to labour. The seven managed to smuggle letters to the other detention camps, inviting other detainees to also down tools. As punishment for refusing to work, Owen and the six other non-co-operators spent up to ninety days each in tiny solitary confinement huts, each with one window painted opaque white on the outside. The non-co-operating prisoners received three or four slices of bread per day, with mugs of water to wash it down. On every fourth day they received a reduced version of normal rations. This included meat, and around two thirds of the normal vegetable allowance, without pudding.[63] As a vegetarian, Owen received half a pint of milk and half an ounce of cheese instead of meat on these days. He grumbled in a smuggled letter that 'everything we get has the suggestion "You don't deserve it," or, "Aren't we good to you."'[64] Sometimes the daily half hour of exercise was denied, and they spent day after day in the tiny dimly-lit huts. Cold and hungry, Owen had trouble sleeping on the bare board floor (mattresses were not allowed for three days out of four):

> 'The blankets were hard and thin. Some had holes in them. To try and stay warm, I doubled them up, but there was a monstrous gap under the door, and when a freezing southerly whistled straight in I somehow shivered my way to sleep about five o'clock…We had to be up at six.'[65]

He managed to keep going though, in part because he received extra food clandestinely:

> 'For our exercise, we walked back and forwards at the back of the huts while the screws walked back and forward at the front. At Rangipo, butter was made for all the prison farms. At a pre-arranged signal from a note in our bedding, a half-pound block hidden in a shirt would come hurtling towards us while we were walking. I kept

Photograph of Henry Greathead Rex Mason, Holland, Roy, fl 1943–1971 Portraits of Labour politicians, and lantern slides compiled by Harry Holland, Alexander Turnbull Library, PAColl-4415-09

> the butter until number-two ration day. Then sometimes we got a very sour Ballarat cooking apple. Eating the apple, bread and butter together, you got a pleasant sweet taste, because dry bread, in reacting with the saliva and the acid in the apple, broke down the starch, and turned it into sugar.'[66]

Despite occasional smuggled pats of butter, Owen lost two stone while in solitary confinement. In May 1945 it snowed at Rangipo Prison, and the warders had to pour boiling water on the bolts locking the solitary confinement huts before they could open the doors and give the men their bread and water.[67] Shortly afterwards, the non-co-operators decided to go back to work—the war was ending, and they had some hope of release. Their actions had certainly made an impression on the authorities. The Minister of Justice, Rex Mason, wrote angrily:

> 'The attitude of these prisoners if they had been permitted to get away with it would have imperilled the discipline of the whole camp—indeed having regard to the "bush telegram" that obtains among

> defaulters and their sympathisers it would have affected the orderly running of the whole of prisons.'[68]

Ironically, the Minister of Justice was a vegetarian theosophist who shared many beliefs with the Hansen brothers. Fellow politician John Marshall later described Mason as 'a man of peace and sweet reason; a tall, gaunt, ungainly figure striding through the corridors of power in uncongenial company…respected…for his integrity.'[69] Mason had some sympathy for conscientious objectors. In May 1941, he suggested changes to the Appeal Board system:

> 'The standard of proof should not be harsh. Until and unless an appellant shows himself to lack sincerity, I suggest that he should be handled by a friendly examination rather than by a rigorous cross-examination.'[70]

His suggestions were ignored, and Mason dropped the issue. Under pressure from school boards, he suspended anti-war teachers from their jobs. He refused to respond to appeals on behalf of specific prisoners, and denounced prisoners who refused to co-operate with the system as 'exhibitionists and martyrs.'[71]

Other vegetarians

There were other vegetarians in detention. While at the Strathmore camp, Harold commented that there are 'many food-reformers here.'[72] When Charles Stewart, an assurance agent, was called up, he appealed as a conscientious objector, proclaiming to the Appeal Board that 'there are no nationalities; it is merely an accident of birth whether one is British or non-British.' He explained that he was an ethical vegetarian, and would 'rather starve than kill for sport or food.'[73] The judges were unimpressed, and he was sent into detention.

Little is known about the vegetarian Adventist Henry Thompson, though he may have been the 'very nice chap' that Harold Hansen met at the Strathmore camp, and with whom Harold discussed Beeville, co-operatives and community living.[74] Although there were a number of vegetarian Hindu conscientious objectors, few were imprisoned. In fact the authorities did not particularly want them to join up, in part because their vegetarian diet would have caused difficulties for the military services.[75] In 1942, an objector was imprisoned for two months because he refused to

Conscientious objectors at Hautu, Richard Grenville Lord is second from the right.
A C Barrington Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, F-37724-1/2

work in a cheese factory, hoping instead to pick fruit in the orchards of the Riverside pacifist community.[76] Whether or not he was vegan is unclear.

Richard Grenville Lord was remembered by other inmates for his appearance as much as his diet. Ian Hamilton, who became firm friends with Lord, walked into the shower room of the Hautu detention camp early on his first morning there, and was startled to see a young woman standing under a showerhead with her back to him:

> 'Her body was sunburnt and she had long brown hair falling down to her shoulders with a blonde streak in it, and she looked pretty good to me. I'd seen the effect of prolonged confinement on others…and thought, here it is with you too, dreams turning into hallucinations. Then the girl turned round and smiled at me out of an enormous brown beard. "How's things?" she said, with a North Country accent.'[77]

The 'girl' was Lord, a labourer from Lancashire, who belonged to the Israelite House of David, a sect of Christians who refused to cut their hair, eat meat or wear leather. Some abstained from dairy products, out of concern for calves.[78] The Israelite House of David was based in the United States, but had maintained a small presence in New Zealand since the early twen-

tieth century. They were strict pacifists; in 1941 another House of David member named Clive Carlsen had also appealed against military service, explaining that he was opposed to all forms of violence. He did not eat meat and would not hunt or fish. He believed that it was wrong to support the war in any way, and refused to perform non-combatant service.[79] Back in Hautu, William Young, a fellow inmate and former teacher, found Lord intriguing:

> 'Dick was a total vegetarian, he would not countenance the killing of any living creature. That meant, among other things, that he would wear nothing made of leather, no leather belt, no leather shoes. He wore gym shoes and tied his trousers up with anything vegetable that came to hand, or to waist, binder twine for example. He was an imposing figure, was Dick…Very intelligent, too. If you stopped to chat with him for a minute, he would discuss anything with that grave courtesy that was his hallmark. A fellow well worth knowing, was Dick.'[80]

One day, Lord went out with a work gang clearing scrub, and was ordered to dig up rabbit burrows. He refused, and another objector described the scene:

> 'Dick said…quite calmly that he wouldn't do it. The screw turned huffy and told him to obey the order…The next minute all hell's let loose. Dick had a spade in his hands and he jumps across a ditch at the screw brandishing the spade, his eyes blazing. The screw backs away thinking he's going to use the spade, but of course…Dick was just waving the spade about to show what he felt towards the screw for daring to tell him, Dick, to do such a dastardly act as digging out rabbit burrows…[In the end] Dick just sat down on the ground and refused to move. They had to send back for a truck to take him in and he received some sort of punishment, but they never told him to dig rabbit burrows again. I expect all the furry things in the world will be waiting at the gates to intercede for Dick when he gets up there.'[81]

There are few details about Lord's life outside detention, or his pacifist beliefs, but he quietly made a few friends in the camps. Ian Hamilton portrays him as something of a hippy, decades before the 1960s counterculture emerged. Lord cherished nature, and surprised his friends with naked

handstands.[82] Over the months, Hamilton learned to appreciate Lord's companionship:

> 'If Dick had been able to sing his life into ballads in the common room, then at least some of them [the other prisoners] would have been able to recognise what a valuable person he was. Emotionally he was consistent enough: if you wanted to know how Dick would act under any particular circumstances all you had to do was imagine a child who loved life, who'd never learnt the lesson that rabbits must be chopped out of their burrows in order that civilization may carry on its progressive way.'[83]

Five of Harold and Owen's brothers were also fined or spent time in detention during the war. Ray, Allan and Clarence only spent short periods in detention because they were married men with families, and because they played an important social and economic role in the Taupiri area. Ray, for instance, was called up for military service in 1942, but refused to report for duty at the Marton Military Reception Centre. Eventually he was granted a deferment because he had a large family, drove the local school bus and ran the only grocery store in the area. The Master Grocers Association and the Farmers Union testified that he was a vital member of the community.[84]

Prison and camp staff were sometimes baffled by the diverse beliefs and life choices of the conscientious objectors they guarded. While Ray Hansen was in Mount Eden prison, the authorities were so perplexed by his diet and lifestyle that they arranged for a psychiatrist to examine him. According to Ray's memories of the incident, he was trying to read in his unheated cell on a cold winter afternoon, the prison silent around him. Around one p.m., the steel door swung open, and a guard announced 'come along lad, you're wanted downstairs.' Ray was hurried into a small room with a 'smooth, calm-faced man' waiting behind a table, who quizzed him about his diet and lifestyle.

> *'Now Mr. Hansen, I understand that you are one of a family, or a group, with unusual food preferences.'*
> I agree that such might be said to be the case.
> *'You don't eat meat then?'*
> 'No.'
> *'Nor white bread?'*
> 'Not if wholemeal can be obtained.'

'Nor white sugar?'
'Never as a rule. Honey takes its place.'
'Nor drink tea?'
'Not as a rule. Never at home.'
'Nor drink intoxicating beverages?'
'No.'
'Nor smoke?'
'No.'[85]

Despite such eccentricities, Ray was eventually judged 'psychologically normal.'[86]

Vegetarians who refused to wear leather caused difficulties for the prison management, as the clothes issued to detainees included a leather belt and boots.[87] At one point, Richard Grenville Lord was sentenced to two weeks' hard labour in Mount Eden Prison. The prisoners were sent in gangs to work in quarries, and Lord objected to wearing the mandatory leather boots and belt. He was put in the prison 'pound' for this, but after a long interview with the prison superintendent, Lord emerged still wearing his sandshoes, with a piece of twine to hold up his regulation prison trousers. The authorities had given in.[88]

Meat-eating inmates were sometimes equally puzzled. Ian Hamilton met Owen and Harold Hansen at the Strathmore detention camp mess hall and found both their beliefs and their dinner plates bizarre:

> I was fascinated with their Gargantuan vegetarian meals; they seemed to have dug up all sorts of things to put on their plates, and I wouldn't have been at all put out if I'd walked in one day and found them with enormous dishes of lawn clippings.[89]

Other inmates were more open to unusual diets. At the Strathmore detention camp, Harold discussed health, diet, and the teachings of Krishnamurti with the other inmates.[90] In his memoir, *We Said No to War*, Walter Lawry recalled that the inmates at the Whitanui detention camp 'offered to go vegetarian so that people in Britain could have more meat.'[91] A number of objectors showed compassion for animals. One group of objectors at Hautu Prison Farm objected to laying poisoned carrots as rabbit bait, protesting that the rabbits suffered an agonising slow death from phosphorus poisoning.[92] Alan Handyside, at Rangipo, was punished for refusing to trap rabbits.[93] Objector Noel Ginn remembered a general sympathy for animals among the inmates, commenting that: 'we were all very much under

his spell [St. Francis of Assisi] in those days, (and could do a lot worse than fall under his spell again.)'[94] Though prison life was never easy, vegetarians seem to have been tolerated in the camps, and there was some flexibility to follow a meatless diet—this was made easier by the fact that the inmates themselves did the cooking. The vegetarian Seventh Day Adventist, Henry Thompson, who was confined in the 'Strathmore' camp considered that:

> I was treated very well in camp. I even had a vegetarian table at meal times…Some of the boys were pretty unreasonable; it was no use trying to escape or protest. I was grateful that I lived in a country where the authorities could tolerate me.[95]

Vegetarians in Mount Eden Prison

Life in Mount Eden Prison, however, was a different story. Four of the Hansen brothers were sent to prison in 1946 after Harold escaped from detention, and made his way to Beeville. Once home Harold made little attempt to avoid detection, travelling to Auckland and Hamilton to speak at anti-war meetings. He was soon recaptured, and his elder brothers Ray, Allan and Clarence were also arrested for harbouring escaped prisoners. The four were detained in Mount Eden Prison for several weeks—all rather unexpected and shocking.[96]

Once in prison, Ray Hansen was appalled at the lack of fresh fruit and vegetables in the regulation diet, and the dismal daily rations inspired him to verse:

"A spot of green, we sometimes get
Or pumpkin, carrot, parsnip, swede
We've had two apples only, yet
The call for fruit gets little heed….

Today however Doctor said
He'd give us veges 'stead of meat
And bran, quoth he, to cows was fed
But we could have some for a treat!"[97]

He wrote his poems on any scraps of paper he could find, such as the brown paper wrapping for his two-ounce cheese ration.[98] He and his younger brothers tried unsuccessfully to organise a strike in protest at the quality of the meals.[99] Ray was released after a few weeks, along with Allan

and Clarence. Harold remained in Mount Eden, suffering from stomach problems.

After the war

Most of the detainees remained in camps or prisons when the war ended in August 1945. C.O. Bell of the Returned Services Association argued that objectors should be imprisoned for ten years after the war had ended.[100] However, late in 1945, some objectors began to emerge from the camps, and Owen and Harold Hansen were freed in 1946. Owen had spent three and a half years in prison, and Harold nearly four years. They returned to the Waikato, where they joined Ray and Dan Hansen at Beeville. The community flourished in the late 1940s; the honey farm expanded, and Dan Hansen opened a welding shop with equipment loaned from a conscientious objector that he had met while visiting his brothers in prison. Dick was also released, and Ian Hamilton later met up with him in Auckland.[101]

In the post war period, pacifists from all over the world came to visit Beeville, and peace remained the main focus of the small farming community. Ray Hansen sent the *Waikato Times* letters opposing 'the secret atomic and other poisonous armaments which menace the very existence of life on earth,' but these often went unpublished.[102] Ray's children also became pacifists. In 1946 Ray's teenage son Lucien withdrew eighteen pounds from his childhood savings, and travelled down with Harold Hansen to the 1946 Peace Conference in Christchurch. Lucien was a talented carpenter, who at the age of ten constructed rocking horses for the younger children at Beeville. He also typed letters to his Uncle Harold in jail, telling Harold about his 'two Angora rabbits which eat a tremendous lot.'[103]At school, the other children sometimes looked askance at Lucien because he was 'loath' to join in with schoolboy fights.[104]

Vegetarians also visited Beeville, and discussed animal rights. In the 1950s a family of vegetarian pacifists from California came to stay for several months, hoping to start a no-kill project farm. The Californians did not wear leather belts or shoes, and only used vegetable oil soap. They gave Beeville twenty dollars worth of 'scare-away' strips, used to frighten rabbits away as an alternative to laying traps, and also donated a sack of soybeans, which the Hansens planted with great success. The community

decided to move away from all animal farming as 'all requirements for human life can be found direct from the soil.'§[105]

Beeville was certainly an unusual phenomenon in mid-twentieth century New Zealand, and the community attracted some media attention. Journalists, however, were more interested in rumours of nudism and promiscuity, than in vegetarianism or the community's deeply held anti-war beliefs. In the late 1940s *Pix* magazine published a five-page illustrated article about the Hansens and their 'free love' community, producing a sell-out edition.[106] There was a small germ of truth in the piece—Ray Hansen and his wife Olive had an open relationship with another woman, Ann Sanders. This had been arranged in part because Ann was single with just one daughter, and longed for more children. It was a loving friendship based on mutual respect, and 'part of the challenge of living more openly and dangerously than at any earlier time.'[107] The *Pix* article was sensational and misleading, and Ray was 'morally revolted' by the headlines.[108] The 'full blaze of sensational and questionable publicity' was particularly distressing for the community's children.[109] A journalist from *Truth* followed the *Pix* article up with a piece headlined 'N.Z.'s strangest community.' This highlighted the community's 'peculiar views on family life' and 'sex questions.'[110] In 1955 the *Sunday Morning Post* published a picture of strategically arranged naked sunbathers, and described how a visit in the late 1940s by a 'confirmed' nudist caused conflict within the community.[111]

The Korean War

Meanwhile, the world moved towards war again. The United States had become the dominant power in the Pacific region, and sought to contain what it perceived as the 'communist threat' in China and Korea. The fear of communism also shaped New Zealand's defence strategy.[112] Compulsory military service was reintroduced in 1949, for all men over the age of eighteen. It included fourteen weeks' full-time training, three years' part-time service, and then six years on the Army Reserve.[113] The Korean War broke out in 1950, and New Zealand sent troops as part of a Commonwealth force. A small proportion of young men refused to enlist for a variety of reasons. In 1950, an eighteen-year-old argued that the army diet would be inadequate for one who did not eat meat, and therefore he should be exempted from military service. However, his appeal was dismissed with the

§ Though members were vegetarian, Beeville kept a herd of cows for milk, which meant that unwanted male calves were sent to the slaughterhouse.

comment that the camp diet excluding meat 'was sufficient for a vegetarian…the applicant could obtain extra vegetables if he wished, and vegetarian meals could be prepared for him in camp if he produced a certificate.'[114]

Constable Andrews of the Ngaruawahia Police arrived at Beeville in 1952, looking for twenty-year-old Lucien Hansen. Andrews did not arrest the young man, but warned him to either register for military training, or apply for exemption as a conscientious objector. Lucien filled out the form for objectors, and sent it in with a note 'I wish it to be understood that I give no undertaking to abide by decision on hearing by the Committee.'[115]

Lucien's Appeal Board hearing was scheduled for September 24th, 1953. Lucien and his cousin Reginald (who also objected) arrived at the courthouse in Hamilton to present their case, accompanied by other Hansen family members. They carried letters of support from friends and acquaintances, and even a testimonial from an 'ardently militarily minded' farmer who lived across the road from Beeville.[116] Lucien made a statement to the judges linking vegetarianism and pacifism:

> 'I wish it to be known that under no circumstance will I ever take part in any warfare, whether it be against colour, creed or nation. It seems to me that every individual has as much right to live as you or I…I am a non-meat-eater, and refrain from killing wherever possible.'[117]

Lucien also explained that he was already married and a father, and 'another child is expected soon.' However, the court dismissed Lucien's application, and imposed a twenty-pound fine. When he refused to pay this, he was sent to Mount Eden Prison for six weeks. It was a harsh and politically-motivated sentence, as the standard penalty for non-payment of similar amounts was only seven to ten days' imprisonment.[118] His cousin Reginald was also jailed, and the *New Zealand Truth* ran a headline describing their actions as 'An affront to thousands of loyal New Zealanders.'[119]

Vegetarians in prison in the 1950s

At Mount Eden, Lucien worked in the prison kitchen and warehouse carrying sacks of potatoes and sorting vegetables. Despite efforts by the kitchen officer to improve the diet, the food was poor, with inadequate supplies of pumpkin, carrots and tomatoes, and a 'double dose of swedes.' Lonely, and separated from his partner and child, Lucien still tried to see the humour in the situation:

> 'Whew! Didn't the kitchen officer do his scone when swedes turned up again this week and no tomatoes or carrots…Gosh I had a good cry today…we had to peel and cut a bucket full of onions into wafer thin slices for a salad…The rest of the salad consisted of shredded carrot and swede with finely sliced cabbage and maionnaise [sic] sauce. Quite a change for this place.'[120]

Lucien's younger brother Francis also refused to register for military service and was confined in Waikeria Youth Borstal, near Te Awamutu, for three months. He wrote to his father Ray fretting that he was not home to help with the fruit harvest, and wondering whether the soya beans were mature yet.[121] However, he was grateful to be assigned a job in the prison kitchen, where he could help ensure that the food was not over-cooked or over-salted. There were plenty of fresh vegetables, and sometimes even wholemeal bread. Best of all, he could dish up his own vegetarian meals, and did not have to eat the food prepared for the other inmates. Francis wrote home to friends:

> 'How would your children like to make 100 cut lunches per day? I helped make them this morning. I'm glad I don't have to eat any of them. They are white bread (6 slices), nearly all meat-filled and spread with a butter-lard mixture.'[122]

He missed dried fruit and nuts:

> 'I am told that any foodstuffs may be brought in. How about bringing some peanuts, sultanas, figs, etc., when someone visits? Also, how about leaving a 5 lb. tin of honey to share with the kitchen staff?'[123]

Lucien and Francis were released in due course, and returned to Beeville, where they started a business making reinforced concrete posts.[124]

Freedom School and the final days of Beeville

Beeville children had the chance to attend their own school in the 1960s. This was set up after a student from the pacifist community refused to participate in cadet training, and was harassed by other students and teachers in 1963.[125] 'Freedom School' was based on the principle that 'love and understanding between teacher and pupil will replace the need for discipline.'[126] The children studied health and nutrition, learned how to grow vegetables, and explored how to put together an 'adequate and balanced' vegetarian diet of home-grown food.[127] The curriculum included peace

education, Māori culture, and sex instruction, incorporating 'close and sympathetic contact with the lives of plants, insects, fish, birds, animals and people.'[128] Unusually for the times, girls were allowed to learn carpentry, and Dan Hansen found the delighted expression on seven-year-old Margaret's face as she painted a chair 'a joy to behold.'[129]

Unfortunately 'Freedom School' did not survive long, as the community was beset by personal and legal difficulties. Shortly before the end, it ceased to be vegetarian. In 1973 Beeville was wound up, following a legal dispute.[130] In a sense, vegetarianism was one just small aspect of Beeville, itself a small and obscure community. Yet the letters of the Hansens create a picture of what life was like in the harsh environment of prison. Their writings and those of fellow-inmates, show how some individuals continued to follow a meatless diet while in detention. The Hansens were ahead of their times in exploring a lifestyle based around pacifism, vegetarianism, anti-authoritarianism, spirituality, and communal living. Decades later, young people marched against New Zealand's involvement in the Vietnam War and against nuclear testing. Some stopped eating meat, explored Eastern religions, or moved to the country to set up communes. The ideals that inspired Beeville were voiced by a new generation.

6

‘Glorious is the crusade for humaneness’

theosophy, vegetarianism and animal rights

The national life, trade, and prosperity [of New Zealand] depend very largely on the exploitation of animals. Unbelievable and inhuman cruelty and the flowing of rivers of animal blood have for years deeply stained and continue to stain the soul of New Zealand as of every other nation—Geoffrey Hodson, theosophist and founder of the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, 1943[1]

Early in 1943, around thirty people arrived at the Auckland chambers of the Theosophical Society, looking for a ‘Meeting for people interested in vegetarianism.’[2] Among them was Geoffrey Hodson, a middle-aged English theosophist who had not eaten meat for twenty-seven years.[3] Although still quite new to New Zealand, Hodson was invited to take the chair. Perhaps this is not too surprising—Hodson was an experienced speaker, and also very approachable. Friends described his personality as ‘lovable and attractive…The picture of vigorous health and strength, he meets everyone with an intimate smile, and immediately becomes a personal friend.’[4] Tonight Hodson’s charisma was most effective—the meeting resolved to set up a New Zealand Vegetarian Society that would be open to all who had abstained from meat, fish and poultry for at least three months. The annual subscription was set at two and sixpence.[5]

To many during those wartime years, worrying about dietary choices must have seemed abstract, if not absurd. New Zealand soldiers were fighting in North Africa and the Pacific. At home, life was controlled by emer-

gency regulations. Meat, eggs, butter, tea, and sugar were rationed, and at night, the street lighting was dimmed.[6] All shop and house lights had to be screened by dark blinds in case of enemy attack.[7] Sirens wailed and war planes circled over cities in air raid exercises.[8] American troops were stationed in Papakura.[9] Speaking out for peace took courage, and hundreds of conscientious objectors were interned in camps and prisons. Perhaps understandably, the small group of vegetarians meeting at the Theosophical Society rooms advocated vegetarianism in patriotic terms, as a way to improve the 'national well-being, physical, mental, and spiritual.'[10]

Theosophy and vegetarianism

Theosophical beliefs have influenced the experiences of both vegetarians and animals in New Zealand since the early years of the twentieth century. Theosophy is a syncretic system of religious philosophy that draws from Buddhism, Hinduism, and Gnosticism, faiths that emphasise inner light and truth, and also have traditions of vegetarianism.[11] Some theosophists avoid meat because they believe that humans and animals are part of a shared 'brotherhood of life.'[12] Citing the Hindu principle of ahimsa, or harmlessness, they argue that humans should refrain from inflicting suffering on other beings. Through the laws of karma, animal exploitation leads inevitably to human suffering. Early theosophical leaders included ethical vegetarians and anti-vivisectionists, notably Annie Besant, Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland.[13] Kingsford also avoided fur and leather, substituting some 'vegetable fiber' for the soles of her boots.[14] Theosophists have also made practical contributions to vegetarian well-being. In the 1950s the theosophist biochemist and lifelong vegetarian E. Lester Smith isolated the dark red crystals of cobalamin, an essential precursor to the laboratory synthesis of this vitamin. As well as helping sufferers from pernicious anemia, his work has made it easier for vegans to avoid Vitamin B12 deficiency.[15]

In the mid-twentieth century, theosophists helped run groups such as the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, the Auckland Branch of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, and the Combined Council of Animal Welfare Organisations. They campaigned against animal experiments, and were among the first New Zealanders to speak out against factory farming. Though theosophy is little known today, many theosophists were well-educated, influential citizens, who had the connections to further their ethical ideals within New Zealand society. Their stories offer

insights into attitudes towards meat, vegetarianism and animal welfare, both during the years of rationing and subsequent post-war prosperity.

The relationship between theosophy and the vegetarian movement has been complex, however. To conventional New Zealanders, theosophy seemed very strange. The linking of meatless diets with 'weird' theosophical ideas only reinforced the stereotyping of vegetarians as eccentrics. As the *Otago Witness* grumbled in 1901 'Cranks, cranks, cranks—prohibitionist, vegetarian, theosophist.'[16] Theosophists were well aware or this, and did their best to present vegetarianism as a respectable and rational way of life. This pragmatism led them to seek small improvements in animal welfare, such as improving slaughterhouse practices, rather than trying to end all animal exploitation. Ironically, vegetarian theosophists found themselves debating precisely how cows should be slaughtered.

Theosophy arrives in New Zealand

In 1888 a young man named Edward Sturdy set up a small branch of the Theosophical Society in Wellington.[17] Soon theosophists met regularly in the main cities to discuss an eclectic range of topics that included women's rights, occultism, arts and crafts, the lost civilisations of Lemuria and Atlantis, and meatless diets.[18] The Wellington branch started *Hestia* magazine. The first issue urged vegetarianism, reprinting Ovid's 'An appeal for the Brute Creation'

> 'Forbear O mortals, to taint your bodies with forbidden food
> Corn have we, the boughs bend under a load of fruit
> Our vines abound with swelling grapes;
> our fields with wholesome food…
> Earth is lavish of her riches, and teems with kindly stores
> Providing without slaughter or bloodshed
> for all manner of delights'[19]

Theosophists spoke on topics such as 'Why vegetarian' at public meetings, and argued that 'it is impossible for mankind to tread the path of spiritual progress while they eat meat.'[20] Veganism was discussed, well before the term had been invented. Theosophist Daphne Hanlon went as far as avoiding fruit and vegetables grown with animal manure:

> 'Not until [a person] has given up milk and animal products of every kind, including vegetables stimulated by animal manure can he rightfully conclude that his body is clean…Vegetables, fruits, legumes

> and nuts, with water for drink, are the natural foods, and taken in their correct proportions they will keep a man in the best of health.'[21]

English theosophist leaders such as Charles Leadbeater and Annie Besant visited New Zealand. Leadbeater was a colourful and controversial figure—he encouraged teenage boys to relieve their sexual desires by masturbating, a startling proposition at the time. He was also accused of inappropriate relations with young men.[22] However, the rumours had settled down somewhat by the time Leadbeater visited New Zealand during the First World War. He delivered a series of lectures, in the course of which he noted 'the importance of building the body by the right kinds of food… A vegetarian diet was superior from the point of view of health and moral development as well as from the economical viewpoint.'[23] Theosophists also debated animal rights. Augusta White, a Wellington theosophist poet, lectured on 'the justice that should be extended to animals' in 1929.[24] White argued that:

> 'Much has been heard of Woman's Rights and the Rights of Man. What about the Rights of Animals? Are the animals not entitled to fair play, if not to gratitude from us their conquerors and captors, who for centuries have bred, imprisoned, exploited and eaten them, without even giving thanks in church for the divine right to do so? Perhaps because we suspected that the right was not divine, but was one of the piratical powers mankind has usurped to itself.'[25]

White also wrote to the *Evening Post* condemning zoos, where wild animals 'pass their existence in the unspeakable ennui of life-long imprisonment.'[26]

> 'We have certainly advanced a step in civilisation, since the ancient Romans, for the amusement of the public, fed their captive lions with Christian martyrs—the onlookers doubtless wearing the same gratified smile that adorns our faces to-day, when our leonine prisoners receive their scanty meal of beef or horse flesh.'[27]

There was even a vegetarian theosophical primary school. In 1919 the co-educational Vasanta Garden School opened on the western slopes of Mount John in Auckland. It had two open-air classrooms, where the children, mostly aged between five and eleven, were responsible for 'conducting and arranging their own group-lessons;' there was no punishment or compulsory homework.[28] The children learned to respect nature, and

wrote their own poems about birds and animals.[29] Education was along holistic lines, and included information about healthy diet. There was one hitch—the older girls travelled to a local technical school for home economics classes, which 'were rather unpleasantly concentrated on meat dishes.'[30] Luckily, the problem was soon resolved, as 'Mrs Fernyhough interviewed the Instructress, who very kindly undertook to bear in mind the vegetarian principles on which our School is managed, and the children's dislike for meat and its smells.'[31]

A queer and unreasonable fad

Theosophists also discussed how best to promote vegetarianism. There was concern that vegetarians should try and appear as 'normal' as possible, as theosophical concepts of karma, reincarnation, and clairvoyance could seem outlandish. If they believed in Atlantis, or talked to fairies, they should keep quiet about such fascinating topics in general conversation! Wellington doctor Edgar Wilkins argued that any public association between vegetarianism and theosophy should be downplayed:

> 'Vegetarianism is little known in New Zealand, and is commonly looked on as a queer and unreasonable fad. Being a departure from the conventional, it is naturally severely criticised, and the personal peculiarities of those who practise it are commonly attributed to their diet…The name [vegetarianism] in the first place is unfortunate… 'ism' calls up thoughts of sects, peculiar religions, and superstitions. The fact that many vegetarians are theosophists tends, at the present state of public thought, to intensify this view.'[32]

Wilkins also worried about extreme diets such as fruitarianism or raw food regimes, as 'the association of these methods with vegetarianism in the public mind does not help increase its popularity.'[33] A pragmatic and vigorous man (he won prizes as an athlete in his Dublin youth), Wilkins praised vegetarians 'who are robust and healthy; who are accommodative in their habits; rational, level-headed, and prudent in the expression of their views.' *[34]

* Wilkins was a doctor with the School Medical Service, and had been vegetarian since his youth in Dublin, where he excelled as an athlete. In 1899, he came second in the Mile Handicap at the Royal Irish Constabulary Tournament; and in the Trinity College Sports, on June 25th 1899, he won the Half, One, and Two Miles Handicap. His son, Maurice Wilkins, was one of the co-discoverers of DNA. ["Herald of the Golden Age, 1899," http://www.archive.org/details/heraldofgoldenoct1910exetuoft (accessed July 5, 2009.]

Similarly Clara Codd, who had been vegetarian for forty-five years, felt that theosophists should never 'inflict' their way of life on others. 'We ought not, when new members come into the Society, tell them that it is awful to eat meat. I think that it is awful to eat meat, but I think we should be very tactful and wise in imposing our convictions on others.'[35] When the New Zealand Vegetarian Society formed in 1943, the main organisers were theosophists. The group resolved to take 'every precaution…to avoid identification of the two movements in the public mind.'[36]

Animal rights and vegetarianism in the 1940s

During the Second World War, theosophists began to promote vegetarianism more vigorously. At a practical level, rationing offered opportunities to promote meatless recipes as a way to cope with meat restrictions. Theosophists also drew connections between human violence and animal exploitation. In 1940 George Arundale, the international president of the Theosophical Society, pointed out that:

> 'Hitler may be doing infinite wrong towards the Jews and towards the many peoples he has oppressed. Might may be his watchword, and self-justification. But how many of us do grave wrong, or are condoning it, towards members of the animal kingdom?…We herd animals into concentration camps we call slaughterhouses. We consume their flesh and blood for food.'[37]

Arundale's views reflect the theosophical belief that all suffering is interconnected, and others have drawn such links. The Jewish author Isaac Bashevis Singer, who escaped from Hitler's Germany in 1935, once wrote that 'there is only one little step from killing animals to creating gas chambers a la Hitler and concentration camps a la Stalin.'[38] New Zealand theosophists were reasoning along similar lines. In 1941, they set up the Theosophical Order of Service, Animal Welfare Branch. The Theosophical Order of Service was the 'activist' wing of theosophy, offering a framework for practical and humanitarian actions, and the Branche invited all 'animal lovers' to join together to oppose vivisection, meat-eating, and the wearing of fur and feathers.[39] At the group's first annual meeting, Geoffrey Hodson expressed his belief that 'before this globe could be a really habitable place, we must banish from it our exploitation of the animal kingdom.'[40] S. Oldfield, an Auckland anti-vivisectionist, described the 'present physical "black-out"' as the outcome of 'spiritual darkness' linked to animal exploi-

Geoffrey and Sandra Hodson in Olcott, Illinois, 1967, image courtesy of Theosophical Society in America Archives

tation. This, he believed, was 'scarcely less excusable that the existence of concentration camps, bombing raids, poison gas, and man's inhumanity to man in this worst of wars.'[41] Moving on to more practical issues, it was noted that 'excellent synthetic leather sandals had been produced, and the soyabean yielded a milk substitute.'[42]

Geoffrey Hodson

Much of the vegetarian, anti-vivisection and animal rights activity in New Zealand in the 1940s and 1950s can be linked to Geoffrey Hodson, who spent much of his long life promoting vegetarianism and animal rights. 'Meat eating,' Hodson believed, 'not only offends every principle of justice and compassion, but also serves as a continuing cause of human suffering and sorrow.'[43]

Born in 1886 in Lincolnshire, England, Hodson had childhood visions of nature spirits.[44] As a young man, he listened to a 1912 lecture by Annie Besant in the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, and imagined a 'golden blaze of light' fill the room as she spoke.[45] Shortly after the First World War he married Jane Carter, and the couple decided to stop eating meat, regarding the 'unnecessary slaughter and exploitation of animals, and the killing of them for food, as amongst humanity's major crimes.'[46] Jane was a musician and mountaineer who loved animals—she had a 'unique gift in winning the trust of wild animals, in handling even the fiercest of them'.[47]

Hodson began working full time for the Theosophical Society in 1925, lecturing in Europe, the United States, Asia, and Australia. Jane played the piano before and after Hodson's lectures, and occasionally spoke on theosophy or animal welfare.[48] On December 17th, 1940, Hodson arrived in New Zealand, just in time to lecture at the Theosophical Society 'Victory Convention' in Christchurch. He found the 'harmonious and fruitful gathering' pleasant, but a little surreal, 'strangely removed from a world torn and ravaged by war.'[49] Initially Hodson only planned a twelve-month visit to New Zealand, but Jane's health was deteriorating. She suffered from multiple sclerosis, and her legs were so paralysed that she could barely stand; a cruel illness for a woman who relished climbing mountains.[50] The couple decided to settle in Auckland, where Geraldine Hemus, a theosophist contact, offered them a room in her three-storey villa in Epsom. Sandra Chase, a friend from Perth, arrived on the Monterey to nurse Jane, leaving Hodson free to travel and teach.[51] He travelled through the country, speaking at theosophical halls, Rotary clubs, and schools, on a varied range of subjects. In 1942 he lectured at the Wellington Town Hall on 'Marriage and Parenthood' and learned about Māori cosmology from the Ngā Puhi interpreter and genealogist Hare Hongi (Henry Matthew Stowell) with 'a deep sense of gratitude and privilege.'[52]

The publicity around Hodson's lectures brought new members into the Theosophical Society, some of whom stopped eating meat.[53] Convert Mavis Ross celebrated her 'first birthday' as a theosophist in 1943. She revelled in her new faith, pushing aside her worries about seeming eccentric. The young Wellington woman described theosophy as:

> 'a wonderful, wholly satisfying, above all joyful way of life…The difficulty is to find ways not too unconventional (lest they bring the society into disrepute) of giving vent to this joie de vivre. One feels like bursting forth into snatches of gay song, or skipping like a frolicsome lambkin as one walks along the city thoroughfares. Perhaps nine months of vegetarian diet, with abstention from narcotics and stimulants has something to do with it;it evidently suits my physical makeup.'[54]†

† Ross flourished as a theosophist. She helped set up a vegetarian group in Wellington, before moving to Pahiatua to teach English to Polish refugees—where she found it 'a lot of fun trying to say 'Vegetables only' in Polish, German etc.' In the early 1950s, she married Leslie Hardy, a Palmerston North vegetarian, and as Mavis Hardy, she contributed letters to *Theosophy in New*

Conscientious objectors

It would be interesting to know if Hodson and Mason ever discussed conscientious objectors over the breakfast table. Both received letters from the Hansen brothers of the vegetarian pacifist Beeville community. In June 1944, imprisoned objector Harold Hansen wrote to Mason from the Hautu detention camp, expressing his refusal to 'continue to submit to or even compromise with the authority and regulations that are holding me in detention.'[55] Less than a month later, Geoffrey Hodson received a sheaf of anti-war poems from Harold's brother Ray Hansen. Hodson read the poems carefully and wrote back congratulating Ray on 'the many lines of real rhythmic cadence', but questioning his message:

'There are two kinds of war, and when talking of war it is most important to discriminate between them, otherwise one may gravely mislead one's audience. One kind of war is aggression, and this is to be most whole-heartedly condemned. Another kind of war is waged in defence of the weak who are attacked. This, whether it is social legislation, civic protection, as by police, or in the larger field of war, is to be commended.'[56]

During his trips, Hodson sometimes stayed at Rex Mason's Wellington home, sharing vegetarian meals with the Minister of Justice and his wife Dulcie, both ardent theosophists. If the cheese ration allowed, Dulcie may have served them her 'special cheese savoury', a custard flavoured with cheese, onion and tomato, or baked marrow filled with cheese, tomato, thyme, wholemeal macaroni, and parsley.[57]

The New Zealand Vegetarian Society and rationing

Hodson was keen to promote meatless diets beyond theosophical circles. In May 1943, Hodson helped found a New Zealand Vegetarian Society, open to all who had abstained from meat, fish and poultry for at least three months.[58]

With rather appropriate timing, meat rationing was introduced just as the Vegetarian Society first met. From May 1943, all local consumption of fresh pork was banned, so that American forces serving in the Pacific could eat bacon.[59] Slaughterhouses such as Hellaby's freezing works supplied 2 pound cans of meat and vegetable rations in 1000 tonne lots to the US forces.[60] Shortly butter and other kinds of meat were also rationed, enabling the authorities to ship thousands of tonnes of meat and dairy products to Britain, and also to troops serving in the Middle East and the Pa-

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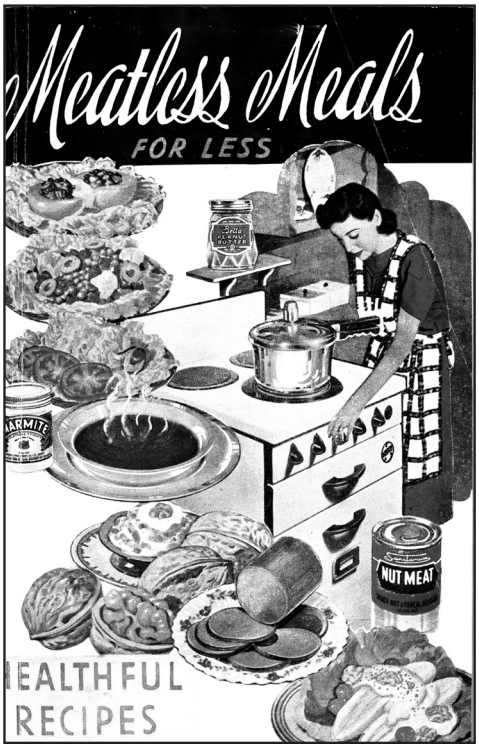
Zealand and the *New Zealand Vegetarian* until she was in her nineties. [Mavis Hardy, "Letter," *New Zealand Vegetarian*, March-June 1998, 17]

cific. The fish catch declined as the government took over fishing trawlers and converted them into minesweepers.[61] Patriotic writers responded by inventing economical dishes that used little or no meat, butter, and eggs, and the Food and Rationing Controller even put out vegetarian recipes for pets.[62] In 1942 Drs. Elizabeth Gregory and Elisabeth Wilson published Good Nutrition, a recipe booklet that criticised the 'dietetic errors' of New Zealanders. The authors pointed out that the average citizen consumed about three times the amount of meat recommended by the League of Nations.[63] The New Zealand Women's Food Value League issued Rationing Without Tears, with recipes for lentil, soybean, and nut dishes (and also brain pie, baked tripe, and stuffed flap of mutton).[64] Some people gave up meat for the sake of their cats and dogs. At a 1944 Christchurch meeting protesting the effects of meat rationing regulations on animals, M.P. Mabel Howard announced that 'Many of us will also be becoming vegetarians so that our animals may have food. In fact, I have been a vegetarian for a week now.'[65] However, the drop in per capita meat consumption was surprisingly small. New Zealanders contrived to find alternative sources of meat: catching fish, hunting rabbits, and eating more offal.[66] In 1947, the average New Zealander consumed 262 pounds of meat and 53.8 gallons of milk every year; only a little down from 270 pounds of meat and 57.5 gallons of milk before the war.[67]

Nonetheless, rationing offered the chance to discuss meatless diets. Seventh Day Adventists issued a new edition of the *Sanitarium Recipe Book*, complete with colour photographs. The authors asked: 'What are we going to eat for protein today? Cheese fondu? Peanut butter sandwiches? Bean patties or lentil loaf?'[68] Around the same time, the Vegetarian Society put out *Meatless Savouries*, a recipe pamphlet.[69] Geoffrey Hodson travelled through the country lecturing on topics such as why 'Meat rationing need not trouble you,' in which he explained how to prepare 'tasty and adequate vegetarian meals.'[70] The vegetarian dishes that Hodson recommended during rationing included vegetable pies, rissoles made from lentils, beans, or ground chestnuts, omelettes, green salad with lemon or olive oil, wholemeal bread, and cereals with jam or honey.[71] He published a booklet of vegetarian arguments, *The Case for Vegetarianism*, which appeared in 1943. It cost three pence, and was available through the Theosophical Society bookshop.[72] Hodson outlined 'hygienic, anatomical, economic, humanitarian, altruistic, aesthetic and spiritual reasons' for vegetarianism, all in service of 'the gospel of humaneness.'[73] Articulate and enthusiastic, Hod-



Meatless Meals for Less (Auckland N.Z.: Brookdale Press, 1950), Alexander Turnbull Library, B-K 915-COVER

son was skilled at recruiting new members, and vegetarian groups formed in Wellington, Hamilton, and Whanganui.[74]

Obviously vegetarians were not affected by meat rationing; however they still went hungry during the 1940s. In June 1946, theosophist Myra Fraser commented on 'the difficulty of obtaining fresh fruit and vegetables, vegetable fats, nuts etc.'[75] Similarly, Christchurch theosophist Ethel Shearman complained that 'here in the South Island shelled walnuts are six shillings per pound, almonds one and six pence per quarter, soya beans are unprocurable…rice is now a food of the past.'[76] Vegetarians were not permitted to swap their meat coupons for other foods. In Auckland, Marjorie Thompson asked if she and her husband could exchange their meat coupons for an extra egg ration, but was told 'Certainly not! Call yourself a New Zealander? There's perfectly good meat here if you want it.'[77] Such responses could be almost unbearably frustrating. In March 1944, an elderly woman tried in vain to exchange her meat coupons for a vegetarian alternative at a crowded Christchurch post office. Finally she tore up the sheet of meat coupons and threw them down, saying that they were 'no

use to her.' However others profited from her distress—the coupons had 'hardly landed on the floor before the people in the queue [behind her] had swooped down on them.'[78]

The Vegetarian Society acted as a voice for vegetarians, demanding an extra ration of butter for vegetarians.[79] In wartime it was hard to obtain non-animal sources of fat. In 1946 the New Zealand Vegetarian Society *Bulletin* appeared, packed with news, nutritional information, and recipes. Ethel Shearman, the editor, was a Christchurch theosophist who ran St. Raphael's Rest Home, a vegetarian retreat where the residents enjoyed 'compost-grown' vegetables from the surrounding gardens.[80] The first issue featured recipes for soya milk, 'Butto' (a vegan spread coloured with carrot juice), and a nut roast. The last was certainly packed with protein—it was a mixture of brown beans mashed with onion, gluten, nut butter, and hardboiled eggs.[81] Clarence Hansen, one of the pacifist Hansen brothers, sold home-grown soya beans through the Bulletin, linking vegetarianism, health, animal rights, and peace:

> 'Eating soya beans liberates our animal friends from wholesale slaughter and suffering. Using soya beans instead of meat…means better health and more peaceful relations in the world…For a longer and more useful life, eat, grow, and enjoy Soya Beans!'[82]

The *Bulletin* also published some rather charming advertisements for 'La Solana,' a vegetarian kindergarten in Takapuna. Chubby naked toddlers sunbathed in a field of daisies, wearing only garlands of flowers.[83] At this 'school for modern times,' the children enjoyed wholemeal bread, unpasteurised cow's milk from their own herd of cows, and fresh fruit and vegetables grown from compost. 'Sunshine Kindergarten' was built on rising ground near the beach, with plenty of lawns, gardens, and 'tree-shaded nooks,' for playing in.[84]

Even though food was short, the New Zealand Vegetarian Society managed to send food parcels overseas. In 1949 the German Vegetarian Society was grateful to receive a package of coconut cream, cheese, honey, and coffee, the latter 'a very seldom delight here.'[85]

Cooking demonstrations also attracted interest. In 1950, Mrs J. MacSmith, a Seventh Day Adventist nurse, published *Meatless Meals for Less*, a cookery book that included recipes for 'Toad in the hole,' roast duck made with lentils and walnuts, and 'Aga' [sic] jellies. She toured the country to promote her cookbook, lecturing to the Auckland Branch of the Vegetar-

ian Society on 'Practical vegetarianism—essential proteins', and describing how to make gluten cutlets by kneading a wheat flour dough.[86]

Such events were a chance to share food and conversation. In May 1950, Christchurch vegetarians organised a buffet tea to coincide with a visit by Geoffrey Hodson. Finger food was very different half a century ago—modern staples such as samosas, hummus and pita bread, spring rolls, and guacamole were unknown. The sixty guests sipped carrot and beetroot cocktails, and filled their Wedgwood china plates with 'savouries of crisp lettuce leaves filled with tomato and nuttolene, celery and cheese.' They also ate wholemeal bread sandwiches filled with green pea and lentil meat, and 'plates of tiny biscuit savouries, spread with a teaspoon of nut-meat, topped with a green pea'. For dessert, there were platters of sliced pineapple, pears, tamarillos and Chinese gooseberries, carefully arranged in circles. There were bowls of walnuts, blanched almonds, and red apples, 'compost grown' by one of the members.[87]

The Vegetarian Society annual conference, which was timed to coincide with Theosophical Society events, offered further opportunities for vegetarian theosophists to meet up. Around fifty people came to the first congress at the end of December 1945. The proposals including transforming New Zealand into a land of fruit orchards. Wellington theosophist Halford Lyttle declared that 'each individual vegetarian should be a crusader.'[88] Lyttle had crusaded against war, as well as against meat-eating. Between December 1939 and February 1940 he was arrested five times for anti-war speeches at open-air meetings in Wellington. Lyttle toured the North Island with fellow pacifist A.C. Barrington during January 1940. In Hawera, an angry policeman kicked their soapbox to pieces, and locals pelted them with eggs and tomatoes in Stratford and New Plymouth.[89] However, Lyttle later changed his mind about war, and enlisted; in early 1943 *Theosophy in New Zealand* reported that he was serving in a military training camp.[90]

Sandra Chase and the 'Humane Killer' Campaign

While Hodson was writing and lecturing on vegetarianism and animal rights, his close friend Sandra Chase stayed in Auckland. Chase was nursing Hodson's wife Jane, who was severely paralysed from multiple sclerosis. Chase was an articulate speaker and leader in the Theosophical Society, who was passionate about animal rights. However, like so many other women of her time, she spent much of her life in a traditional care-giving role. While nursing Jane, Chase pondered the 'furry, speechless brothers

Sandra Chase, 1950, Evening Post Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, 114/152/16

of mankind that writhe under knife and bludgeon in terrible or in silent agony.'[91] She wondered how to further the 'forlorn hope such as animal welfare almost seems to be in the present age…Ours may be a voice crying in the wilderness, but for pity's sake let us cry aloud that all humanity may be forced to hear.'[92]

In 1944, Chase and Hodson set up the Combined Council for Animal Welfare Organisations. She decided to expose the 'dreadful cruelty associated with the meat trade':

> 'One needs to look upon the evil thing in order to feel and so to understand the pain…The measure of one's capacity to feel with and recollect the suffering creature is the measure of one's resultant power to bring about reform. When one sacrifices one's own peace of mind and heart, dares to look upon man's inhumanity to man, to child and to animal, then there comes an invisible power which is both a solace and an aid.'[93]

Chase and three other representatives from humane societies resolved to investigate one of Auckland's main abattoirs. They walked through the slaughterhouse doorway into 'an animal hell…imprinted indelibly upon my memory.' From the right-hand side of the killing shed, she watched

workers cutting the throats of sheep, then slowly made her way through the abattoir. Finally she arrived at the ramps leading to the stunning pen. As the workers drove cattle towards their death, 'one beast put his big black nose through a hole in the ramp and breathed for the last time the free air outside.' Two men waited, wielding long, double headed hammers.

> 'As [the animals] entered the stunning-pen, they balked and tried to back out…The knocker then waits for the animal to put up its head. He then brings the hammer down with all his force as near to the centre of the forehead as possible. The animal bellows loudly with pain, and lowers its head. Again the knocker waits an appreciable time for the hurt head to rise, and again he brings down the hammer. Although the beast is bellowing with pain all the time, each time the hammer falls the poor creature cries more loudly with agony and lowers its wounded head to the ground. This process is called stunning and is supposed to be merciful.'[94]

One of the 'knockers' was a new employee, and clumsy at his job:

> 'It took six or more of those cruel hammer blows to drop the poor thing to the floor of the pen. Actually, I lost count after the sixth blow. Twice, I do know, he hit the great beast on the temples, missing the middle of the forehead. I thought that the animal would never drop, never cease its pitiful crying. It took all my courage to watch this to the finish. At long last there was a thud, and it went down to the waiting beef-men on the killing floor below.'[95]

Chase left the abattoir resolving to do everything she could to prevent the 'indescribable suffering before and during the slaughter'. Around twenty million animals were slaughtered in New Zealand every year in the late 1940s.[96]

In 1948, Chase and Geoffrey Hodson launched a campaign for legislation requiring slaughterhouse workers to stun the animals with captive bolt pistols; these drove a bolt sharply into the animal's forehead, causing immediate unconsciousness. Captive bolt pistols were used in some New Zealand slaughterhouses during the 1930s, but were abandoned during the Second World War, as the necessary ammunition was diverted, rather ironically, to the armed forces.[97] It is uncertain whether there was debate within the Vegetarian Society about whether it was ethical for vegetarians to lobby for better slaughter practices. Some vegetarians, such as Norman

Bell in Christchurch, were totally opposed to killing animals. When Bell died in 1962, he left money in his will to fund a monthly newspaper advertisement 'No More Slaughterhouses,' aiming 'to secure peace between men and domesticated animals.'[98] However, lobbying for stricter slaughter regulations seems to have represented an acceptable compromise to many 1950s vegetarians—a concession analogous to present day vegans joining modern protests against battery farming that endorse free range eggs.

Chase and Hodson drew up a petition requesting the use of captive bolt pistols in slaughterhouses, collecting 33,000 signatures. Labour MP Mabel Howard supported the campaign, and regulations requiring the use of captive bolt pistols were gazetted in 1951.[99] However, the new legislation did not apply to sheep and lambs. As late as 1970, the *New Zealand Vegetarian* reported that workers routinely slashed the throats of fully conscious sheep, and clubbed lambs with pieces of stovepipe.[100]

After the campaign for humane slaughter came to a successful conclusion, Sandra Chase finally took a holiday. She travelled to India to study yoga, and spent six months in South India, making pilgrimages to ashrams and to the 'Sacred Hill Arunachala Vision of Light.' Here she brought offerings of fruit to a yogi who lived in a small dwelling near a pool of water in the forest. As the pilgrims walked up the path, a peacock stood at the edge of the water, motionless, his tail fully spread out. The yogi spoke about yoga, self-realisation, and the 'way to union with our spiritual self.' He blessed the fruit, and they shared a meal of fruit and milk. Chase watched in wonder as 'the squirrels came down behind where he sat, the birds fluttered down onto the branch quite unafraid.'[101]

Theosophists and the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection

Meanwhile, Hodson had joined the Auckland branch of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV). The group formed in 1929, but initially focused on opposing compulsory immunisation.[102] BUAV began campaigning more directly against animal experiments in the 1940s and 1950s. Anti-vivisectionists Florrie Sinton and Margaret Jones ran stalls every year at Auckland's Anniversary Show, despite harassment from angry medical students. Some hurled hard-boiled eggs at the animal activists, and 'verbal battles were the order of the day.'[103]

There had been links between BUAV and theosophy for decades. The very first public meeting in October 1929 was held at the Theosophical

Hall in Queen Street, on the topic 'No cruelty is useful.'[104] In the 1940s, the president, Mr. S. Oldfield, was a socialist, a vegetarian, an SPCA activist, and a member of the Theosophical Order of Service, Animal Welfare Branch. He was opposed to 'vivisection, the wholesale slaughter of animals for food, the caging of birds, and the use of fur and feathers.'[105] BUAV published Hodson's *The Case for the Abolition of Vivisection* (1947), which argued that animal experiments were cruel and of dubious scientific value. They also desensitised society to the point where scientists might experiment directly on human beings. Hodson described reports in medical journals such as the *Lancet* in which scientists poured boiling acids into the eyes of laboratory animals, crushed the limbs of dogs, and performed sleep deprivation experiments on puppies. He concluded:

> 'Vivisection is based on the profound error that by inflicting needless tortures upon highly sensitive animals and fellow human beings, man can find freedom from pain for himself…With a growing number of physicians and with the world's humanitarians, I condemn vivisection as an evil thing, a dark stain on human character and conduct, and a blot on human civilisation.'[106]

Animal rights

Hodson continued to think about animal rights and human duties. In 1949, he published *An Animal's Bill of Rights*. He appears to have drawn on the ideas of the English reformer Henry Salt, author of *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress* (1892). Hodson proposed that animals should enjoy 'all rights from which they can benefit' and 'that man be compelled to accept responsibility for the welfare, happiness and development of all members of the animal kingdom.' The bill would ban zoos, vivisection, and blood sports. It included both 'ideal' and 'compromise' provisions. While vegetarianism was ideal, a realistic goal was state regulation of farming, with 'power granted to the police to act immediately to prevent or remedy the effects of cruelty.'[107]

Hodson also began working on a children's book, *Authentic Stories of Intelligence in Animals*. He encouraged children to put out crumbs for birds in winter, and to:

> Be watchful for horses that are tired. Give them a lump of sugar, a carrot, or some grass or water (take care to give it on the palm of your

> hand to avoid being bitten.…[Make] every effort to help abolish such places of animal captivity and exploitation as rodeos, racing tracks, circuses; all blood sports such as hunting, fishing, and live hare coursing, and all fur farming, cruel animal transport, cruel slaughter of animals, and the bobby calf trade.[108]

An end to rationing

Meat rationing ended in September 1948, and New Zealanders could eat as much beef and mutton as they wanted. Alan Millar, who immigrated to New Zealand from Scotland in the 1950s, was astonished at the quantities of meat consumed by ordinary workers:

> 'When I came to New Zealand first of all I was amazed at the quantity of meat that was consumed. The fact that you sat down to roast meat virtually every day and sometimes two times and occasionally three times I found a bit sumptuous, it was really beyond what I expected of life. The fare was much more plentiful here and in bigger quantities, with much more generous helpings. Sausages were something that in New Zealand you had of choice rather than a necessity, it was something to sort of richen a thing up a bit.'[109]

Harold Turbott, the Deputy Director General of Health recommended a meat-based diet for health and convenience, contending that 'animal proteins are better than plant proteins for human food.'[110] Eating meat was 'less bother [and] safe nutritionally.'[111] Even tiny infants were eating more meat; back in the 1920s, babies were not usually fed meat until they were over a year old. Three decades later, the authorities recommended egg yolk, liver juice, or meat juice for six-month-old infants.[112]

Vegetarianism continued to seem rather peculiar. In the 1950s the vegetarian theosophist Judith Terry travelled around the country giving lectures for the Workers' Educational Association. Sometimes she spoke about meatless diets. After one lecture, she heard a man in the audience comment: 'So she's a vegetarian, is she? She looks all right to me, but I don't hold with the Adult Education sending round cranks like her. It mightn't be good for the meat trade.'[113] Indeed, the meat trade was thriving. Between 1950 and 1960 frozen meat exports increased by 183 per cent.[114] Undaunted, theosophists such as Terry continued to argue for animal rights and ethical vegetarianism. Some hoped that new technologies might create new meat substitutes. In an article in the *New Zealand Women's Weekly*, Mary

Stroobant looked forward to a vegan world where factories would produce meat and milk alternatives:

> 'Farming will, no doubt, change in character, for with little demand for meat, dairying will become unprofitable. There will be no need to go short of milk, however, for soya bean milk is recognised as being more nutritious and more easily digested than cow's milk, besides having the advantage of being free from T.B. germs. Margarine, suitably fortified with vitamins, makes an excellent and cheap substitute for butter.'[115]

Fur and factory farming

Geoffrey Hodson was still campaigning for animal rights. In the 1950s he began writing about the cruelty of the fur trade, vividly describing the suffering of animals trapped for fur coats:

> 'If women who wear furs could see one furry animal caught in a trap struggling to tear itself loose, and see it die slowly of cold, thirst, hunger, fright or injury, or all these agonies together, they would cease calling fur beautiful.'[116]

Furs were popular with New Zealand men and women during the 1940s and 1950s. Even during wartime, well-off women managed to deck themselves in 'jaunty hats, evening skirts sewn from parachute silk or curtain materials, bridal veils, fox furs, and smartly tailored suits.'[117] A fur coat took up fifteen coupons out of the annual allowance of fifty-two clothing coupons.[118] After the war, American entrepreneurs set up captive-breeding farms for silver and black foxes, and fur prices fell, making imported fur coats affordable for many New Zealanders. Attempts by overseas anti-fur groups to call a fur boycott proved unsuccessful, as fur coats were entrenched as a status symbol.[119] With the pragmatism that he displayed during the campaign for humane slaughter, Hodson put together a 'White list' for those who might be described as 'ethical fur consumers.' This was a list of fur-bearing animals who were killed 'humanely'; ponies, goats, sheep, moles, silver and black foxes, and all animals from fur farms. Hodson argued that 'if we ask animals to die for us, they have the right to a painless death.'[120] Perhaps he was not aware that animals spent miserable lives in cramped cages in fur farms, nor that many farmers killed animals painfully by anal electrocution.[121]

Hodson was more insightful in his condemnation of factory farming. He and other theosophists were the first animal rights activists in New Zealand to speak out against the cruelty of battery hen farming. Battery cages were introduced into in New Zealand in the 1950s. The Department of Agriculture recommended farmers purchase battery cages such as the 'Multiplo Californian laying cages', advertised as 'clean and healthy for the hen and the poultry farmer.'[122] In fact conditions were far from pristine. The hens were crowded into nine-inch-wide wire cages, and their droppings steadily grew into mounds, creating stinking ammoniacal pyramids on the floor of the sheds.[123] The birds could not spread their wings and were slowly denuded of their feathers through rubbing against the wire walls. The rows of cages were invisible within enormous, industrial-looking sheds. Hodson denounced factory farming in the *New Zealand Vegetarian* magazine, asking:

> 'How can the welfare of chickens be safeguarded when one man looks after 16,000 battery cages, in each of which there are three birds? There is bound to be neglect and there IS neglect…On this scale, stockmanship gives place to the overseeing of mechanical equipment alone.'[124]

In Dunedin, Agnes Inglis, an elderly theosophist, lobbied the Minister of Agriculture, asking whether battery hen farming was legal in New Zealand; he replied that there were no laws preventing it.[125] She continued her campaign in the pages of the *Evening Star*, arguing that:

> 'Animals have both a physical and a psychic being (being part of God's creation). They live nearer to nature than we do, hence suffer more when "cribbed, cabined, and confined."'[126]

The Vegetarian Society in the 1970s

Hodson turned eighty-three in 1969, and he was finally beginning to feel tired. He resigned as president of the Vegetarian Society, and Conrad Jamieson, another theosophist, took over. Under Jamieson's leadership, vegetarians ran cooking demonstrations, protested in Queen Street, and organised 'themed' suppers with fundraising stalls of plants and herbs from Jamieson's organic garden. Friend Susan Skarsholt remembers Jamieson's 'big broad smile, his frequently shared chuckle, his enthusiasm with

good ideas to implement within the Society…not to mention his penchant for horse radish sandwches!'[127]

Tauranga vegetarians were particularly active in the 1970s, organising public talks on topics such as 'And just what do vegetarians eat?' They held coffee mornings with the Jaycee wives, who apparently came to realise that vegetarians 'are not a lot of cranks living on a limp lettuce leaf and a glass of water.' These included vegetarian food samplings that elicited comments along the lines of 'Um, delicious, whatever it is.' One 'very sceptical' lady demanded 'What is this?' brandishing a gluten sausage in the air.[128] In Auckland, a Vegetarian Youth Movement group began, hoping to 'provide a means of contact between young vegetarians…and to further the Cause of Vegetarianism—humanitarianism, sound eating, conscience content.'[129] They enjoyed picnics, tramps and a 'gobble and wobble' (a progressive dinner). One evening the group met at the Macintyres' 'pad' at 6.30 p.m. to eat soup and toasted cheese snippets, then filled plates with 'lovingly prepared' vegetables at the Mabeys' house:

> 'To top our meal off, the Edens poured out the ginger beer, which they ardently declared was non-alcoholic. Judging by the way some of our more enthusiastic members braved the elements on Takapuna Beach, I somewhat doubt the veracity of their declaration.'[130]

Vegetarianism was discussed on television for the first time. Truda Burrell, a Dunedin theosophist, described vegetarian protein sources on the 'On Camera' afternoon television show in August 1971. She set up a table of small labelled glass dishes of soya beans, wheat germ, sesame and sunflower seeds, brewer's yeast and nuts, and discussed their nutritional value—the show culminated with a demonstration of how to make a nut roast.[131]

Though no longer president, Hodson continued writing and lecturing about theosophy, vegetarianism, and animal rights. Vegetarian Society president Margaret Johns remembers him as 'an absolutely wonderful' speaker who condemned animal suffering in powerful and moving language.[132] On fine mornings, Hodson and other theosophists performed sun rituals on the lawns of the Vasanta Garden School in Epsom. Wearing brightly coloured robes, they invoked 'beneficent forces' with flowing, co-ordinated movements.[133] Hodson and Chase called for 'A World Campaign for Humaneness' in 1978, to promote 'universal compassion in every facet of life…the abolition of cruelty towards animals, and the cessation of war.'[134] In a 1978 television interview, Hodson, aged 91, spoke with horror

Truda Burrell gives a vegetarian cooking demonstration, 1971, Collection of the New Zealand Vegetarian Society.

of the modern world of 'almost perpetual wars with increasingly destructive weapons, the acceptance of torture in criminal procedure, and the slaughter of millions upon millions of animals every year.'[135] However, he was heartened by 'the activities of large numbers of animal welfare movements, and the increase in many countries in the number of vegetarian societies, health food shops and vegetarian restaurants.' [136] He continued to lecture until 1982, the year before his death at the age of 96. In his final months, he wondered how to build a war-free world where 'peace, health, beauty and humaneness reign upon earth':

> 'Are we going to build an armament factory, a police station, and a bank vault, and in them worship force and gold, and call it the new world? Or are we going to build a veritable Temple of love, of reverence, of justice and beauty.…This is the burning question at this critical hour.'[137]

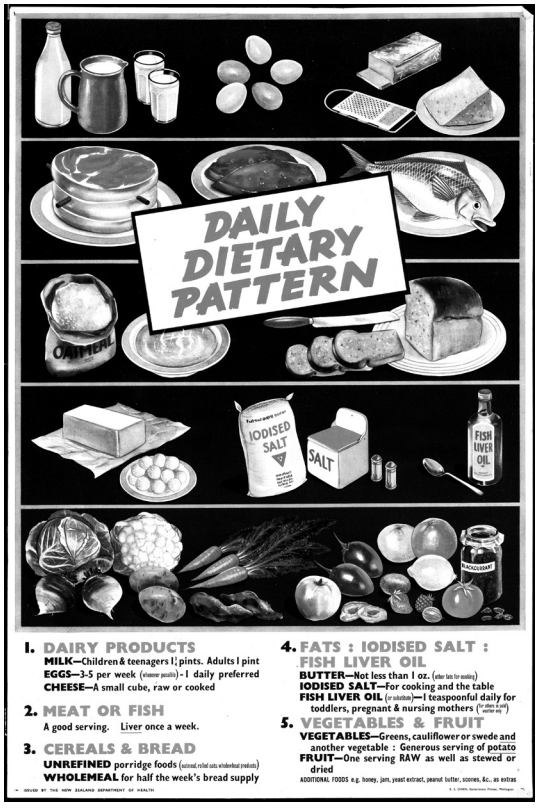
7

Flavours and recipes from many traditions

We were tempted by our most helpful waitress to try something called 'Tofu' which contained a substance which defied all my detective powers for some time. It was excellent—but were the pieces of protein which formed the basic ingredient flesh or fruit?
—Patricia Harris, describing a visit to Wellington's Cantonese Lotus restaurant in 1973.[1]

Nina Vink was twenty-six when she and her husband Peter arrived in New Zealand in 1954—Peter was avoiding compulsory military service in the Netherlands. Vegetarian food was tricky to find in Greymouth, which lacked even a Sanitarium health food store. For a few weeks the young couple stayed in a hotel, studying the menu at mealtimes to work out which dishes were vegetarian. They puzzled as to what scones could be, and wondered at 'baked Swedes.' Were New Zealanders cannibals? One day, tripe appeared on the menu. Uncertain about the English word, the Vinks asked the waitress if it was vegetarian. She replied that she thought so—it wasn't red. When the dish of pale, quivering flesh arrived on the Vinks' table, 'they knew it wasn't a vegetable.'[2]

Since Polynesian explorers first arrived in New Zealand, people from diverse cultures have settled here, bringing their knowledge of herbs, spices, fruits and vegetables. Migrants from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Pacific all introduced new dishes that were suitable for vegetarians.



New Zealand Department of Health daily dietary pattern, Ministry of Health, Alexander Turnbull Library, Eph-D-FOOD-1950s-01

Some settlers brought food taboos unfamiliar to Pākehā, who eat many non-human animals (though not dogs, cats, insects, or horses). Followers of Islam seek halal meat, and observant Jews follow kosher practices. Many Hindus and Sikhs avoid beef, and some follow a vegetarian diet, as do strict Buddhists and Rastafarians. World events have played their part. During the Second World War, New Zealanders learned more about other cultures through overseas service and the presence of thousands of American servicemen. Subsequently European refugees and assisted immigrants arrived, some of whom tried to recreate the kinds of cafés and restaurants in their homelands.[3] In more recent years, many young New Zealanders travelled overseas. On the road they tried new dishes and encountered faiths that were sympathetic to vegetarianism. Before the 1970s, migrants often found it tricky to locate vegetarian foods in meat-eating New Zealand. Even vegetarian Dutch immigrants, who shared some cultural roots with Pākehā New Zealanders, had an awkward time. Eric Doornekamp ar-

rived from the Netherlands in 1959 and found that 'if you went to a European restaurant all you were given was cabbage and potatoes, and second choice was potatoes and carrots.[4] The range of ingredients was particularly limited in small towns that lacked Sanitarium stores or cafés, or Chinese or Indian imported goods. Many new settlers started eating meat, but others kept to the old ways. Some shared recipes from their home countries with New Zealanders, and a few set up restaurants. Cookbooks with an international flavour began to appear. Over the years, many different food traditions have enlivened meatless meals, as immigrants introduced dhal, curries, falafel, hummus, tofu, tempeh, miso, laksa, sushi and a multitude of other flavours and textures, transforming vegetarian food in this country.

Dutch vegetarians in Greymouth and Wellington

Thousands of Dutch migrants arrived in New Zealand from the Netherlands or Indonesia in the 1950s.[5] Some started restaurants and cafés, influencing food culture in New Zealand.[6] The new arrivals included vegetarians such as Nina and Peter Vink, and Eric Doornekamp. Vegetarianism was reasonably well-known in the Netherlands, where there was a significant vegetarian movement in the early twentieth century, led by the anarchist and socialist Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenheis, and the Tolstoyan Felix Louis Ortt.[7] During the First World War, the nation turned to a largely meatless diet to avoid starvation. Animal flesh was consumed sparingly. Eric Doornekamp grew up in the village of Hoevelaken, where his parents, brother and uncle ate little or no meat and where the family garden and apple orchard made it 'very easy to be vegetarian.'[8] Although most of their neighbours ate meat, the quantities eaten were small. As Doornekamp explained, 'apart from Americans and Australians, nobody eats meat like we [New Zealanders] do, three times a day. Most people eat meat once or twice a week, in small portions.'[9] Nina and Peter Vink's, and Eric Doornekamp's experiences give insights into the experiences of European vegetarians as they learned to survive in an unfamiliar land, and also into New Zealand food culture in the 1950s.

Peter and Nina Vink arrived in Greymouth in 1954, where their vegetarian diet seemed quite outlandish.[10] Most New Zealanders consumed large quantities of meat, dairy products, cakes, sweet puddings, and tea. Vegetables were thoroughly boiled, and 'coffee' consisted of instant brown powder, or coffee and chicory essence in hot milk.[11] However, the Vinks were determined to remain meat-free. Nina had grown up in a vegetarian

family in Indonesia (then the Dutch East Indies), and Peter had stopped eating meat as a schoolboy.[12] In Greymouth, they found a house handy to Peter's work as an engineer with New Zealand Railways, and dug a vegetable garden, where they planted Dutch endive, cabbages, cauliflower, carrots, onions, silverbeet, and lettuce. On weekdays Peter Vink looked without envy at the lunches of the other railway workers—most ate white bread sandwiches, followed by biscuits and cake. The Vinks preferred wholemeal bread, and started each meal with raw food. For protein Nina cooked up 'dried beans, split lentils, brown rice, cheese and eggs…we made our own coconut milk by soaking coconut and then squeezing it.' She baked pumpernickel bread and prepared sauerkraut salads.[13] Mung beans were available from the Chinese greengrocer, but Nina had trouble finding cooking fat. The only vegetable fat on offer locally was Kremelta, a solid white substance consisting mostly of coconut fat.[14]

Social events could be hazardous for 1950s vegetarians—at a New Zealand Railways cocktail party, Nina picked up a cracker with poppy seeds on it. She discovered to her horror that the tiny black dots were specks of caviar. She was also annoyed that Griffins' new 'Maltmeal wafer' contained animal fat, and sent a letter of complaint to the company. The reply came that animal fat was essential to stop the biscuits going stale.[15] In the 1950s pregnant vegetarians faced the prospect of meaty hospital meals, and Plunket nurses who insisted that meat was essential for babies. Even Farex, the recommended baby cereal, contained bone meal. When Nina became pregnant, she studied natural childbirth and persuaded the Greymouth Hospital staff to let her give birth without the epidural injection customary at the time. She also worried about what she would eat during her two-week stay in hospital:

> 'I had to warn the matron and the cook that I was a vegetarian—was that possible? The cook came to my bed and asked what I wanted to eat. They asked if I ate macaroni cheese? [So] I received macaroni cheese for breakfast, even the tomatoes on it were cooked…not one single thing raw…most ladies having babies already had false teeth.'[16]

Nina gave birth to Ingeborg Erica, and raised her as a vegetarian. Plump babies were fashionable in the 1950s, and a Plunket nurse demanded that Nina add meat juice to the baby's solids as she was weaned. Nina refused, adding instead a teaspoon of egg yolk and occasionally a little Marmite to

her meals. Tragically, Ingeborg died of leukaemia as a toddler, but Nina had five more children, all of whom thrived on a meatless diet.[17]

Nina was keen to make connections with like-minded folk. She joined the New Zealand Vegetarian Society and the Theosophical Society as soon as she arrived and was grateful for the news and recipes in their magazines. However, there were no vegetarian theosophists in Greymouth. Her immediate neighbours were 'very ignorant, you had to explain what you ate…they thought we were overseas people with funny habits.'[18] Eventually she convinced one friend to give up meat, and others became interested in meatless recipes. Nina typed up her favourite recipes on carbon paper and distributed them. Later Vink and her family moved to Auckland, where she met Geoffrey Hodson and other vegetarians. There were also meat-free cafés, health food shops, and talks and events organised by the Vegetarian Society. She published a vegetarian cookbook, *An Introduction to Vegetarianism, with Basic Recipes*.[19] Finally, she felt part of a vegetarian community. Vink was surprised, however, to find that some of her new friends ate a meatless version of the typical New Zealand diet, basing their meals around white bread, and 'they were not good examples of healthy vegetarians.'[20] She met Seventh Day Adventists and wondered at their diet of 'big meals of lots of cooked vegetables and nut roasts—lovely filling meals in winter, but not the kind of vegetarianism I was brought up with, with lots of raw food.'[21]

Eric Doornekamp also found the New Zealand diet 'very restricted' when he arrived in Wellington as an assisted immigrant in 1959. Doornekamp was a pacifist who ran away from compulsory military service in the Netherlands (before being caught by the military police). He believed that 'one should not eat living creatures. If you kill people, then the next step is to kill all the animals too and eat them. It all involves violence.'[22] On the advice of friends, the young man decided to immigrate to New Zealand in the late 1950s. After a seven-week sea voyage, and a tedious six-hour-long customs process, he and his shipmates climbed into an ancient double-decker bus. They drove, disconcertingly on the left-hand side of the road, to a reception camp in Hataitai. Exhausted and famished, Doornekamp trudged down the camp driveway, hoping for some kind of official welcome, and also some food. He sat down to rest, but leapt up again immediately, with 'terrible prickles' from an unfamiliar gorse bush. However, he pulled himself together and went on:

> 'I thought it's about dinner time, we must be expected, and I walked down the track. There was a man and he said, 'Oh, come and have something to eat'. It was mutton, and [aside from being vegetarian] I hadn't eaten mutton in my life, so that put me off for starters, but I ate the veges and spuds, and there was a big dessert afterwards so that made up for it. They called it pudding but it was mostly custard.' [23]

Mutton and gorse—Doornekamp had encountered two ubiquitous aspects of life in New Zealand on his very first day. It was a prickly start, in more ways than one. Fortunately, the hungry young man had enough English to explain to his hosts that he did not eat animals. Soon he was boarding in a private home, where he ineptly tried to prepare his own meatless meals, surviving mostly on cheese, potatoes, and cabbage. He was unimpressed that New Zealanders ate 'meat and veges, and not very well-prepared veges, either, you know…mostly potatoes and cabbage. Typical English cooking! Lots of people had never heard of vegetarians…there was a lot of food you couldn't get in New Zealand.'[24] However, he did not wish to seem too pushy, and remained reticent about his diet:

> 'I was a very quiet sort of person…I had friends in Wellington when I lived there for a while and they didn't even know I was vegetarian. They didn't realise that vegetarians don't eat meat, and they'd grown up eating meat, and so they were eating meat and never questioned it. They thought, oh well it's like pumpkin, some people don't like pumpkin. They ask if you like pumpkin. You say you don't like pumpkin, so they put the pumpkin or meat aside.'[25]

Although Wellington in the 1960s was a dull and conservative place, it was more sophisticated than Greymouth. Doornekamp soon tracked down the only two delicatessens in town, and a couple of congenial cafés where he could enjoy a 'great selection of cakes and tortes.' A few coffee shops had opened—notably Suzy's Coffee Lounge in Willis Street, run by Dutch immigrant Suzy van der Kwast. In the 1960s, Suzy's was 'the place to be', and Doornekamp got to know the proprietors quite well.[26] Hip young Wellingtonians, students, politicians, and artists dined here on European-style mains, almond cakes, crisp appelflaps, and dark chocolate cake.[27] A few blocks away in Mount Victoria, customers at Mary Seddon's 'Monde Marie' listened to live folk music, and consumed cheap meals, cheesecake, and Cona coffee at tables lit by 'candles stuffed into wax-encrusted Chianti

bottles.'[28] Doornekamp recalls that one could order a 'special' coffee with an illegal tot of rum.[29]

Doornekamp found it easier than Nina Vink to find sympathetic friends. At yoga classes he quickly got to know people, including a kindly woman who invited him to dinner. He joined the Wellington New Zealand Vegetarian Society, which organised social evenings, and cooking classes. Soon he had a circle of friends, with whom he set up the Lotus Yoga Centre in Aro Valley, and the Amrita vegetarian restaurant at 127 Cuba Street. Through the Centre, Doornekamp helped publish cookbooks, such as the *Sivananda Cookbook*, *Recipes for the Farmyard*, and the *Sunflower Cookbook*—all were priced affordably at six to twelve dollars.[30] He also wrote *A Manual on Practical Vegetarianism* (1979), and was part of one of the earliest organic food co-ops, which bought in 'avocados, lots of fruit, it all came from the Bay of Plenty, kiwifruit, beans, lentils, all the spices actually.'[31] Despite his initial shyness about his diet, he was now helping support other vegetarians.

Hindu vegetarians in New Zealand

At the Greymouth Four Square grocery store, Nina Vink talked to the proprietor, who was of Indian descent, and learned that his vegetarian grandfather had arrived in New Zealand in 1913, and remained vegetarian all his life. Hindu culture has strong traditions of vegetarianism, and Indian settlers represent a New Zealand community in which meatless diets seem quite normal. Over the years, settlers imported a wide range of beans, pulse and spices, and grew herbs to flavour dhals and curries. Some started restaurants and take-away outlets that offered traditional Indian food, including meatless dishes. This made it easier for all New Zealand vegetarians to eat out.

The first Indian migrants travelled to New Zealand around 1890, and the Indian community slowly expanded in the twentieth century. Like Pākehā immigrants, many hoped to earn money for a better life for themselves and their families, though often they planned to eventually return home.[32] Most of the early arrivals were men, who voyaged on steamers or cargo boats. When Indian sons joined their fathers in New Zealand or Fiji, they often travelled in groups by steerage or third class, and cooked their own food—preferable for vegetarians as the rations on board usually consisted of mutton and bread. Others survived on sweets, bread, tea and pickles and foods that they had brought with them from home.[33] Once in

New Zealand, they settled in communities of fellow migrants, vegetarians living together where possible to make cooking more convenient.[34]

Many immigrants came from the Gujarat or Punjab states, and Gujarati settlers were much more likely to be vegetarian. In *Indians in New Zealand*, Lalita Kasanji explains that Gujarati Hindu immigrants came from a vegetarian tradition, in which meals were considered a sacrament, to be celebrated with ritual.[35] In India, Brahmin men bathed before eating, and removed clothing above the waist, eating their meatless meals in privacy. Vegetarian diets were considered morally superior. According to Hindu theology, Manu, the first of the fourteen creators of the world, praised vegetarianism—abstaining from meat was said to be equivalent to one hundred horse sacrifices. Vegetarian meals were associated with purity, while meat-eating seemed analogous to eating a corpse.[36]

Early Indian settlers found themselves in a country where the dominant culture was unfriendly or, at best, indifferent to Asian immigrants. Many Pākehā New Zealanders were suspicious of itinerant 'Hindoo' hawkers, and dismissive of Indian vegetarianism. In 1893, an article in the *Bruce Herald* argued that:

> 'The health of the vegetarian races is not equal to that of the races which eat both flesh and farinaceous food…The flesh-eating races have mastered the world, and the Northern Asiatics, who eat meat, have, with their comparatively insignificant numbers, conquered the innumerable vegetarians of India whenever they have invaded them.'[37]

The *New Zealand Truth* published xenophobic articles conjuring up lurid vistas of the 'Hindu' as 'a menace to mother and maiden. Women are terrorised by him…These Hindus will traverse the North and perhaps the South Island, hawking cheap, shoddy, and nasty merchandise.'[38] Indian culture seemed more acceptable when its proponents were only visiting. In 1901, a hundred Indian troops spent a couple of weeks travelling through New Zealand, where they were 'greatly admired.'[39] The Commander of the New Zealand forces, Colonel Penton, sent a telegram to the Mayor of Napier, advising that 'the only entertainment you can offer the natives is biscuits, fruit, and aerated waters.' A Wellington journalist was delighted to be shown inside the 'spick and span' galleys of the Royal Indian Marine, where 'chupatties [sic.], rice curries, vegetarian delights of all sorts, and the officers' dinner are all going on at once as we pass through and before our eyes is the process of grinding the ingredients of the curry powder.'[40]

Nabob Bombay Chutney, imported by Auckland's Indian Importing Co. in the 1920s, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, Eph-D-FOOD-1950s-01

As well as vegetarian Hindu soldiers, there were vegetarian Hindu conscientious objectors during the Second World War. Many young men of Indian descent objected to serving in the armed forces, making the obvious point that their religious and dietary needs could not easily be met in the army.[41] Fortunately, few were sent into detention camps or forced to join the armed forces—chiefly because the military authorities were unwilling to provide special vegetarian diets in the barracks, and did not actually want Hindus to join up.[42] Factory worker Vrajlal Kalidas appeared before the Armed Forces Appeal Board in Wellington in December 1941, and pleaded that he should be exempt from military service as 'his religion forbade him to eat meat or fish, or anything that had had conscious life at all.' The judge was sympathetic, commenting that 'this man would starve in the Army.'[43]

Vegetarians who were genuinely anti-war received less consideration. In November 1942, Yallabh Hira, an Auckland storeman, explained that he was a follower of Gandhi, and totally opposed to militarism. He 'declared that even if the authorities made provision for Hindus to produce vegetables and prepare their own meals, he would not enter camp as he would be participating in war.'[44] His appeal was rejected—the judge C. R. Orr Walker compared him unfavourably with 'Hindus who had…expressed

willingness to enter camp if arrangements were made so that they could observe their religious practices.' Sadly, Hira was sent into detention.[45]

Many Indian New Zealanders felt more closely connected to the Indian struggle against colonialism, especially those who had ties with the Punjab and Gujarat regions, where the national independence movement was particularly strong.[46] Historian Jacqueline Leckie considers that vegetarian identity was sometimes aligned with Indian nationalism and Gandhi's philosophy of ahimsa.[47] In December 1946, the Indian vegetarian theosophist Sri Ram visited New Zealand, and analysed the independence movement in a radio broadcast, describing his hopes that 'the troubles that mark the present in India are the birth-pangs of a New India, striving to see the light as a free nation, and breathe the air of a free epoch.'[48] Sri Ram also spoke to New Zealand theosophists about his concern for animals, and his conviction that 'cruelty must be abolished, for it is the war spirit.'[49]

After 1945, increasing numbers of Indian women arrived in New Zealand. Women were more likely than men to remain vegetarian, and forward-thinking cooks brought their kitchen utensils with them. When seventeen-year-old Ruxmaniben Kasanji left Vaswari in Gujarat for New Zealand in 1948, she packed her khal (mortar and pestle), zaro (griddle iron), tavi (chapatti pan), and welan (rolling pin)—none of these were available in New Zealand.[50] Eating implements were also different in the new country. In India, food was traditionally served on banana leaves, with liquids in dry leaf cups. Spoons were used for liquids, raitas, and sauces, but knives and forks were not used. Instead, diners tore bread into pieces, using it to scoop up the food.[51] Jacqueline Leckie has described how Gulabhan Patel's mother managed to follow a vegetarian diet in New Zealand.

> She purchased mung beans and lentils for dhal, and she would hand grind dried peas and lentils for flour. Cardamoms and rose-water were sourced from pharmacies. Mrs Patel, like many Indian women, established a garden to grow vegetables and herbs, such as eggplants, chillies, garlic, and coriander. Without a refrigerator, chillies and coriander had to be dried and pounded for future use.[52]

Most grocers sold red and yellow lentils, and Chinese greengrocers supplied mung beans. Indian women purchased some vegetarian products from Sanitarium health food shops, or from general shops. As early as 1898, M. M. Webster's Nelson grocery store offered mango chutney, 'pure Nepaul pepper,' and 'Currie powder.'[53] By the 1950s, Quality Fruit on Wel-

lington's Cambridge Terrace was selling bhindi (okra), brinjal (eggplant), Bulgarian peppers, and mangoes from Tahiti.[54] Ranjna Patel remembers her parents buying lentils and turmeric at Dunningham's store on the Auckland wharves. Born in 1955, Patel grew up in a vegetarian family in Herne Bay. Her grandfather had arrived from Fiji in the early 1900s, after his banana license expired. Originally, her family came from Gujarat, close to where Gandhi lived, and some of her relations in India joined the independence movement and went to jail. In New Zealand, Patel's family kept to a strict vegetarian diet, largely for economic reasons. Her parents ran a fruit shop, so they had plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. They followed a simple lacto-vegetarian diet, and rarely ate out. The children took marmite, peanut butter and jam and cheese sandwiches to school. When they went out, they ate hot chips, not realising that these were often cooked in lard. At home, her family ate traditional Indian food—roti, rice and dhal:

> Growing up we had very little we could buy—lentils, and a lot of fresh vegetables. None of the Indian vegetables were available, so we ate normal cabbage, cauliflower, beans, potatoes, kumeras. Broccolis didn't exist back then![55]

Friends and relations who visited India sent parcels of spices back to New Zealand. As the years went by, supplies became easier to find. In the early 1980s, Patel shopped at Dinesh Tailor's Indian Foodmarket in Karangahape Road, opposite the Rising Sun Tavern. Carroll Wall from Auckland *Metro* visited the store in 1983, and was impressed by the range of foods—twenty-seven different spices, fifteen kinds of pulse and dhal, fifteen kinds of dried peas and beans, and twelve types of flour. Most of the customers were of Indian descent, with the 'occasional Polynesian and inquisitive Pakeha.' Friends chatted in Gujarati, while the children delighted in 'running small brown hands through the dried peas and beans.'[56] Fresh stock ran out quickly, as the customers bought in bulk whenever there was a new shipment.

Patel remembers growing coriander in the family garden, which was dried and then ground for use in curries, along with turmeric, salt, and chillies.[57] Some women planted taro, and used the leaves for the Indian savoury patra. They were familiar with taro, having grown it in India, where it was known as patra, arabi or ghuiya. Vidya Jatania described how to prepare patra in her book *Gujerati Vegetarian Dishes* (1976).[58] One washed

the leaves, then coated them with a batter of pea flour spiced with ginger, garlic, turmeric, coriander and garam masala. The coated leaves were shaped into a roll that was steamed, then lightly fried. Jatania included her telephone number, so that readers could ring her for advice about where to source the spices, which were not readily available in 1970s New Zealand. Women also prepared chutneys, preserved fruit, and made chapattis and roti with wholemeal flour. As with Patel's family, meals could be based around staple Kiwi vegetables likd potatoes, carrots, pumpkins, cabbages, peas and fresh beans. *Gujerati Vegetarian Dishes* included recipes for aloo dum (potato curry), alootiki (fried potato balls), and sambar, a vegetable curry incorporating chickpeas, runner beans, potato, tomatoes, green peas, and eggplant.

Many settlers who had been vegetarians in India changed their diet in the new country. Vegetarians who travelled between India and New Zealand often abstained from meat in their home country, but were less strict in New Zealand, where finding the right vegetables, legumes and spices could be difficult. Few pulses were available. The Gregg's factory packaged some herbs and spices for sale, but these were often stale by the time that they reached the shops.[59] Men who had been vegetarian in India often began eating meat in New Zealand, though sometimes abstained from beef, in respect for the sacred cow.[60] Maintaining a vegetarian diet was particularly difficult for travellers. In November 1950, the Indian dancer Shivaram toured New Zealand, and talked to New Zealand Vegetarian Society president Geoffrey Hodson about the difficulties of finding vegetarian food in Western countries. Shivaram grew up in India on a diet of vegetables, rice, bananas, dhal, curries, and curdled milk, eating his meals off plates of fresh green banana leaves. However his vegetarianism became less strict after he left India in 1947 to tour the world as a professional dancer. Most of his time was spent travelling or in the theatre and it was hard to find enough vegetables, fruits and nuts to make up a balanced diet—a common difficulty for Indian performers in Western countries. He was 'forced to accept the food supplied at hotels which sometimes included meat.'[61]

Some permanent settlers also began eating meat. Historian Edwina Pio has described how Saroj Keshav was born in Whakatane and grew up in a grocer's shop that her father started in 1952. When Keshav's family arrived in New Zealand, they were 'pure vegetarian, but in those early days it was difficult to get Indian vegetables and so we eventually started eating meat and chicken.'[62] Some vegetarians began eating meat as they became

more financially successful. Those who were shopkeepers often felt that selling meat products and slicing ham for customers compromised their identity as vegetarians.[63] Others worried that eating traditional spicy food could deter their clientele. Sociologist Lalita Kasanji notes that 'many Europeans would complain saying that Indians smelt like garlic. In response, the Gujaratis refrained from eating garlic and other pungent herbs or spices, especially in their mid-day meal.'[64]

Indian community members shared food with each other, and this could also influence whether or not individuals remained vegetarian. Ranjna Patel's mother and sister made an extended trip to India in the early 1970s, and extended family members supported her father and the other children by bringing them prepared dishes. Some of these included meat:

> 'Dad started eating a little bit of meat, a little bit of chicken, a little bit of lamb, but not a basic meat diet like European meals would probably be back then. It always used to be one meat, three vegetables. Salad or rice wasn't on the menu back then. So it would be once a month we'd have the meat, but we were considered meat-eaters.'[65]

Some women remained vegetarian, but cooked meat for their husbands, brothers, children and guests.[66] After Patel's mother returned from India, she began cooking meat for her husband, feeling that it was healthier than if he purchased meat dishes away from home, but she herself remained vegetarian. As with most vegetarians, some Indian vegetarians were stricter than others. Some did not eat eggs, while others ate chicken and fish, while avoiding pork and beef.[67] Others avoided meat products at specific times of the month.[68] Food prepared for religious festivals or social occasions was almost always vegetarian.[69] In 1983, Auckland *Metro* magazine described the marriage of twenty-three-year-old Niru Khusal and twenty-eight-year-old Mohan Patel in a traditional ceremony at the Pukekohe Town Hall in Edinburgh Street, South Auckland. As in India, Khusal followed Patel as he walked four times clockwise around a smouldering altar. However, Khusal wore a white sari, rather than the traditional red wedding sari. The couple exchanged garlands, and wedding rings, and then the guests filed past, smearing red pigment on the bride's forehead and offering fistfuls of rice for good luck and fertility. After the formal ceremony was over, nearly a thousand guests from the Gujarati Indian community gathered for a vegetarian feast at the Khusals' onion packing shed:

> 'Newsprint is laid on the tables and relations file past offering bowls of lapsi (a type of sweet semolina), pickles, rice, soups, vegetarian curries, popadoms, and fried delicacies. As in the old country, the whole meal is vegetarian, but unlike India, it is washed down with liquor from the bar in the corner.'[70]

In contrast to the experience of European vegetarian immigrants such as Nina Vink and Eric Doornekamp, New Zealanders of Indian heritage such as Ranjna Patel felt no need or desire for support groups, as she already had a strong vegetarian network:

> 'Europeans…need support, whereas with our cooking it's very easy to be vegetarian. With the European cooking in order to get some taste you've got to add some spices and if you're not used to it, or you're allergic it's a bit difficult. Whereas with us we could take one kilo of moong and roti which would cost five dollars and ten people can eat from it…I don't think we feel ourselves different.'[71]

A few Indian New Zealanders did make links with other vegetarians. At a 1978 Vegetarian Society picnic in Outram Glen in coastal Otago, Mrs Avon Kumar cooked 'delicious Indian vegetarian dishes' on a primus stove and served these alongside the vegetarian Kiwi-style contributions of nut-meat, cheese, bean dishes, and green salad. When the rain came down, the picnickers sheltered in a van, while listening to classical and Indian music.[72] Kumar shared her knowledge of herbs and spices with Dunedin the Pākehā vegetarians.[73]

Slowly Indian restaurants became more popular with Pākehā, especially outfits that served a rather bland and standardized cuisine intended to suit the 'European' palate.[74] However, more authentic cuisine was also appreciated. In August 1971, Mr V. Satyanarayan Bakshi, the vegetarian catering superintendent of Air India, arrived in Auckland. Originally from Andhra Predesh, in southern India, Bakshi designed menus for vegetarian passengers incorporating selections from six hundred separate dishes in the Air India repertoire. During his visit, the New Zealand Vegetarian Society organised a cooking demonstration in the Auckland Electric Power Board's kitchens. Around five hundred people arrived. They watched Bakshi prepare stuffed green pimentos, patoli (a vegan lentil curry), and Vulli batani (yellow pea curry with ginger, cardamom and tamarind). Even meat-eaters were appreciative—Robyn Tucker of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* praised Bakshi's cooking under the headline 'With his

dishes you would not miss meat.' She was especially impressed by the dessert—savian malai. Bakshi added coconut milk, cashew nuts, saffron, sugar, and crushed cardamoms to a base of fried vermicelli, creating a dish 'equally tasty served hot or chilled.'[75] The organisers handed around food samples and recipe booklets, and Bakshi advised that 'by eating foods such as fruit, legumes, herbs, spices, glutin [sic] flour and vegetables…people can maintain a healthy, balanced, animal fat-free diet.'[76] Some began using Indian spices in their own cooking. In 1979, Wellington vegetarian John O'Donnell enjoyed a Christmas feast of:

> 'Homemade cottage cheese, mung bean sprouts and curd, vegetables in a dressing of thick yoghurt and fresh herbs, chapattis, a dhal of mung beans cooked with ground ginger, lemon juice, and turmeric. He also had brown rice cooked with oil and khir—an Indian dish of reduced milk, rice, and cardamon, sweetened with honey and served with organic strawberries soaked in honey.'[77]

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Over the last few decades, many Pākehā New Zealanders have discovered Indian-style vegetarian food through Hare Krishna restaurants and food stalls. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) was founded by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in the 1960s, but draws on Hindu traditions dating back to the time of Sri Krishna Chaitanya, who lived in India in the later part of the fifteenth and early years of the sixteenth centuries. Followers avoid meat, fish, eggs, mushrooms, onions and garlic and also intoxicants such as alcohol, tea, and coffee. Krishna cooking is a ritual. Cooks wear a fresh change of clothes, speak as little as possible, and are not allowed to snack while they cook. All food is offered to Krishna, and eating is considered a spiritually purifying act.[78] Most Hare Krishna followers consume dairy products, but a few are vegan. Former Krishna monk Vidyapati Dasa explained to me why he avoided all animal products:

> 'Our philosophy teaches that we can only take cows' milk if the cows are treated like our mothers and fathers. However, since the dairy industry certainly does NOT treat the cows in this way, I can't justify taking their milk at all.'[79]

New Zealand's first Hare Krishna temple opened in April 1972 at 155 Landscape Road, Auckland, and the movement was well established in New Zealand by 1975, with weekly 'mellow spiritual gatherings' at New Nadia Ashram in Auckland and Sri Chaitanya Malira Ashram at Whangamata. The public were invited to Sunday vegetarian feasts of Krishna food such as curried potatoes, chickpeas cooked in ghee, dhal, chutney, and halvah.[80] ISKCON founder Prabhupada visited New Zealand several times in the 1970s, drawing further attention to the movement. By 1978 a community had formed at the 'Hare Krisna Marae' near Muriwai; a one hundred and fifty acre farm with a school, crèche, and space for yoga and philosophy classes. The rules specified 'no intoxicants, no meat eating, no gambling, and no illicit sex.'[81] The Krishna faith had some values in common with those of the 1970s counterculture—devotees practiced 'non-attachment' from material possessions, sought to protect the environment, and opposed the Vietnam War. However the Krishna faith disapproved of drugs, was sexually conservative, and promoted traditional gender roles based on ancient Hindu law books. In *My Sweet Lord*, Kim Knott argues that though women were held equal in spiritual terms, in daily life 'women are understood to be in need of protection and shelter…the philosophical context is male protection and female subservience.'[82]

In 1978 the New Zealand Hare Krishna movement launched *Haribol New Zealand*, a newspaper carefully crafted to appeal to youth. It printed articles discussing vegetarianism, organic gardening, yoga, reincarnation, herbs, composting, rock music, nuclear power, indigenous rights, racism, pollution, and solar power. *Haribol New Zealand's* food philosophy of 'good home cooking, prepared from natural unrefined ingredients and fresh fruits and veges,' was in tune with the values of the counterculture, as were its ethical justifications for vegetarianism.[83] As one writer explained:

> 'If more people adopted a vegetarian diet, it would help alleviate the suffering of the world in many ways. Coupled with a sensible and humane system of distributing the millions of tonnes of grains now fed to livestock, it could help feed the one-fourth of humanity which presently goes hungry or starves to death. It could reduce the suffering due to cancer, heart disease and other diseases which have been linked to the over-consumption of meat.'[84]

The magazine had a regular recipe column 'Simple cottage cooking,' which featured vegetarian dishes from a range of traditions. There were some

Indian-style recipes, but these often had a local twist—silverbeet pakoras, chickpea subji (with silver beet), kumara leaf curry.[85]

Over the years, many New Zealanders have enjoyed Krishna food, especially young people on a budget. In 1976 feminists Christine Dann and Sandra Coney were editing *Broadsheet* magazine in Auckland, at an office only two minutes' walk from a small Hare Krishna café on Victoria Street. Dann remembers taking breaks to fetch take-aways:

> 'They used to sell a large-sized milkshake carton full of mixed salad (including sprouts and nuts) for $2. We would take them back to the office and eat from the carton with a fork. I suppose one or both of us actually sat down to eat there occasionally and probably we bought other things, like samosas, but it is the salad carton that sticks in my memory because it was the most food for the least money.'[86]

Dann noticed that often Hare Krishna women with babies and toddlers sat in the restaurant, looking 'pale, pregnant and exhausted.' In the Krishna faith, sex is only allowed for procreation, which tends to favour large families and frequent pregnancies. Dann worried that she was financially supporting an organisation that oppressed women.[87] However, the food was cheap, tasty, and convenient, and Dann and Coney continued to occasionally eat at the café, even though 'neither of us were principled vegetarians, and even if we had been we could have bought salad elsewhere.'[88]

Some Pākehā were attracted to the Hare Krishna faith through their interest in vegetarianism.[89] In 1987 Ruth Jackson from the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* interviewed Harananda-dasi, a young woman who discovered the Krishna faith while training to be a teacher in Auckland. Formerly Margaret Hardwick-Smith, Harananda-dasi was a vegetarian who ate regularly at Gopal's Restaurant. She became friends with Krishna followers, and began spending her weekends at New Varshana, the community temple and farm at Riverhead. Eventually, she left her training college, and joined the Krishna faith, taking a Krishna name, and preaching and distributing religious literature. In 1987 she married Luke Marks, a former hippy who had converted to Krishna. The wedding ceremony was influenced by Hindu traditions: Harananda-dasi wore a red and gold sari, and Marks changed into the white robes of a married man. The guests threw rice, and the couple placed bananas in the wedding fire as a sacrifice. After the ceremony, Harananda-dasi placed a red dot on her forehead to show

that she was married, and the couple's wedding garments were knotted together.[90]

Chinese-style cuisine

Hindu and Hare Krishna cooking traditions were not the only Eastern influences on vegetarian cuisine in this country. Chinese settlers have brought herbs, vegetables and soy products that enhanced the diet of all vegetarians. Vegetarianism in China has a long history, extending as far back as the Taoist sage kings of around 2300 B.C. When Buddhism was introduced to China, this also encouraged vegetarianism. The sixth-century Emperor Wu was a Buddhist who opposed animal sacrifice, and forbade hunting and fishing in two districts near the capital.[91] Chinese Mahayana Buddhists developed the 'Su' diet, which avoids meat, fish, dairy products, dried lily stem, onions, chives, garlic, and leeks.[92] They devised an elaborate vegetarian cuisine based around seitan (wheat protein) shaped, flavoured and textured to resemble meat. Many dishes had religious references in their names, such as 'Buddha's delight,' made with vegetarian steak, black mushrooms, cloud ears, ginger, lily flowers, and soy sauce.[93] A famous Chinese novel, *Chin-P'ing Mei*, includes the story of Aunt Yang, a pious Buddhist nun who is deceived by dishes that look too much like meat.

> "'There are some bones on the plate,' Aunt Yang said. 'Please, sister, take them away. I might put them in my mouth by mistake.' This made everyone roar with laughter.'Old Lady,' said the Moon Lady, 'this is vegetarian food made to look like meat. It has come from the temple, and there can't possibly be any harm in eating it.'"[94]

Vegetarianism was associated with religious devotion. Abstention from meat and piety were so closely associated that when the first Christian missionaries arrived in China, they were referred to as 'eaters of vegetables,' until the truth became known.[95] There were also many involuntary vegetarians, as peasants in rural China rarely ate meat except at festivals. Soybeans were more important than meat as a source of protein, and were cultivated as far back as the Western Zhou period (1100–770 B.C.).[96] Many early Chinese immigrants came from the 9,000 square kilometres of land around the Pearl River Delta in the Guandong Province of South China, where they grew rice, sugar-cane, ginger, sweet potatoes, and many fruits and vegetables. Daily meals were based around rice and vegetables, often

flavoured with a few scraps of meat or fish. Sometimes even this was lacking. Auckland community leader Peter Chang remembers growing up in Sun Gai village in the 1930s:

> 'There was certainly no meat to eat. Rice, we usually ate as porridge. We flavoured it with kumara plant leaves, only because nobody else wanted the leaves. We ate kumara and pumpkin, anything as we were so poor. We often starved, and never knew where our next meal was coming from.'[97]

The first Chinese miners arrived to work in the Otago Goldfields in 1865, and settler numbers grew rapidly. Most immigrants were peasants or small traders, who left home to earn money for a better standard of living for themselves and their families. They worked hard, lived frugally, and sent money home to China.[98] By 1881, census figures showed 5,004 Chinese people living in New Zealand, but only two women. It was not economically viable for men to bring their wives to New Zealand, and most women stayed in China, caring for their families, and parents-in-law. The New Zealand authorities imposed a harsh poll-tax and literacy test on Chinese entering New Zealand—in effect a 'keeping New Zealand white by stealth' policy.[99]

Chinese settlers found New Zealand food very different, often disliking the smell of cheese and mutton, and also the European practice of adding cow's milk to tea. They consumed less meat, and used a wider range of fresh vegetables, herbs and spices, as well as unfamiliar protein sources such as tofu.[100] Europeans were equally puzzled by Chinese food, observing that:

> 'A Chinese meal consists of rice as a foundation, green leaf or other vegetable, and a very small quantity of well cooked or minced up meat. You will see the Chinese carrying three or four ounces of meat at the end of a piece of string, and that would be sufficient for the household. They do not have joints of meat as is common with Western countries.'[101]

In 1880 the *Hawke's Bay Herald* noted that 'jew's ear fungus' was mixed with vermicelli and bean curd to serve as a meat substitute on fast days.[102] In the 1930s tofu was described as appearing 'in little white cubes and tastes like burnt milk.'[103] The traditional New Year's Day dish 'jai' was a vegetarian dish of lotus seed, gingko nut, black moss seaweed, dried bean

curd, and bamboo shoots.[104] Cooks did their best to improvise with local ingredients; in Wellington Ng Yew Sui used 'corn leaves instead of large bamboo leaves for wrapping joong and rice dumplings and dried red sultan plums as a substitute for chan pei mei (dried liquorice plums).[105] In 1901, the *Christchurch Star* reprinted an article arguing that a near-vegetarian diet detracted from the fighting qualities of Chinese soldiers:

> 'Soldiers of the Celestial Empire thrive, after a fashion, on rice, cabbage, and a vegetarian diet, with just a smattering of meat, which is scarcely worth of being taken into consideration.…It is not to be expected that a man who lives upon rice, cabbage and the like could ever equal an eater of meat, no matter in what respect the comparison is made, and history reveals what poor soldiers the Chinese are.'[106]

Some Chinese Buddhist immigrants were strict vegetarians, while others might take temporary vows of vegetarianism, or observe two meatless days every lunar month.[107] Unfortunately, little is known about their experiences. Some settlers changed their faith and their diet in the new country. In *A Home Away From Home*, Chan-ho May-Yun describes her relationship with Mrs Wong-Toi, a very strict vegetarian Buddhist who 'would pray to Buddha if any thing went wrong in her household.' However, after Wong-Toi's daughter became ill, the entire family converted to Christianity, though it is not clear whether or not they began eating meat.[108] More recently, there has been concern that Chinese New Zealanders are suffering from an increased incidence of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer as they consume more red meat, dairy products, fats and sweets.[109] However, there is still a Chinese Buddhist community in New Zealand today, even if many adherents are more recent immigrants. In Auckland, the Fo Guang Shan North Island Temple serves vegetarian food at its Tea House, and organises a vegetarian food fair to mark the Chinese New Year.[110]

Many early New Zealand vegetarians would have depended on the produce of Chinese market gardeners, who supplied vegetables to city folk. As one correspondent to the *Evening Post* noted, rather patronisingly, 'but for the ubiquitous and much execrated Chinaman, dwellers in the cities would often be without the homely cabbage, to say nothing of the succulent and nutritious bean.'[111] The *Bruce Herald* reported with wonder that a Chinese gardener 'offered a gigantic broccoli, weighing 20 lb., for sale in our township on Saturday morning. Whether the vegetable was purchased

by an epicurean vegetarian for his individual consumption, or a company went in for shares in it, we are unable to state.'[112] Chinese merchants also imported ingredients from China and Hong Kong, and some of these were suitable for vegetarians. Tea shops in the mining towns of Round Hill and Riverton sold:

> 'All manner of Chinese groceries, cakes and vegetables, including moon cakes at the Autumn (Lantern) Festival. Other delicacies on sale included…bean-curd cakes, and bean jam pies…There was even a ground-nut seller.'[113]

In New Plymouth, the merchant Chew Chong ran advertisements in the *Taranaki Herald* for 'silk rice…with a particularly fine flavour of its own.'[114] He also supplied teas, 'Chinese fancy goods,' silk handkerchiefs and preserved ginger.[115]

By the 1940s and 1950s, many Pākehā New Zealanders had forgotten that their grandparents feared and despised Chinese immigrants, and xenophobia was replaced by mild curiosity about Chinese culture and food. Pākehā housewives experimented with Chinese-influenced recipes. In 1958, Price Milburn published *Fifty Chinese Dishes You Can Make*.[116] This included some vegetarian recipes—eggs with tomatoes, spiced beans, and pickled vegetables. Dishes such as 'fragrant eggplant,' and bean curd and spinach soup could be easily made vegetarian. By 1971, the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* reported that 'without a doubt, Chinese cooking is increasing in popularity at the New Zealand dinner table.' The article included recipes adapted to New Zealand taste—spring rolls, Chinese cabbage soup, fried rice. There was just one vegetarian dish—Chinese cabbage and mushrooms.[117] The New Zealand Vegetarian Society published recipes for dishes such as 'Mandarin' fried rice, almond vegetable chop suey, and described how to make tofu by blending soybeans with water, and adding lemon juice to form a soft curd.[118] 'Chinese'-style recipes were not necessarily genuine—in 1969, Sanitarium issued *Creative Meatless Cooking*, which included a rather frightening recipe for 'Soy chop suey,' flavoured with Marmite. The same book had instructions for 'Mixed vegetables Chinese style'—a strange concoction of carrot, cabbage, parsnip, and grated cheese.[119]

Chinese restaurants have made life easier for many New Zealand vegetarians. Since the early twentieth century there have been Chinese eating houses in New Zealand. These served a range of dishes, some of which

could be made vegetarian. Disappointingly, early newspaper reports about Chinese restaurants emphasise gambling dens and police raids rather than food—they were not considered places where other New Zealanders might choose to eat.[120] However, Lynette Shum has told how Doris Chung followed her father in the 1920s to houses in Haining Street, Wellington, where skilled cooks prepared noodles in soup, dim sims and other Chinese snacks. For many non-Chinese Wellington residents, it was their first chance to try Asian food.[121] As Chinese dishes became more popular, the number of eating establishments increased. By the end of the 1950s there were Chinese restaurants in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.[122] Some of these became trendy; young people in Auckland enjoyed hanging out at the Golden Dragon café in Greys Avenue, 'frequented by Bohemians.'[123] Many such establishments were rather Westernised, offering menus in English, forks instead of chopsticks, and copious quantities of bread and butter as a side dish.[124] Eric Doornekamp recalls Chinese restaurants where the menu featured just two 'Europeanized' vegetarian dishes, vegetable fried rice, and egg foo yung (an omelette dish derived from Fu Yung Egg Slices). Tofu was available, but did not feature on the menu, and most Pākehā did not know to ask for it.[125] Nonetheless, as Doornekamp noted, Chinese restaurants were convenient for 1960s vegetarians, especially for those who 'didn't like cooking…it was much easier to eat Chinese food.'[126]

By the 1970s, Chinese restaurants were expanding their menus. Peter McLuskie, a young Wellington vegetarian, tasted tofu for the first time at the Lotus, an upmarket Chinese restaurant in Cuba Street in the late 1970s:

> 'Kerry and I ordered a vegetarian fried rice and it came back with this white stuff in it. We called the waiter over. 'What's this?' 'It's To-Fu.' 'It looks like meat to us.' 'No, vegetarian. To-Fu!' 'It doesn't taste like anything. Are you sure it's not meat?' Finally the waiter went and got the chef who tried to explain to us and reassure us in his best broken English that he understood that we were vegetarian and that we did not eat meat or eggs and that this was tofu…it certainly had not come from any animal! It illustrated how removed we were back then from the things you take for granted.'[127]

Hungry after emerging from gigs at nightclubs, McLuskie and his friends also enjoyed midnight snacks at 'the famed Chinese takeaways on Courtney [sic] Place just beside the music club Last Resort.' Open until late into

the night, this served 'really big wedges cooked in olive oil. It was the first place in Wellington to have big signs saying "All our food is cooked in olive oil."'[128] More recently, vegetarian restaurants have opened in the main cities to serve Buddhist-style Asian dishes. In the 1990s I sometimes ate at the Chinese Vegetarian House in Otahuhu, which served a bewildering range of fake meat dishes, such as sweet and sour pork ribs, chicken and chestnuts, and disturbingly authentic fake fish.

Vegetarian food from many countries

Further into the 1970s, New Zealand food became more cosmopolitan, and by 1979 Auckland had six completely vegetarian restaurants. The Diamond Restaurant offered a dish entitled 'Vegetarian Delight' and a variety of tofu-based dishes. At El Patio, a Chilean restaurant in High Street, vegetarians could find tortillas, and stuffed pimentos, deep-fried cauliflower, and an eggplant dish. French cuisine is not known for being vegetarian-friendly, but the French Tart served quiche with silver beet or cauliflower, and pancakes with courgettes, mushrooms, and asparagus.[129]

Right across the country, vegetarian food was becoming rather sophisticated. Dunedin vegetarians could enjoy 'international vegetarian cuisine' and live music at Potpourri in the late 1970s.[130] Dutch immigrant Eric Doornekamp was pleased when 'Greek restaurants came in and it was a bit more easy to be vegetarian because they had very good food.'[131] Popular Greek vegetarian dishes included spanakopita, stuffed vine leaves, eggplant dishes, and tiropetes. Doornekamp also dined happily at Italian restaurants that served lasagne and pizza with olives. The Hare Krishna movement opened Gopal's Restaurant in Auckland, and the Wellington Buddhist Association regularly held Asian vegetarian food fairs as fundraisers in the early 1980s.[132]

Ironically, in the 1970s and 1980s many young people within the Indian community began eating meat, around the same time that some young Pākehā were discovering vegetarianism. In the 1980s I briefly dated a young man of Indian descent who was amused that he, the Indian, was a meat-eater, while I was a vegetarian. Cultural influences could be complex, and sometimes unexpected. In the 1980s, Maria Verivaki, a young woman of Greek heritage, was studying in Wellington, and experimenting with cooking a wide range of dishes, including vegetarian recipes. She visited Eric Doornekamp's organic food co-op and clipped vegetarian recipes from Victoria University of Wellington's student newspaper *Salient*.'[133]

However, her 'most-stained' recipe book was the *Amrita Cook Book* (published by Doornekamp's Lotus Yoga Centre), as:

> 'It turned out to be the handiest during fasting periods in the Greek Orthodox church; it contained a number of vegan recipes that I perceived as making our meals more interesting, since we cut out milk, cheese and butter. Among my favourite recipes are the date and walnut loaf and the apple cake; I also gave the vegan tofu loaf a go (the comment on the recipe page says: made this—got to be pretty desperate!).'[134]

Verivaki's mother followed a vegan diet (supplemented with shellfish) during the Greek Orthodox church fasting periods. She preferred to cook traditional Greek meals. The family disliked innovations such as tofu, as it 'it wasn't regarded as a tasty addition to a meal.' However, the vegan recipes that Verivaki brought home were appreciated because they added 'a touch of something different to our regular meals.'[135]

The new diversity of vegetarian cuisine was reflected in cookbooks. In 1982, the Lotus Yoga Centre published Anna van der Lip's *Vegetarian Recipes from Many Countries*. The first recipe listed was Munkaczina, an orange and onion salad from Arabia. Van der Lip did not forget New Zealand—there was a section on indigenous foods, with instructions for preparing puha, pikopiko (fern tips), monehu (bracken shoots) and seaweed, and directions for a vegetarian hangi. Meanwhile, Dutch immigrant Nina Vink was living in Wainuiomata, and working on *An Introduction to Vegetarianism, with Basic Recipes* (1983). Vink's cookbook explained how to prepare a wide range of healthy vegetarian and vegan dishes, including some that fused Dutch and New Zealand styles of cooking.[136]

Whether dining out, or cooking at home, vegetarians could now choose from an appealing range of ingredients and flavours. Auckland vegetarian Valerie Davis commented in 1982:

> 'There have been treats and flavours discovered which one never knew existed…To people who love grub as much as I do, who drool, like Pavlov's dog at the mention of words like garlic, avocado, brie and camembert, who enjoy Italian, Vietnamese, and Indonesian cooking as much as Chinese or Indian tastes, food is too important not to enjoy it. There is more to food than dead animals.'[137]

As it became easier to find vegetarian food, the Sanitarium cafés and health food shops began to lose business. Adventist businesses also suffered from the advent of Saturday shopping, as managers were morally opposed to trading on the Sabbath. The last Sanitarium retail shops closed in 1988.[138] In a sense they were superseded by enterprises run by a competing vegetarian faith—the Hare Krishna restaurants, which served cheap and appetising Indian-style food. The tastes and textures available to vegetarians had changed in telling ways since the Adventist Ernest Hadfield first opened his 'Health Café—No Meat Served' in Auckland in 1901.[139]

8

Diet and the revolution

vegetarianism in the counterculture: 1960s–1990s

A few years ago I knew no vegetarians apart from the lady who taught yoga in Onehunga. Suddenly I know lots. Apparently some people are taking to lentil stews, and claiming they feel better for it.
— Auckland journalist Helen Davis, 1970.[1]

On April 30th, 1971, over thirty thousand New Zealanders marched through Auckland to protest against the Vietnam War. People danced in the streets. Tim Shadbolt stood on the steps of the post office, screaming 'Power to the People,' fake blood dripping down his face.[2] Anti-war demonstrations marked the beginning of years of outrage against nuclear weapons, apartheid, sexism, and environmental degradation. They also indicated a profound shift in values. Young people all over the Western world questioned social norms that seemed materialistic, selfish, and exploitative. They looked for new ways of relating to others and the world around them, ways that were more authentic, ecological and harmonious.

It is difficult to define the counterculture—sometimes it seems a tapestry of divergent dreams, gestures, and ideologies, with a few common threads. Historian Megan Simpson describes the counterculture as 'essentially a non-movement that was united only by its opposition to the Establishment.'[3] This opposition could include refusing to eat meat for spiritual, ethical, or environmental reasons. As Tim Shadbolt puts it 'Vegetarianism was very much part of the anti war, happier alternative lifestyle cultural

revolution of the 60's.'[4] Bill Wheeler, the leader of a North California commune, announced that 'Diet is very very central to the revolution', and that 'when carrion is consumed, people are really greedy.'[5] *Time* magazine described the vegetarian hippy scene:

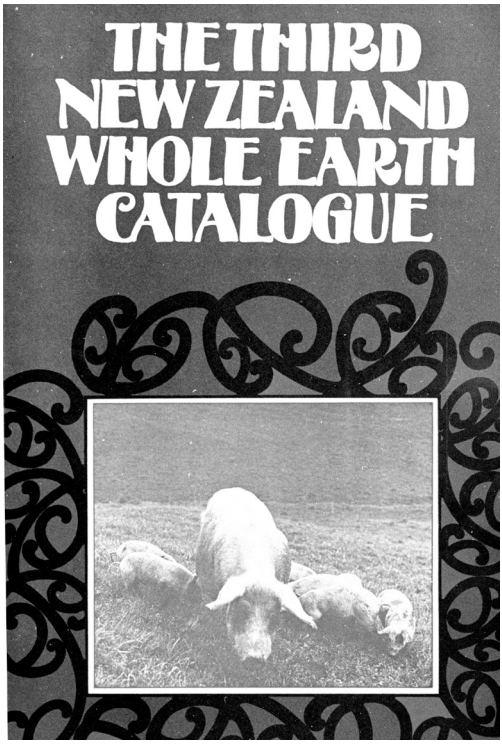
> 'When Yale students played host to Black Panther supporters last spring, for example, they fed their thousands of visitors not hot dogs and Coke, but a special recipe of oats, dates, sunflower seeds, peanuts, prunes, raisins, and cornflakes. Indeed, at Woodstock itself, the free kitchens of the Hog Commune ladled out rice, carrots, and raisins for all comers'.[6]

Experiencing other traditions also influenced young people and how they ate. Overseas travel became more affordable in the 1960s, and young people explored the United States, Europe and Asia, living cheaply, and discovering new flavours and cooking traditions. Janine McVeagh travelled to London to party at rock concerts and clubs, then hitch-hiked back to New Zealand through North Africa, Italy, Greece, the Middle East and India, living on about fifty cents a day. On the way, she met other young people from Western countries. They slept rough, stayed with local people, and ate local food. McVeagh and her friends were vegetarian, 'partly because on such small amounts of money buying fruit and veges at the markets was a lot cheaper and went a lot further than expensive, often fly-blown, meat. Also, most of the families we stayed with were poor and rarely had meat.'[7]

When the young travellers returned to New Zealand, they shared their new ideas and recipes with their friends. Although we do not to know how many within the counterculture strictly avoided meat, the young vegetarians who were active in the anti-war, alternative lifestyle, anti-apartheid, environmental, feminist, and anti-nuclear movements all helped make vegetarianism more visible within New Zealand society. Vegetarian food became more available, diverse and delicious.

The literature of the counterculture

Manuals such as *The New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogues* wove together the diverse voices of counterculture activists. The editors hoped that these would become 'handbook[s] of social change' for individuals 'in their twenties, well educated, idealists, pacifists, often creative, usually long-haired, and resistant to the pressures of social conformity.'[8] These were the kind of people who rejected plastic consumer culture, with its mass-



Front cover of *The Third New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue*, depicting a pig farm, K E Niven and Co Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z., F- 74524-35mmF- 74524-35mm

produced, over-processed, chemical-laden sausages and hamburgers.[9] *The Whole Earth Catalogues* discussed diet, often in the context of Eastern spirituality and self-awareness. Some contributors recommended a macrobiotic regime, describing this as:

> 'One of the ancient oriental arts of healing…By understanding balance in our eating habits, we can understand the subtle balancing that mind and body go through all the time…When you're next preparing a meal or snack, remember yin and yang, and help your mind understand what your body already knows.'[10]

Articles such as 'Food for the New Age,' presented vegetarianism as a spiritual trip that offered a path to 'self-discovery and self unfoldment.'

> 'You begin to really "feel" for our co-habitants on this planet, and their place in the overall scheme of things in the great plan. You become more aware of the needless suffering endured by our animal friends. The question arises "Why kill for food?"'[11]

However, *The Whole Earth Catalogues* were not explicitly vegetarian. Articles on meat-free diets and vegetable gardening sat alongside instructions on how to castrate calves and raise pigs for the table—the 'trip' was about being more connected with food production, whether that involved growing one's own soybeans, or cutting a pig's throat.

Waitati's *Mushroom* magazine offered further opportunities to discuss diet and lifestyle. Aimed at those who were looking for 'something that has got to be better than the isolated suburbia trip,' *Mushroom* reflects the preoccupations of the counterculture in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[12] One could find all about 'communes and communities; the Ohu scheme; homesteading; rural technology; alternative schooling; natural foods; organic gardening and farming; crafts; survival in cities; personal awareness.'[13] *Mushroom's* pages included practical advice on how best to bring up children on a meatless diet, and how to turn old tyres into sandals, without glue, nails, or leather.[14] In the first issue, a rural family discussed the ethics of keeping animals for milk, eggs, and wool, and their journey towards a vegan lifestyle:

> 'Our diet has radically changed from the meat everyday regimen of twenty year application: to anything goes lacto-vegetarianism exploring the sentient delights of egg dishes with roast [vegetables] and sauté and dessert…to a continuing inspection of the Wisdom in including any animal products in our diet…We now understand that long term keeping of these [farm] animals equates with inevitable slaughter of creatures. A yard burgeoning with Billy goats, roosters, and old hens is not on, so you kill (passing the Buck incurs the same harm), or eliminate animal products from the diet. We are tending to veganism.'[15]

Not all the contributors, of course, agreed. In 1977 an anonymous writer published an article in *Mushroom* suggesting that readers trap and skin possums for 'beer money.' This kindled a brisk debate in the letters' column about the ethics of killing possums, a discussion that continues today. Denis Smith from rural Northland was appalled at the idea of killing animals for food or profit:

> 'The destruction of life is always a crime, and every coin gained from this immoral business is stained in blood…The killing of beasts as a substitute for fruit and veges and other economical kai is needless and without a shadow of justification, for people have been bred into

> this perverted habit by the selfish greed of those who make money out of the agonies of the animal kingdom.'[16]

The literature of the counterculture gives a feel for its food philosophies, which foreshadow those of today's 'slow food' movement. Both *Mushroom* and *The Whole Earth Catalogues* rejected 'the white sugar, white flour, white rice, greed conspiracy [that] is slowly but very surely killing us.'[17] Instead, one should prefer unprocessed, homegrown, or local ingredients. *Whole Earth Catalogue* contributors Mike and Felicity praised the virtues of homemade wholemeal bread:

> 'You'll never get it to rise like the plastic bread because the ingredients are heavy and there's no junk in it to give it that sponge-like texture. But a slice of homemade bread will fill you more than four slices of plastic will, and it's got enough goodness in it to deserve the name 'the staff of life.'"[18]

Vegetables should preferably be grown at home. *The First New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue* explained how to plant soybeans 'anywhere that is warm enough to grow sweet corn.'[19] Home-grown sunflower seeds were also a valuable source of vegetable protein. Stoned gardeners needed to beware, however, as 'sunflowers can be somewhat disturbing creatures to have around while tripping. Instant paranoia can be generated by all those serried ranks of giant teddy bear eyes all craning their necks to look at you.'[20] The author of 'Beans are Beautiful' recommended raising one's own vegetables organically, and preserving or drying the harvest for a continued supply.[21] Sun-drying vegetables was a natural, ecologically friendly process:

> 'The oldest known method of preserving food is through the process of natural drying, utilizing the free energy of the sun…take a lesson from the ancients and experiment with various things. When the food is completely dehydrated it can be stored in bags, jars, whatever you have. Keep it in a cool, dark dry place, and your labors will be enjoyed all winter.'[22]

Countercultural literature also explored the economic and social rationale for vegetarian diets. In 1971 Frances Moore Lappé published *Diet for a Small Planet*, in which she pointed out that raising animals for meat is an inefficient way of producing food, and that humans can easily obtain adequate protein by combining plant foods. Her arguments made quite an

impression on young New Zealanders. Kevin Hague, now a Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand politician, read Lappé's book while an Auckland University student. He became a strict vegetarian, resolving 'to take only what resources I need from the natural world and to harm the natural world to the least extent possible.'[23] Others felt that the point was to cut down on animal products, rather than abstaining altogether. *Deborah McCormack* reviewed Lappé's book in the *Third New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue* (1977):

> 'The contention—and it is not new—is that it is easy to obtain an optimum diet without meat. By combining grains and beans we obtain more than the sum of assimilable proteins taken separately… and indeed more high quality protein (if soya [beans] are used) than in an equivalent amount of meat. So though weed-eating [i.e. eating wild plants] and vegetarianism are independent practices, I have combined them, and now buy very little meat or fish.'[24]

Perhaps the lengthy article 'Food' in *The Second New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue* best summed up countercultural attitudes towards diet:

> 'Getting away from processed foods might be part of getting away from an over-processed life to more simple basic needs…Maybe you don't eat meat at all because of the way you feel about animals. Maybe you don't eat meat, or perhaps just eat less than your average NZ'er because of how you see the world. It's a lot more wasteful to grow grain and other stock foods and feed them to animals than it is to eat the grain and the stock foods (veges) yourself. It isn't possible for all peoples to eat [a] heavy meat diet.'[25]

Tim Shadbolt and Renee de Rijk

The stories of young New Zealanders offer us a deeper understanding of countercultural vegetarianism. Tim Shadbolt was one of the editors of *The First New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue*, and his writings give a feeling both for the protest movement and for what it was like to be vegetarian in prison.[26] Born in Auckland in 1947, Shadbolt grew up in a state house in Blockhouse Bay. In 1966 he enrolled to study history at Auckland University, and met Dutch student Renee de Rijk, 'a pacifist, a vegetarian, a humanitarian, a political activist and a wonderful girl.'[27] Her quiet example influenced Shadbolt and other radical students to stop eating meat.[28]

De Rijk and Shadbolt helped set up the theatrical protest group, Ausapocpah—The Auckland University Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Politically Apathetic Humans. The eight members made large flowing red and black capes and wore bowler hats. De Rijk remembers that:

> 'Ausapocpah was active on many fronts: we were against the war in Vietnam, we thought about prison reform and reforms in education, we "liberated" with many others Myers Park and Albert Park (Tim and I and probably some others held a hunger strike in Myers Park in an effort to get attention from the press and in that way motivate people to join us) and we were anarchists or socialists. The yippies (political hippies) in the States were our heroes and heroines.'[29]

In the late 1960s, Shadbolt was arrested at a protest against sporting ties with South Africa, and fined eighty dollars. He refused to pay. While visiting Wellington during the university Arts Festival, he left a drinking session at the 'Duke' to find a police car waiting for him. He spent the next month at Mount Crawford Prison:

> 'My new home looked like a barricaded American fortress. Cold and unfriendly. Bleak cold concrete. The guards looked and talked bloody terribly. My clothes were changed for grey monotonous prison gear. I thought about refusing a hair-cut but wanted to be with the boys and see prison life; for me to go into solitary would suit them fine. So I submitted to the final act of reduction to mass conformity—dress/grey, head/bald, inspiration/nil, education/none. Discipline/uniforms/uniformity. An excellent preparation for New Zealand society, grey and dull. Off come fourteen inches of hair, my first haircut in six years.'[30]

Food in New Zealand prisons had improved little since the Hansen brothers were detained as conscientious objectors during the Second World War. At Mount Crawford, prisoners in solitary confinement received just one ounce of butter, two spoons of white sugar, five slices of white bread and half a pint of milk a day.[31] As an ordinary prisoner, Shadbolt received an egg for breakfast, but there was no attempt to provide a balanced vegetarian diet. 'At tea the kitchen guard gave me a full plate of carrots and swedes as a vegetarian meal, a bloody insult to the whole principle of vegetarianism. I think it pissed the guards off no end.'[32]

On a visit to the prison superintendent, he demanded a meat-free diet on ethical grounds. The superintendent advised him to see the prison doctor, stating that 'this was a medical issue, not a moral one.' Unfortunately, the doctor refused to allow a special diet, and Shadbolt survived on meagre portions of vegetables. He described 'the vegetarian issue…[as] a long battle. Because I was medically fit, they refused to substitute my diet. They simply didn't serve me any meat, which meant I spent some nights really hungry, so hungry I'd chew the corner of my blanket to get to sleep.'[33]

After a few days he was transferred to the maximum security wing, where he was locked up for eighteen hours a day, spending the rest of the time in the recreation area—a cage of 'concrete walls, filthy green slime, open toilets in one corner strewn with toilet paper. The guards look over us. A wider centre for walking around like a caged animal.'[34] Here he fed the sparrows every morning.[35] Through Renee de Rijk, Shadbolt sent a message to an unidentified 'prominent vegetarian.' Shadbolt complained about how difficult it was to get appropriate food, but the reply came that 'a good vegetarian shouldn't be in prison.' In the meantime, Shadbolt solved the problem himself. When he was called into the superintendent's office to discuss his fine, he used the opportunity to ask for more food. Finally, he received extra milk, eggs and vegetables.[36]

At the end of the month he was released, and continued to protest against war and apartheid. He was arrested and fined many times. Once a judge fined him a hundred dollars for saying the word 'bullshit' in public. In 1972 he helped set up the Huia commune near the small village of Huia, on a ribbon of land between the Manukau harbour and the Waitakere Ranges. He and his friends:

> 'didn't want anything to do with this selfish, greedy, materialistic, environmentally destructive consumer society. We would return to our pioneer roots and start again. This time we wouldn't clear, fell, and burn the forests, but would delicately create small plots for organic gardens, and live gentle, co-operative lives based on sensitivity and compassion towards our brothers and sisters. We aspired to follow in the footsteps of Gandhi and Te Whiti.'[37]

As Shadbolt put it in *Bullshit and Jellybeans*, 'the commune philosophy was to try and break down the physical barriers like bedroom walls, fences, hedges, steel cubicles (cars) and also psychological barriers like cynicism, fear, stiff upper-lip politeness, small talk, and arrogance'.[38] Huia had ten

acres of kauri forests and streams. The commune members bought two hundred dollars worth of car cases and built five baches. They grew organic vegetables and followed a largely vegetarian diet, though some ate fish that they caught in the Manukau harbour. Sometimes they released the first fish caught, as a gift to Tangaroa, the Māori guardian of the seas.[39] Eventually, Shadbolt joined the Māori Land March of 1975, and started eating meat again because 'I suppose as a non-Māori I just wanted to fit in rather than stand out.[40]

Dan Hansen and Wilderland

Young people started communes in many parts of the country, and sometimes these were largely or fully vegetarian. Wilderland in the Coromandel was one of the more influential of these. In the early 1960s Dan Hansen was living at the Beeville pacifist vegetarian community in the Waikato, and happened to read Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Carson documented the lethal impact of commercial pesticides on birds and other wild animals, and imagined a future spring without birdsong, as chemicals had poisoned all the birds. Dan felt that 'what she said there made great good sense, because it was fairly obvious that you couldn't poison the insects etc. without also poisoning yourself.'[41] He and his wife Edith began looking for land where they could live organically, without using toxic chemicals. On a trip to the Coromandel they drove down a clay road to find 250 acres of bush-covered hills overlooking Whitianga Harbour and Mercury Bay. They decided to buy the land, naming it Wilderland in honour of Tolkein's Middle Earth. In 1964 they left Beeville in a truck stacked high with furniture, machinery, tools, chickens, and goats.[42] Slowly, they settled into the 'rather suspicious and conservative community,' amid rumours of free love and nudism. Most of the land was covered in scrub, and they gradually cleared this, letting the branches decompose and return nutrients to the earth. They planted organic gardens, and orchards, and sold produce from a tent by the road, building a permanent shop in 1971.[43] Dan and Edith were both vegetarian.[44] They aspired:

> 'To find how to live a life which is good, both to the individual and to the collective; a life which is of value to all…
>
> To produce health giving food in ways which are ecologically and nutritionally sound, and to introduce and develop new species and varieties of food crops…

> To be a link in the network of all people working through peace to end violence, oppression and war.'[45]

The Hansens hated the animal exploitation inherent in factory farms, where 'thousands of hens are kept in batteries in really terrible conditions and you get farmers who have cows and handle them cruelly, in all sorts of ways.'[46] Dan kept bees, and tried to care responsibly for them:

> 'Animal life can be exploited—or you can live with bees or other forms of life respecting them, caring for them, and being sensitive to their needs…Money's not a first consideration in whatever you're doing, really, is it? It's secondary to doing things the right and proper way.'[47]

In the late 1960s, thousands of young people from the counterculture came to visit the community. Unlike many other communes of the time, Wilderland was 'free from the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs of all kinds… Our diet is basically home-grown organic vegetarian.'[48] Visitors often found Wilderland impressive. Teacher Tim Jones stayed at the community in the 1970s, and enjoyed vegetables fresh from the gardens:

> 'Before sundown, Dutch Peter and I would usually take a stroll around some of the gardens collecting a large variety of ingredients for a magnificent salad. At Wilderland I find that the salads have a distinct effect on me. My body quickly feels light and a sense of wellbeing pervades it, making me feel quite high. I'm not sure whether it is the number of ingredients, the richness of the soil or the loving care with which the gardening is done. Perhaps it is all of these things.'[49]

Other visitors described the 'absolutely beautiful vege and fruit gardens, dotted among the trees, hidden along paths going in so many different directions—and the people there are lovingly welcoming too.'[50] Dan Hansen passed away in 2006, but Wilderland continues to exist, with a new group of residents working towards 'better ways of living and sustaining communities in harmony with our environment and each other.'[51] The community remains largely meat-free, though sometimes members may catch fish from the estuary.[52]

The *Fri* and the antinuclear movement

Other activists were particularly concerned with protesting against nuclear testing, and the threat of nuclear war. On July 2nd, 1966, the French government detonated a plutonium fission bomb from a barge floating

over the lagoon at the Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia. Over the following years, Mururoa Atoll became a focal point for anti-nuclear protests. In 1973, twenty-eight-year old Emma Moodie arrived in Auckland on the *Fri,* a protest ship. Moodie ran a health food store in California in the late 1960s, where she met her husband David Moodie. The couple moved to Vermont, farmed for a while, then travelled across the United States selling maple syrup. In 1970 they saw the *Fri* on sale, bought her, and sailed to the Pacific to demonstrate against French nuclear testing. As one of the cooks on the ship, Moodie prepared 'vegetarian and strictly wholesome' meals based around organically grown vegetables, and rice:

> 'There is more to being health food conscious than merely buying food from proprietary brand health-food manufacturers…It takes time to track things down, but we ask around and find where you can buy this or that. We buy in bulk so it lasts for months, so it isn't really as time-consuming as it seems. It is much better for you and you can enjoy doing it—comparing prices and talking to other people and finding it all out.'[53]

As the ship had no refrigeration to keep meat fresh, a vegetarian menu was practical as well as healthy. Dairy products rapidly went sour in the heat, so they made yoghurt with milk powder. Soybeans quickly fermented, but remained edible for two days if curried.[54] The cooks bought fresh vegetables in case lots, using the perishables first. As the green vegetables ran out, they tended a 'bean sprout garden' of muslin-topped preserving jars filled with alfalfa and mung bean shoots, moving the jars up to the deck to catch the sun during the day, and taking them back down to the warm galley at night.[55] Moodie served up granola, soy burgers, wholemeal bread, pinto beans with tomato sauce, and cabbage salads with carrots, onions, sprouts, and diced apple:

> 'The main thing is not to be put off. So brown rice takes 45 minutes to cook. But by the time you have washed and chopped the vegetables and scrubbed the potatoes and made a salad, the time has probably gone away. It is worth it. I feel really good; very rarely have colds or aches, and if I am not getting enough of something or other, my body tells me.'[56]

Moodie and her husband ran a ferry service in New Zealand for a few months before sailing off to protest against French nuclear testing at

Mururoa in July 1973. They took on new crew in New Zealand, some of whom ate meat, but the diet on board remained largely vegetarian.[57]

The goats of Arapawa Island

While activists aboard the *Fri* were protesting against nuclear testing, American immigrant Betty Rowe was exploring vegetarianism, feminism and animal rights. In 1969 Rowe, her husband Walt and their three children arrived from Pennsylvania, seeking to escape from the materialism of life in the United States. After a brief stay in Southland, they began farming sheep on Arapawa Island in the Marlborough Sounds in the early 1970s. In *The Second New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue*, she described her delight in life at 'Aotea, our kingdom by the sea.' She and Walt avoided artificial fertilisers and chemical sprays as much as possible and 'learned the joy of watching things grow and come nourishingly to our table.'[58] Often she took in lost or injured wild animals. One day Walt found a sick and emaciated baby goat, huddled next to the stiffened body of her mother. A hunter had killed the mother and the baby's leg was shattered, with a festering sore. Walt took the kid home, where Rowe fed her from a bottle, and named her Jody. Rowe also adopted Samantha, another orphaned kid, who was 'robust, vocal, independent, and scornful of any attempt to tame her wild spirit.'[59]

Samantha and Jody thrived, nudging their way into the hearts of everyone in the household. As Rowe tramped around the hills of Arapawa Island, she learned more about the lives and habits of the wild sheep and goats. However, in the mid 1970s, the Department of Lands and Survey decided that the wild goats were damaging the native vegetation, and should be exterminated. Rowe was dismayed by the official attitude towards 'pests:'

> 'Gentle creatures like deer, goats, chamois, thar, are considered public enemy number one, with vast expenditure of the taxpayer's money spent on their destruction…The opossum feels as much pain and is as deserving of compassion as the cat or kiwi…Man is the perpetrator of the sins our wildlife is blamed for. Because we fail to manage these animals properly, we resort to policies of eradication to cover our guilt.'[60]

She started a campaign to save the goats, arguing that they were descended from a breed of Old English goat that had become extinct in Great Britain,

and that hence they were of heritage value. The authorities did not listen, and dispatched a Forest Service squad to shoot the herd of goats. When the hunters arrived, Rowe led groups of protesters into the hills to disrupt the slaughter. People sent rocks cascading down the slope, creating a 'commotion that caused hunter and hunted alike to seek safety elsewhere. The shooters headed for their camp and the goats ran for cover.'[61] Day after day, around thirty campaigners climbed the hills, risking bullets to protect the goats. Years later, Rowe remembered the danger:

> 'Suddenly a shot rang out so close that we both flattened ourselves to the ground, faces down…I crawled commando-style to the top of the knoll and listened intently for any sound. I almost jumped out of my skin when another shot rang out above me and watched horrified as a little buck vaulted head over heels past where I crouched, then lay dying with half its side blown away. I could make out two figures above me and a small group of goats below milling about in frightened confusion. I saw the shooter raise his rifle and something inside exploded. I jumped to my feet and, screaming like a wild animal, raced pell-mell down the steep incline towards the goats. I tripped and fell and screamed again as I landed heavily on a boulder. Staggering to my feet, I picked up rocks and hurled them at the goats below to make them run. I screamed until I was hoarse: 'Run, run. Don't just stand there, run! With tails up and beards flying, they raced out of sight.'[62]

Rowe began question many things she had once taken for granted. Around 1977 she stopped eating meat, fish, and poultry, feeling that it was inconsistent to campaign for some animals, while eating others. She found standard farm practices heart-rending. Every year, Walt and the other farm workers castrated the male lambs without anaesthetic, and she argued with him about the ethics of such farm practices. 'Hardly a day went by without a bitter disagreement over what I saw as cruelty to the animals and a deliberate denial of my right to participate in the running of the farm.'[63] After many arguments with Walt, she decided that their different points of view could not be resolved, and she walked out:

> 'I didn't fit the role of the dutiful farmer's wife…I refused to be relegated to the bed and breakfast brigade, and since I was in the liberating mood, I issued Walt with an ultimatum—either I assumed what I considered my rightful place in the decision-making process,

> which for me meant a reaffirmation of our original purpose and a move away from the exploitation of the sheep, or I was leaving…The battle reached its zenith one hot November day, and I renounced my share of Aotea, lock, stock, and wool bale.'[64]

She took off her wedding ring, and moved to a dilapidated shack at the other end of Arapawa Island, feeling herself a 'liberated woman.' Her three terriers, the farmhouse cats, and the small herd of friendly goats followed her there. Her new quarters were old and rickety, shaking during southerly storms, and on wild nights Rowe huddled in the basement with the goats, gaining comfort from the warmth of their sleeping bodies. For eighteen months, she lived alone apart from the animals, taking long walks in the hills to gather firewood, and wondering if she had made the right decision:

> 'I would strongly recommend to my sisters that, should they decide to go it alone, they see to it that they are in a better position than I was. An island, perfect as it may be when getting away from it all, is not at all ideal when burning your bra and declaring your equality…there is no-one around to appreciate your gestures of defiance.'[65]

Walt was feeling uncertain about his own choices. On her fifty-second birthday, Rowe heard a knock on the door. She looked up to see Walt standing on the veranda, holding a bunch of flowers. 'You win!' he said. Slowly, they renewed their relationship. Eventually he turned vegetarian, and gave up sheep farming. Together they worked to protect the goats and other wildlife, setting up the Arapawa Sanctuary where the goats 'could live their lives with dignity without having to justify their right to life by benefiting mankind in some way.'[66]

The women's movement and vegetarianism

While Rowe was asserting her independence on Arapawa Island, other women were also questioning male domination. In 1972, two hundred women gathered in Wellington to attend the country's first women's liberation conference. The following year, fifteen hundred women participated in the United Women's Convention in Auckland. The 'second wave' feminist movement grew swiftly.[67] Women organised protests against sexism and patriarchy, and formed collectives to provide women-focused health and social services. Some politically active women stopped eating meat, while others drew connections between women's rights, environmental-

ism, animal liberation, and anti-racism. As Pat Hunter explained in *Bitches, Witches & Dykes*:

> 'When we cry over the destruction of the environment, the clubbing of baby seals, the robbing of Maori land, the rape of women and children, we are calling from the gut, from our spirit, and protesting against the patriarchy's culture.'[68]

In Auckland, the Senior Women's Liberation group discussed topics ranging from 'gay feminism' to vegetarianism and herb culture at their monthly meetings in the Ellen Melville Hall.[69] The Dunedin-based 'Daybreak' feminist bookstore stocked vegetarian recipe books.[70] On International Women's Day in 1972 vegetarian feminist Christine Bird dressed up in a nineteenth century costume and chained herself to the railings in Christchurch's Cathedral Square to 'symbolise the continuation of women's oppression.'[71]

Some women drew explicit links between animal exploitation and female degradation. Christchurch women's rights activist Yolanda Soryl regarded the exploitation of animals as a further example of 'the way that we treat any group in our society that we deem to be powerless, or the way that we keep them powerless, whether that be animals or people of colour or [different] gender or sexual orientation.' She asked other feminists to stop eating meat:

> 'When I hear women justify eating animals by saying that it tastes good, or even asserting their right to eat meat as a reaction to 'loud' vegetarians, I think of men's reaction to 'loud' feminists and their refusal to give up power over women. To give up our power over animals involves change—changing what we eat and buy. To become vegetarian is to eat for life—our own lives and those of animals.'[72]

By the mid-1980s, Soryl had the impression that many women seemed to be giving up meat:

> 'Vegetarianism was quite exciting. If the women's group had a meeting, [the food] would be vegetarian, well it wouldn't be today. But then it would be seen as that's what you did. You would try and be pro-vegetarian. Maybe it was just a time when people were more open.'[73]

Belinda, an activist in the Wellington Women's Workshop, described the 'meat cult' as 'a particularly male thing.' Women, she argued, were pressured into cooking meat by their husbands, who as the breadwinners felt 'entitled to impose their food tastes on the whole family.' She saw connections between meat-eating and sexual exploitation:

> 'A vague, but I think very significant, food myth of our society is that meat is somehow associated with virility and sexual potency. One of the nastiest and most revealing slang expressions for (male) fucking is "getting your meat in."'[74]

Belinda suggested that women could prepare themselves vegetarian Chinese, Indian, Middle-Eastern or South American dishes, while keeping their male partners happy by throwing 'a couple of chops or sausages under the grill—better still to get him to do it—while you cook your way.'[75]

Vegetarianism and youth

Meanwhile, young urban music fans were also exploring vegetarianism. In 1975, Wellington teenager Peter McLuskie studied Zen Buddhism and the Kabbalah, listened to rock music, and experimented with a meat-free diet. Many of his friends were vegetarian or semi-vegetarian, and he estimated that 'over 50 per cent of the scene of young cool rock'n roll types in the late seventies and early eighties were vegetarian…we were the first group that actually made our parents sit up and notice that we had become vegetarian.'[76] As American historian Warren J. Belasco notes, 'the counter-cuisine brought the war home to the family dinner table.'[77] Vegetarianism was one way of defining oneself in opposition to parents and authority figures. Shortly after reading Peter Singer's influential *Animal Liberation*, McLuskie had an encounter with a policeman that reinforced his decision not to eat meat. One Friday night he and his friends were driving down Willis Street, not far from the headquarters of the Ministry of Transport:

> 'Coming the other way was a traffic policeman on a motorbike, and as he approached, John said the immortal words 'You can tell that boy was raised on braised sausages.' And I saw in every pore of his body braised sausages!…[Along with reading *Animal Liberation*, this] led me to becoming vegetarian very strongly and firmly for the rest of my life.'[78]

The image of vegetarianism was changing. McLuskie considers that 'there was almost a re-invention of vegetarian culture in the 1970s within New Zealand. We felt culturally removed from the Vegetarian Society. There's the hippies with their mung beans type thing.'[79]

There was still the problem of how to get by on a meatless diet, especially if you didn't know how to cook, and preferred to spend your time partying and going to gigs. For some, it was a 'fast-food existence.' McLuskie comments that vegetarianism 'wasn't a health thing at all, it was lifestyle, reggae music was coming in…We wanted vegetarian fast food, cool surroundings.' Nightclubs such as Wellington's Last Resort offered cake and live music:

> 'A large carpeted room with the band down one end, people used to sit cross legged on the floor very often cos it wasn't really for dancing a lot of the time and there weren't many chairs. They would serve filter coffee and chocolate cake with whipped cream.'[80]

He remembers with affection the 'Happy Carrot' takeaway in Willis Street, where you could buy baked potatoes and a 'really good' Vogel's bread sandwich in 1975. McLuskie also tried Lebanese fast food for the first time:

> 'One night Kerry said, right we're going out to get takeaways, we're going to the Lebanese place…[When we looked at the menu, the falafels] were so cheap I thought I must have to buy two to get something [big enough]. So I ordered two. They were enormous. I remember thinking determinedly I must at least make an attempt to finish the second one, going my God…and it was so delicious!'[81]

After moving to Auckland in the mid-1980s McLuskie discovered Uncles, a burger bar just off Ponsonby Road, which fried up tofu burgers 'with a huge slab of tofu, [and] a tempeh burger which I had never come across before. It was the first time I really felt, yes I have been catered for a vegetarian.'[82]

Otherwise, vegetarian eating was often a matter of toast in the kitchen. McLuskie recalls living on 'Vogel's bread, peanut butter, Marmite, cheese on toast—anything you could put on Vogel's bread…Vogel's bread is one of the most important factors in the healthy survival of the new vegetarians.'[83] Some young people did enjoy cooking. McLuskie's friend Debra Schulze enjoyed inventing recipes for flat dinner parties.

> 'There weren't many vegetarian recipes so we had to make them up. I used to do this lovely bean casserole, soaking the beans overnight, then boiling them up, putting in all sorts of goodies and then baking in the oven. Brussels sprouts on top, sounds awful, but tastes divine!'[84]

When young people rejected good New Zealand lamb in favour of sprouts and lentils, this could seem rather startling to parents and neighbours. Food writer David Burton still remembers the disapproval in his rural Southland community when his neighbour arrived home from university in 1971 with his new girlfriend, a 'petite waif laden with a small tonnage of silver jewellery.' She had persuaded him to give up meat:

> 'His mother was shocked. Several days later my own mother announced, with a victorious expression, that Hamish's mother was a dietician at the local hospital and knew what she was talking about, and she had told her that she had been monitoring their diet ever since they arrived, and had concluded that Hamish could not possibly be getting enough protein.'[85]

Burton concluded that 'to Southlanders, vegetarianism was outright heresy, a concept so foreign that it was literally beyond their comprehension.'[86] The publisher and environmentalist Craig Potton comments that:

> 'The alternative culture embraced vegetarianism in New Zealand, but the 'straight' culture didn't so much fear it as was astounded by it. It takes a long time to convince people that eat meat that they most likely eat too much protein and fats and that you can get all you need from vegetables.'[87]

Vegetarian restaurants and recipes

Even if vegetarians had to face questions from puzzled meat-eaters, life was becoming easier, whether eating out or cooking at home. *The Third New Zealand Whole Earth Catalogue* (1977) listed eight vegetarian restaurants and forty-seven health food shops around the country, not counting Sanitarium outlets.[88] Meat-free cafés popped up in the main cities, and even mainstream restaurants such as Wellington's El Casino added a vegetarian option to their menu. The counterculture's food attitudes were reflected in a new genre of vegetarian cookbooks, published overseas but eagerly perused in New Zealand. Mollie Katzen's *The Moosewood Cookbook* (1977), and its successor, *The Enchanted Broccoli Forest* (1982), redefined vegetar-

ian food as sensuous and imaginative, rather than morally earnest and stodgy. Katzen celebrated vegetables, rather than trying to imitate roasts, pies, and sausages. Her books were works of art in themselves—hand-lettered and imaginatively illustrated with pen and ink drawings. The dishes incorporated ingredients that were 'not your typical grocery store items'—tamari, tofu, tahini, black mushrooms, fresh ginger root, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, sesame oil, 'lots of fresh garlic and cooking onions.' Katzen recommended keeping on hand 'dry red (Burgundy), white (Chablis or Sauterne) and sherry. These recipes frequently call for wine.'[89]

Anna Thomas' *The Vegetarian Epicure* was as sophisticated as it sounded, with recipes for oranges in white wine and brandy, and dried wild mushrooms and potatoes in wine sauce.[90] Thomas recommended 'sipping a gin and tonic or Pimm's and soda' as 'excellent, cooling accompaniments' to spicy Indian dishes.[91] Thomas advised serving a second course a couple of hours after the main meal:

> 'especially if grass is smoked socially at your house. If you have passed a joint around before dinner to sharpen gustatory perceptions, you most likely will pass another one after dinner, and everyone knows what that will do—the blind munchies can strike at any time.'[92]

In the 1970s, women's rights activist Christine Dann was given a copy of *The Vegetarian Epicure*, and was intrigued and delighted, finding the book 'full of truly delicious recipes from around the world.'[93]

On the home front, at least eleven vegetarian cookbooks were published in New Zealand between 1965 and 1979*—more than in all the preceding decades put together. *The Campus Cookbook of Health-Food Preparation: Cookery for the Aquarian Age,* probably New Zealand's first vegan cookbook, appeared in 1974. Author Kay Ponting explained that:

> 'The ideal of a bloodless diet is no longer an idle dream…Many of us feel that if animal husbandry were abolished and the land tilled to produce rice, grain, leaf and fruit crops, we would have ample food supplies for the poor of the earth.'[94]

The Nambassa Festivals

A shift in consciousness was evident in the early New Zealand rock music festivals. Thousands of people attended the Nambassa Festivals. Held

* Figure obtained by searching the National Library of New Zealand catalogue, 24 August, 2011

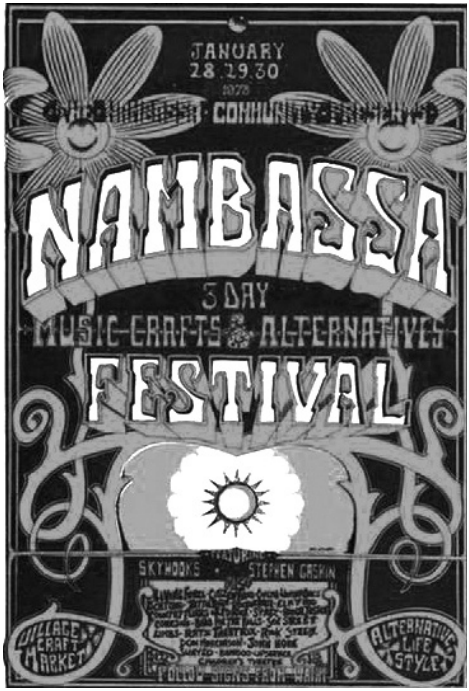
in Waihi between 1978 and 1981, these were meat and alcohol-free. The Nambassa organisers hoped to raise funds for 'a co-operative village of a spiritual new age direction, non-sectarian, vegetarian, with education of ourselves and our wider community as our ultimate goal.'[95] Around seventy-five thousand people arrived at the 1979 festival to sunbathe naked and listen to rock bands; it was the largest music festival ever held in New Zealand. The festival-goers queued for vegetarian meals at the Nambassa 'Village Market', which was arranged in the form of a five-petalled flower, each petal containing twelve assorted small stalls and one large food stall.[96] Nambassa brought together the different threads of countercultural vegetarianism, as young rock'n'roll vegetarians and older folk from the Vegetarian Society and communes such as Beeville all arrived in Waihi. Wellington vegetarians Peter McLuskie and Debbie Schulze tasted Hare Krishna food for the first time at music festivals:

> 'Lovely! That's when the new spices started appearing…They distributed food for free at the music festivals—they would just set up a tent and feed people. If you were willing to sit around for half an hour chanting Hare Krishna Hare Rama, you could get a really nice vegetarian meal.'[97]

There were many other food stalls. A 'solid feed' cost about one and a half dollars. A Thai food booth, 'Meaow' served omelettes, rice and fried vegetables, dressed in 'authentic Chinese sauces.' Margo's 'Whole Earth Foods' dished out vast quantities of salad, chow mein, omelettes, and banana milkshakes. The festival was an intense, exhausting time for the stallholders, as thousands of people demanded food. Margo barely slept for the five nights of the event, and found herself entering 'a dream state of rhythmical food preparation. It feels as if you could live forever awake like that.'[98] Kathy and Mike McLaughlin from Gisborne ran a 'Joy of Soy' workshop. The festival power supply failed and it started raining, but they invited their audience to squeeze under the roof of their tent, where they sampled tofu and soy nuts 'like at a crowded cocktail party. It felt very warm and friendly.'[99] The McLaughlins distributed recipes for spiced tofu spread, soy coffee and 'Soy Souflee'.

As well as music and vegetarian food, there were workshops on alternative technologies, healthy living, and political and social issues. Organiser Peter Terry believed that:

> 'New Zealand is in an ideal situation…to lead the world in an ecological and social revolution, and projects such as these Nambassa

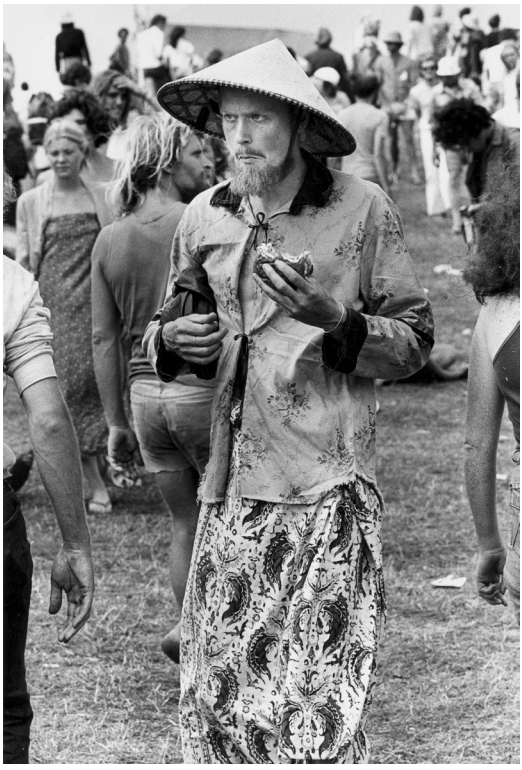


Nambassa festival poster, Collection of Peter Terry.

> workshops must prove to sceptics that man can survive without the gigantic material excesses with which he surrounds himself.'[100]

The Auckland Healing Arts collective spoke about natural health and alternative medicine, and recommended eating whole, raw foods.[101] The Lotus Yoga Centre ran a stall advertising courses based on 'traditional Eastern methods of insight and Western scientific knowledge', and long-term vegetarian Eric Doornekamp ran yoga clsses.[102]

Pacifist Ray Hansen read poetry, and his son Francis arrived with pet goat 'Twiggy' to give workshops on wholemeal bread and bee-keeping. Twiggy stayed away from the crowd in a neighbouring paddock, devouring corn husks and watermelon rinds.[103] Some establishment figures were there too; Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, the vegetarian former mayor of Auckland ran workshops on health and diet.[104] Vegetarian Society president Colin Jamieson distributed literature and advice on meat-free diets. At the Village Market, Dan Hansen's Wilderland commune ran a stall selling 'early season plums, apples, tomatoes, lettuces, pumpkins, and much more, organically grown'. Tim Shadbolt was there too, singing along with members of the band Cockroach, who were fundraising for the legal costs of an injunction on the sale of 20,000 acres of Māori land in the Far North.



Man attending a Nambassa festival, at Golden Valley, near Waihi, Hauraki, Dominion Post Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, EP-Arts-Music-Festivals-01

The *Fri* protest ship was away on a 'worldwide odyssey carrying the message of peace,' but Greenpeace New Zealand was at Nambassa to promote their campaign against nuclear weapons. Judith Jones and the *Mushroom* magazine team arrived with a caravan and set up a stall. Stuart and Nancy Butler from 'The Farm' community in the United States spoke about the community's philosophy, and described their vegan diet, based around soy products as 'a complete high quality protein that's economical and ecological.'[105]

For festival-goers such as Auckland University student Kevin Hague, Nambassa was a chance to find out more about vegetarianism. Hague attended the 1979 festival, dressed in a muslin caftan. He tried out new vegetarian dishes at the many food stalls, and was impressed by the range of alternative lifestyle workshops, which presented 'lots and lots of different ideas that I hadn't really been exposed to before.' He listened to Stephen Gaskin from the vegan Farm commune in Tennessee and sampled tempeh, an Indonesian-style fermented soya bean product, returning home with a 'grow your own' tempeh kit.[106] Many festival-goers were already

meat-free, and Nambassa offered opportunities to spend time with other vegetarians, and also to try new foods. Although Eric Doornekamp found the music 'a bit wild,' he enthused over the gathering as a 'great place, with lovely food, and a chance to meet up with all the yogis, all the vegetarians, from all around New Zealand, from everywhere!'[107]

However, a few concertgoers found a three-day vegetarian diet intolerable. One man lost his temper and raised his fists, shouting, 'I want a meal! And a meal isn't a meal without meat!' He finally agreed to order a 'triple omelette.'[108] The volunteer workers who built the festival facilities were fed a vegetarian diet, and some complained 'Why no meat?' Volunteer Ken Norkett was a reluctant vegetarian:

> 'I personally found a total vegetarian diet oppressive. Probably my body was saying great. My head was saying bad news. After all, when one has been an omnivore for twenty-five years, one can't just switch off meat like pushing an on/off button…Nambassa, an alternative, sure then if an alternative it should be a basic belief of freedom of choice for all.'[109]

Fortunately, there were also plenty of positive comments. Terry found that 'many meat eaters remarked on how unique it was to have a weekend without meat.' He reflected that:

> 'Nambassa was advocating an alternative lifestyle; consequently people were expecting something different and part of that ethos we were promoting didn't include eating copious amounts of meat every day. We thought that being vegetarian was a good thing which would improve one's lot, and so we wanted to share this healthy experience.'[110]

At the end of the Nambassa festival, thousands of people packed up their tents, and no doubt returned home to steak and sausages, leaving quantities of litter at the festival site.[111] Yet young New Zealanders continued to investigate meatless diets. Like their feminist and pacifist counterparts in the early twentieth century, some alternative youth saw vegetarianism as a step towards a more just, harmonious and compassionate world. Vegetarians were becoming more noticeable within New Zealand society. As Peter McLuskie put it, 1970s youth were 'the first group that actually made our parents sit up and notice that we had become vegetarian.'[112]

9

Chickens, pigs, cows and the planet

1980s–2000s

Most meat eaters are shocked when they see where their factory farmed meat and eggs come from, and so it is a case of cover-ups and lies. Factory farming is obviously more profitable for the industry, but they rely on constant misleading advertising and propaganda in order to hide the truth from consumers…These poor animals suffer tremendously every day of their short lives and all for the profits of a handful of greedy people. Surely this can't be allowed to continue. Surely, if people only knew the truth then this could easily be put to an end?
—Wellington animal advocate Ben Griffiths[1]

On a summer day early in 1978, a small boat carried a group of people through the bays of the Marlborough Sounds. The passengers glanced up as grey shadows came leaping through the waves towards them. It seems almost too perfect to be true, but a group of dolphins played around the boat, escorting those on board to an animal rights meeting at Resolution Bay. Betty Rowe, the sheep farmer turned animal rights activist, organised the event.[2] During her campaign to save the Arapawa Island goats, Rowe met other animal welfare campaigners:

> 'Suddenly it occurred to me, why didn't we all get together…I typed up an invitation and sent it out to groups and individuals…And from that sprang a greater awareness of the plight of the animals.'[3]

Representatives of about a dozen animal protection groups responded to Rowe's call. They met at Resolution Bay and decided to form the Animal Rights Federation of New Zealand. The activists included Bette Overell, an anti-vivisection campaigner who was delighted to meet other 'radicals and troublemakers in an era when the concept of animals having rights was little known and seldom discussed.'[4] Though the Animal Rights Federation did not survive long, Rowe's gathering in the Marlborough Sounds marks the beginning of the modern animal protection movement in New Zealand—a movement that promotes vegetarianism and encourages us to think about animals with their own lives and meanings.

Over the past thirty years, the animal rights movement, along with environmental and anti-factory farming campaigners have helped change the world we live in. They have brought the ethical arguments for plant-based diets to the fore, and along the way there has been a cultural shift that is more profound than it seems. Most people want a ban on the factory farming of pigs and chickens. Even *Next* magazine commented in 2010 that 'going vegan is the new cool, the new consumer frontier…Veganism has shaken off its tie-dyed leggings and come of age.'[5] We have been eating less meat; energy from animal products in our diet decreased eight per cent between 1985 and 1995, and we ate more fruit and vegetables.[6] A few years ago, a meatless pie filled with carrots, silverbeet, broccoli, capsicum and cauliflower was judged New Zealand's best pie at the Bakels New Zealand Supreme Pie Award.[7] The stories of the animal rights, anti-factory farming and environmental campaigns can help us understand how these are shaping new attitudes towards food and animals in this country.

Animal rights

In 1978, Wellington teenager Peter McLuskie stopped eating meat after borrowing a copy of Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* from his cousins:

> 'I read it and was absolutely horrified…As a philosopher Peter Singer made sense and also serious conceptual breakthroughs in his notion of speciesism. Animal Liberation worked at a gut level of emotional reaction and had a sound philosophical framework.'[8]

The animal rights movement was inspired by philosophers such as Peter Singer, Tom Regan, and Mary Midgley, who argued for vegetarianism as a moral imperative. Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1976) was particularly influential. Singer reasoned that animal suffering should be counted equally

with comparable human suffering, and that all animals mattered. He called for an animal liberation movement modelled on the Black and women's liberation movements.[9] Singer challenged people who cared about animal welfare to boycott meat, reasoning that:

> 'To protest about bull-fighting in Spain or the slaughter of baby seals in Canada while continuing to eat chickens that have spent their lives crammed into cages, or veal from calves that have been deprived of their mothers, their proper diet, and the freedom to lie down with their legs extended, is like denouncing apartheid in South Africa while asking your neighbours not to sell their houses to blacks.'[10]*

Animal Liberation had a downstream effect as keen new vegetarians converted their friends. Animal rights groups called for New Zealanders to stop eating animals. In the 1980s stickers appeared around Christchurch with slogans such as 'Fluffy lamb today, roast dinner tomorrow' and 'Liberate animals.' Yolanda Soryl and Marcus Puentener had launched the 'loudly pro-vegetarian' Animal Rights Collective (ARC) at Canterbury University in 1984, modelling it on the anti-racist, feminist and peace groups that were then active on campus.[11] Soryl, the daughter of a slaughterhouse worker, remembers that 'we were dying to have some change, we just wanted the world to change, we wanted things to get better for animals.'[12] The exploitation of animals seemed a further example of 'the way that we treat any group in our society that we deem to be powerless, or the way that we keep them powerless, whether that be animals or people of colour or [a particular] gender or sexual orientation.'[13] The ARC staged a sit-in against animal experiments in Colombo Street, and marched from the Christchurch Bridge of Remembrance to the Square on World Vegetarian Day.

Once the banners were rolled up for the night, Yolanda Soryl and her friends enjoyed an active social life. The ARC helped spread vegetarianism within student culture through music, pot-luck dinners and parties. Every week, Soryl and Puentener ran an animal rights music and cooking show on the UFM student radio station, broadcasting songs such as the Smiths' 'Meat is murder,' and Melanie's 'I don't eat animals' into student flats. Some of the ARC members flatted together in an enormous house in Cambridge Terrace, where they organised animal rights fundraising events. Bands played in the living room, and the flatmates sold vegan chocolate cake to

* Singer seems to have assumed that his readers were white.

Yolanda and the Animal Rights Collective at a protest, ca. 1991, Collection of Yolanda Soryl

the punters.[14] Most of the young ARC activists were 'foodie people who shared vegan pot-luck dinners together, slept over at each other's houses and met up for 'hair nights' at which they dyed each other's hair the same colour, quipping that 'the group that dyed their hair together stayed together.'[15] Soryl reflects that 'dealing with animal oppression was very serious. The fun part of it helped us stay sane.'[16]

National groups such as the New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society (NZAVS) also took a pro-vegetarian stance in the late 1980s and early 1990s. NZAVS' magazine, *Mobilise*, contended that it was unnecessary to kill animals for food, and that healthy vegetarians should not need drugs tested on animals. In December 1985, *Mobilise* featured recipes for an 'all-vegan cruelty-free Christmas feast'—these included a mushroom and nut roast, Hungarian potatoes, Christmas pudding, fudge, and vanilla ice cream (whipped up from frozen bananas).[17] NZAVS became an influential protest group, leading thousands of people through the Wellington streets to call for an end to animal experiments. Bette Overell, NZAVS's elderly leader, discovered that the McDonald's fast-food restaurant chain served 'lamb-burgers,' a dish that 'signposts millions of infant animals to the slaughterhouse.'[18] She called for a boycott. Overell drew analogies between the animal rights movement and other struggles for social justice:

> 'As the case for the abolition of human slavery, the case for the abolition of tyranny over women, and the case for the abolition of racial DISCRIMINATION HAD ALL EVENTUALLY BEEN ACCEPTED AS SELF-EVIDENT…so…the case for the abolition of non-human slavery, the case for the abolition of tyranny over non-human females, and the case for the abolition of the use of animals as laboratory tools—WILL, SIMILARLY—EVENTUALLY BE ACCEPTED AS SELF-EVIDENT' [emphasis in the original].[19]

She urged New Zealanders to 'question and push for a more radical approach…stop eating animals…Animal liberation. If not us, who? If not now, when?'[20]

Punk music was also a conduit for animal rights ideas. In the early eighties English punk bands Crass and Conflict recorded songs denouncing meat-eating and animal experiments; they advocated anarchism, direct action, and environmentalism. Young New Zealanders sat in their bedrooms listening to punk records and decided to change their diets. On World Day for Laboratory Animals, 1984, young people with dyed hair and colourful patches on their clothes marched through the Wellington streets alongside businessmen and elderly ladies.[21] Simon Cottle, a Wellington musician and writer, became a leader in the anti-vivisection movement. He produced his own fanzine, *Anti-System*, that promoted anarchism, vegetarianism, and animal rights. He urged young people to take 'direct action against authority while we've still got a planet left.'[22] Cottle, a vegan, sang in the punk band One Less Customer for the Butcher, and protested against animal experiments. It was definitely about ethics, not health. Anti-vivisectionist Lyn Spencer remembers living in a punk house where the flatmates lived mostly on oven chips, chomping their way in the course of a week through 'twenty kilos of potatoes, two litres of vegetable oil, and lots of tomato sauce. That is quite frightening!'[23]

Meanwhile, the national animal advocacy group Save Animals from Exploitation (SAFE) was promoting vegetarianism in a less confrontational way. One of the main organisers, Anthony Terry, stopped eating all animal products after reading Peter Singer and reflecting on the 'extent animals suffered and the compelling arguments in favour of animal rights.'[24] Terry began editing SAFE's newsletter, reworking it into a stylish magazine designed to appeal to young women in particular. There were profiles of vegetarian celebrities such as Paul and Linda McCartney and radio weather presenter Jennifer Broadbent, vegetarian recipes, eye-catching photo-

graphs, animal welfare news, and thoughtful discussion of issues such as the ethics of zoo-keeping.[25] In the editorials, Terry gently reminded readers about 'the reality of the abuse we impose on animals.' After describing his encounter with a 'doe-eyed' herd of cows, he pondered whether the animals 'would ever know we meant them no harm considering by now their lives have ended and their bodies turned into what we euphemistically label as meat.'[26]

In 2013 SAFE launched a new 'Go Veg' website and starter kit for new vegetarians—this featured interviews with New Zealand vegetarians such as Golnaz Bassam Tabar, a broadcast journalist and 'a fanatical animal-loving, social-justice activist with a mouth on'[27] and Mengzhu Fu, an Auckland post-graduate student and tutor who became vegan at the age of fifteen as 'a political decision, as a first step to primarily change the situation for animals and the planet.' She felt that 'it's great when you can have interactions with non-humans, and sometimes it seems like they can sense you're not going to harm them. There have been a number of incidences when I've been in a park or a field and cows have come up to me and started licking my face or hands. It's so cute!'[28]

The image of the animal rights movement was changing. In 2009 Mike King, an actor who had fronted advertisements for the Pork Board, started to worry about the meat he was promoting. He decided he wanted to see inside a pig farm, and along the way he met animal rights advocates. He discovered with some surprise that they were not 'strident radicals with hairy armpits,' but rather 'ordinary human beings who have taken the trouble to care about how we treat animals.'[29]

Factory farming

King was not the first and will not be the last New Zealander to become discomforted after learning the truth about factory farms. Intensive farming is in fact not particularly new—farmers have imprisoned animals in cages and crates for centuries. In Elizabethan England, pigs were fattened or 'brawned' in pens that were 'so close…that they cannot turn themselves around about…whereby they are forced always to lie on their bellies.'[30] The feet of geese were nailed to the floor, and poultry and game birds were fattened in cages in the dark. Sometimes birds were blinded.[31] However, modern-style intensive farms first emerged in the early twentieth century. Around 1911 Professor Halpin of Wisconsin University raised hens in tiered cages of thin wood, with wire at the front and top.[32] The new

methods were implemented on a large scale as Western farming became more industrialised in the 1950s.[33] By 1961, forty per cent of British laying hens lived in cages.[34] Battery hen cages first arrived in New Zealand in the 1950s. Eggs dropped in price, and became available year round, as bright lighting fooled the hens into laying throughout winter. Few shoppers realised that their good cheap eggs were laid by hens who spent their entire lives crowded into nine-inch-wide wire cages.[35] The birds could not spread their wings and were slowly denuded of their feathers through rubbing against the wire walls. The rows of cages were invisible within enormous, industrial-looking sheds.

In the early 1960s Ruth Harrison, an English Quaker, picked up a leaflet about intensively-farmed veal calves. Appalled, she decided to visit intensive farms and slaughterhouses to see conditions for herself.[36] Her experiences inspired her to write a book, *Animal Machines*. Harrison described:

> 'a new type of farming, of production line methods applied to the rearing of animals, of animals living out their lives in darkness and immobility without a sight of the sun, of a generation of men who see in the animal they rear only its conversion factor into human food… Life in the factory farm revolves entirely around profits.'[37]

Animal Machines shed a little light into the darkness of veal crates, of animals barely allowed to live before they were slaughtered.[38] People throughout the Western world read Harrison's book and were appalled. Some stopped eating meat. Animal rights activists circulated petitions and picketed butcher shops. Some became so enraged that they took matters into their own hands. In June 1985 the 'Rhode Island Red Squad' vandalised battery hen farms in the Christchurch region, leaving farmers a typewritten communiqué explaining that 'because New Zealand has no effective laws to protect hens from the barbaric battery system, animal activists are forced to take direct action against you exploiers [sic]…you're creeps…all of you!'[39] The Squad (whose name incorporated a pun—the 'Rhode Island Red' is a breed of chicken) aimed to 'take direct action for the right of every chicken to scratch in the dirt, stretch their wings, and see the sun.'

Others, equally angry, focussed on getting the message out to the public. In 1987, Hamilton shoppers were taken aback to see animal rights activists with signs, table and chickens in the city centre. The stall centred around two giant cages. One housed alert healthy hens; it sat alongside

a cage of scraggy, almost featherless hens from an intensive farm; freshly bought at a cost of fifty cents each. Hans Kriek, a young vegetarian from the Netherlands, stood behind the stall, watching passers-by staring at the battery hens:

> 'The public had never seen anything like it. They were like 'whoa, what is that?' We were accused, even by the media of plucking the birds…No-one thought they could look that bad. They thought we were pulling their feathers out to get the sympathy vote.'[40]

Kriek distributed leaflets asking consumers to ask their local supermarket to supply free-range eggs. At the end of the day, he took the ex-battery hens home to his lifestyle block. Here they learned to walk on grass, and spread their scrawny wings in the sun. Their feathers grew back and they were transformed into 'beautiful chickens.'[41]

Kriek was thousands of miles from his birthplace in the Netherlands, where he cared for injured birds as a young boy in a high-rise apartment in the university city of Leiden. His neighbours wondered at the 'crazy kid' who cared for injured wild birds, sometimes bringing birds to school in a long box with compartments for each bird, and also a supply of worms that he dug from garden patches. 'Every hour I would go to the back of the class and open the box so to feed them, and all these little gaping heads would come out. I was quite disruptive.' When he was sixteen, a biology teacher gave the class a short talk about the intensive farming of pigs and chickens. Kriek went home from school and told his mother that he had decided to stop eating meat. Later he discovered a Dutch translation of Singer's *Animal Liberation* in the school library, a book that described 'everything that I believed in but could not put into words. It helped me feel that I was not alone in the world.'[42]

In 1985, Kriek moved to New Zealand, and found a job as a caretaker at the SPCA animal shelter in Hamilton. He helped run the boarding cattery, and also decorated the reception area with posters of animal experiments, 'rather graphic for the folk bringing their cat or dog in for boarding, but people would ask about and discuss it.' In 1987 he flew to the Australia New Zealand Federation of Animal Societies Conference. Here he met Peter Singer, and found him 'quite humble though very intelligent, quite pragmatic and I too was pragmatic.' Kriek also talked to Adrienne Hall from SAFE, and recognised a commonality in goals and approach.

Hans Kriek protesting against battery farming, Collection of Save Animals from Exploitation

On his return to New Zealand, he and his wife started a branch of SAFE in Hamilton, running fortnightly information stalls in Garden Place. In August 1993 Kriek organised the first television expose of battery farming, driving from farm to farm with a coterie of television reporters, and asking to film inside the sheds. Most farmers refused, but eventually one incautious man allowed the reporters in, though he refused to let them see 'severely defeathered' older hens. The footage screened on national television, and the images resonated with many viewers:

For the first time…the suffering of battery hens was brought into the general public's living room. The programme showed the shocking conditions of life on a battery farm; birds consistently pecking each other, the frustration of not being able to move, birds having difficulty standing on a sloping wire floor, debeaking, cages with broken wire, and manure piled up under cages causing a terrible stench.[43]

This was the start of a media campaign that transformed the way urban New Zealanders perceived some kinds of farm animal. Television stories and newspaper reports told the stories of pigs squashed into tiny crates, featherless hens crammed into small wire cages, and the tonnes of antibiotics poured into animal feed.[44] Supermarkets began stocking free-range eggs.[45] Over 350,000 New Zealanders signed a petition against battery hen farming in the mid-1990s, and a survey found that seventy-seven per

Open Rescue activist inside a battery hen farm, Collection of Wellington Animal Rights Network

cent of people opposed cages for hens.[46] Thousands sent postcards to the Minister of Agriculture demanding that sow crates should be outlawed, and SAFE encouraged New Zealanders to 'Kick the habit' and substitute ham or bacon sandwiches with tofu luncheon, Bean Supreme vegetarian sausages, or Sanitarium Nuttolene. Protesters picketed New Zealand Pork Board conferences and invaded the meat aisle of supermarkets, releasing helium balloons dangling signs reading 'Factory farmed pigs suffer, Keep pork off your fork.'[47] Wellington Animal Action (WAA) asked supporters to 'hold demonstrations at supermarkets, butchers, pig farms, abattoirs… Find out where the nearest [pig farms] are to you and get out there and hassle them.'[48]

Others were impelled to experience life inside a cage themselves, however briefly. In December 1997, Deidre Bourke, a member of Auckland Animal Action, crawled inside a replica sow crate in the middle of Queen Elizabeth II Square in Auckland. The pavements were crowded with Christmas shoppers buying gifts. Blindfolded and gagged, unable to stretch her limbs or turn around, she spent three uncomfortable days and nights in the cage, hoping to 'make people stop and think what they were supporting when they purchased their festive pork products.' Such protests gave New Zealanders a little insight into the lives of intensively

farmed animals; they also gave people the chance to gather and discuss vegetarianism and animal rights. Bourke remembers passers-by coming over to put their hands on her shoulder and thanking her:

> 'I thought this was weird at first, but it made me think. Few people realise how isolated vegetarians can feel, especially at Xmas, it was like people just wanted to thank me for being there and making their voice heard for once.'[49]

Two vegetarians walked past every day to greet her, reassuring her that 'people were taking notice.' Others asked her if she wanted a back rub, or read aloud from the hundreds of messages of support pinned to the crate. In the early hours of her final night in the cage, a man sat down and softly sang and played his guitar. Once a mother came over with her young son:

> 'I heard her say "this is why we don't eat meat, because we don't want animals to suffer and live like this". She told him about how proud he should be about being vegetarian. She explained that this girl inside the crate was "just like us" and that I was trying to show people why eating animals was wrong. I'll never forget how he reached inside the crate and, ever-so-gently, patted my head. It was such a different touch than all the previous children—with such empathy. It was these experiences that kept me from going temporarily mad.'[50]

By the early twentieth century, factory farming regularly appeared in the news. School children debated the ethics of keeping hens in cages, and SAFE published *Battery Hen Farming in New Zealand*, a resource book for teachers. Celebrities spoke out against intensive farming. One morning in May 2009 the Open Rescue Collective arrived at a Horowhenua pig farm owned by Colin Kay, a one-time director of the New Zealand Pork Board. They had a guest with them, television personality Mike King, recently the star of television commercials urging New Zealanders to enjoy pork and bacon. King walked into the shed full of screaming pigs:

> 'It is one of those sounds you never forget. It was the same way you hear babies crying in distress…I just walked around, looking at these beautiful animals, huge animals, wedged in these cages. You look into their eyes and they were either despairing, terrified, lost...it was absolutely harrowing.'[51]

'Sickened and disgusted' at the farm conditions, King appeared on Television New Zealand's *Sunday* programme, and asked New Zealanders to boycott intensively farmed pork. 'I should have investigated the industry before I agreed to promote it,' he explained. 'I am deeply ashamed that I was blinded by and took part in promoting this style of farming.'[52] King's condemnation of factory farming was startling. For a week, television channels and newspapers featured stories about pig farming. One woman wrote a letter to SAFE explaining that, 'the day I saw your television ad [about pig farming] on TV was the day I stopped eating meat.'[53] In December 2010, the government announced that cages for pregnant sows would be phased out by 2016, though female pigs and their newly born young would continue to be confined in farrowing crates. *Good* magazine commented that, 'what makes issues suddenly burst into public consciousness is a mystery, but certainly Mike King's piece on pig farming on TVNZ's *Sunday* programme has made an impact.'[54]

The green movement

More recently, cutting down on meat has emerged as one way to help protect our world. Attendees at a recent national environmental conference† found themselves munching on vegan curries, and carrot, beetroot, hazelnut, and almond nutballs with a savoury sauce, followed by apple crumble.[55] All dishes were entirely free of animal products. Caterer Tara Forde had insisted on a vegan menu, and despite 'a little hesitation' the organisers had agreed. Forde put together a 'really vibrant' menu that was vegan, organic, and mostly local, with soymilk from the local soy factory.

Forde came to activism through the animal rights movement, and was especially distressed at factory farming, as 'it's so unnecessarily mean, so bad for our environment and relationships with animals. Sit in this cage!' She visited a battery farm and was shocked by 'the smell, the look of terror in the animals eyes…animals are amongst the most vulnerable in our society.' Animal rights and environmentalism could not be separated. 'I became aware that earth is a living entity and we treat it badly.'[56]

The environmental movement has become influential in recent years. It is now quite expected in middle-class circles to take cloth bags to the supermarket or organic store, to recycle cans, bottles, and plastic jars, to set up a compost bin for vegetable scraps, to buy free-range eggs, and perhaps

† The conference was organised by Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa New Zealand

Protest against meat industry conference, March 2007, Collection of Wellington Animal Rights Network

even cut down on meat. Environmental and animal rights philosophies have some strands in common, as both recognise the intrinsic value of other life forms. Former Green Party M.P. Sue Kedgley describes animal welfare as 'a very green issue':

> 'The ecological view says that we are not above nature—we are part of an interdependent ecosystem which we should treat with respect. An ecological view questions why we would constantly try to interfere with nature and evolution. I see the animal rights movement as part of that ecological paradigm because it takes the view that we should treat all animals and all other species on earth with respect and compassion.'[57]

Scientists have concluded that the meat industry may have severe impacts on our world, contributing to land degradation, water pollution, and climate change. Factory farms produce huge amounts of sewage.[58] One can reduce the harm one does to the world, by choosing locally grown vegetables rather than intensively farmed meat.[59] Although not all environmentalists concur that a vegetarian diet is necessarily easier on the earth,‡

‡ Christchurch Green Party activist Christine Dann comments that: There are genuine instances in which the vegan diet is not the most environmentally-friendly/sustainable choice, as when the vegetable food is imported long distances. [Email from Christine Dann to author, June 16, 2011]

many agree that raising animals for meat and milk on an industrial scale is an unsustainable way of producing food, requiring more land, water, fossil fuels and fertilisers than plant crops to generate an equivalent amount of protein.[60] In a world that is short of clean water, huge volumes of water are diverted to raise grain crops for animal feed.[61] As the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations points out, 'livestock shape entire landscapes.'[62] When United States researchers Christopher Weber and Scott Matthew examined the environmental impact of differing dietary choices in 2007, they found that 'shifting less than one day per week's worth of calories from red meat and dairy products to chicken, fish, eggs, or a vegetable-based diet achieves more GHG [greenhouse gas] reduction than buying all locally sourced food.'[63] By spacing plants closely, composting, and double-digging beds, it is actually possible to grow grains, fruits, vegetables and root crops to feed a family of four on just 400 square metres—twice the size of the average New Zealand house. However, the system only works if your family is vegan. Animals just take up too much space.[64]

Such concerns offer compelling reasons to cut down on meat. Gareth Hughes, the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand spokesperson for climate change, became vegetarian around 2000 for environmental reasons, perceiving that 'food is politics…Meat is inefficient, and uses more energy, oil, and water than grain and beans. If we want to feed the world, we can't do it on the average Kiwi's meaty diet.'[65] The long-term environmental campaigner Craig Potton described his hopes for a vegetarian future to the Sea of Faith Network in 2007:

> 'I hope we are on the cusp of a change. Firstly, our understanding of animals has greatly expanded and we can no longer deny they have full emotional and thoughtful and social lives, much as we do. Secondly, because of the energy required to raise the billions of animals we send to slaughter, being vegetarian will do more to halt global warming than reducing our output of carbon into the atmosphere from transport and industry.'[66]

Some took dramatic action to make the same point. Early on the morning of December 21st, 2009, John Darroch, a young Auckland student, abseiled down the outer wall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Lambton Quay offices in a protest against climate change. He unfurled a banner with the slogan 'Got Climate Change?' and the logo 'Fonterror'—

playing on the name of the New Zealand dairy co-operative Fonterra. Darroch, a vegan, hoped to draw attention to 'the role dairy farming plays in climate change. Hopefully, it will inspire other people to take action.'[67]

A changing society

On a summer evening early in 2009 I found myself in Sunset Studios, a Henderson warehouse crowded with youngish people dressed mostly in black. 8 Foot Sativa, an Auckland metal band, were the guests of honour tonight. I was feeling a bit out of place—I was too old, and I had a pink flowered dress on. However, I was not the oldest here tonight. There was a tiny lady in her late eighties, sporting a bright red hat—Margaret Jones, who had been campaigning against animal experiments since the 1930s. Someone turned on the data projector, and we were lucky enough to be the first ever viewers of 'Sleepwalkers,' 8 Foot Sativa's latest music video. A glossy black calf stared at me, chewing her cud, and then the room reverberated with thrashing guitars. The screen showed the frenzied wings of an injured chicken in a broiler farm, a piglet nuzzling a sow trapped in a steel crate. Though I couldn't decipher the song's rapid-fire lyrics, I looked the words up later online, and dug out some background to 8 Foot Sativa, a bunch of vegans who write protest songs about factory farming, pollution, and environmental destruction.

Heavy metal has not traditionally been associated with tofu and lentils (or, in this case, canapés of hummus delicately piped on rice crackers, and strawberries dipped in chocolate). Yet Ben Read, 8 Foot Sativa's vocalist, discovered animal rights and vegetarianism through heavy metal:

> 'Metal led me to veganism, which is definitely strange. When I was a teenager, all I listened to was metal, Slayer, Cannibal Corpse etc. I started getting into playing music, and was later exposed to the concept of vegetarianism/veganism through the local metal and hardcore scene.'[68]

Vegetarian ideas have become woven into many different aspects of New Zealand culture—whether you're interested in guitars, art, or cookbooks. Sometimes all three may be combined—in 2007 New Zealand singer Flip Grater published *The Cookbook Tour*, a quirkily illustrated diary of her music tour, interspersed with vegan recipes that she had collected around the country. Thanks to the work of animal rights, environmental, and anti-factory farming campaigners, our culture is more diverse. At end of year

workplace parties, the traditional Kiwi barbecue may have a hotplate with bean patties, or eggplant and tofu kebabs sizzling away next to the familiar steaks and sausages.[69] While waiting for the kebabs to grill, one might nibble on carrot sticks dipped in hummus, salsa, or guacamole. Vegetarians are diverse, too, whether they are community workers or power lifters. Dusan Dudas is a bodybuilder, formerly from Slovakia, who won the Mr New Zealand title in 2009. Dudas maintains his bulk on a vegan diet, enjoying lots of kale, spinach and broccoli, nuts, seeds and grains. He reflects that 'If a gorilla can be that powerful on plant protein then a human can be too.'[70] When food writer Alison Holst and her son Simon released their cookbook, *Meals without Meat*, it became a bestseller, eventually selling over 250,000 copies.[71] More recently the beer company Ranfurly Frontier Lager erected billboards with humorous slogans claiming that bacon was 'the best cure for veganism.'[72] The advertisement irritated some vegetarians; it also suggested that the term 'vegan' had entered the vocabulary of beer-swilling Kiwi blokes. All this creates worries for the meat industry. Back in 1997, Massey University scientist Neville Gregory wrote a report about vegetarianism in our main export markets, noting that in countries such as the United Kingdom 'choosing vegetarian dishes and meals is now regarded as a "mass option" and is no longer a radical stance.'[73] At the 1997 International Congress of Meat Science and Technology, he reflected that:

> 'Thirty years ago, becoming vegetarian was commonly regarded as raising serious health risks. This review has almost completely reversed, and many people now associate meat eating with health risks.'[74]

The real threat to the meat industry, Gregory concluded, was from 'reduced meat eating and semi vegetarianism,' particularly among young women.[75]

Concerns about the environment and animals are helping us see the world more thoughtfully. As SAFE's Hans Kriek puts it, 'if we can sow the seeds of a more caring attitude now, it will open the way towards a better future for humans and other animals alike.'[76] Animals are no longer simply fluffy toys, or sausages and steaks on legs. Farm practices are beginning to change. Mulesing—the slicing of flesh from under the tails of live merino sheep—has been virtually phased out.[77] Caring about non-human beings is not a middle-class indulgence. When Celia Wade-Brown (now the Mayor of Wellington) collected signatures calling for a ban on battery farm-

ing, she found that the people who were most supportive 'were actually often the people on the lowest incomes…people who said they were on a benefit. I think because they could identify with the pain of the animals.'[78]

Recently I read *Ngā Waituhi o Rēhua*, a young adult science fiction cycle by the acclaimed author Katerina Mataira. After a future earth is devastated by pollution and war, a handful of survivors build a spaceship and travel to a distant planet, where they build a new society based on peace and care for the environment. The children have never heard of money or weapons and find the thought of meat disturbing. They grow strawberries and pineapples in solar powered greenhouses, and enjoy healthy vegetarian meals of mostly raw food—fresh herbs, nuts, grains, seeds, fruit, and vegetables.[79] They scatter grain for the native wild birds, who settle and feed nearby without alarm. On Rēhua, birds have no reason to fear humans.[80] On one level, this cycle is an adventure story about teenagers who ride giant telepathic birds. Yet the birds are neither pets, nor pests, nor slaves. They are intelligent beings with their own purposes, who work with the four children to bring peace between all sentient beings. *Ngā Waituhi o Rēhua* is a vision of how Aotearoa could be, of how our world could be—if we move away from violence towards animals and each other.

Conclusion

Looking backwards, looking forward

On a clear warm Sunday morning in March 2013, Frank Kitts Park in Wellington was a colourful jumble of tents, banners, and people. Families spread picnic blankets under the trees, and children chased shoals of bubbles, dashing in between the stalls. Local singer One Lone Lily was setting up in the stage area. This was VegFest, and the pie stall was the most popular—there was a queue of at least twenty people waiting in line, and the pies ran out by lunchtime. Although it was over a hundred years since Wellington's first vegetarian café was established in 1906, there were many echoes of the past in the festival. The New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society was collecting signatures for a petition against the testing of party pills on dogs, and the Hare Krishna caravan was dishing up curries, samosas and smoothies. The Theosophical Society had a stall, and Save Animals from Exploitation (SAFE), founded in 1929 as the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, fried up vegetarian sausages and onions on a large gas barbecue. Oil Free Wellington campaigned against fracking, and Share International was meditating for world peace. Yolanda Soryl, who set up the Christchurch Animal Rights Collective in the early 1980s, was selling chocolate cupcakes at the Vegetarian Society stall. The festival sponsors included the Adventist company Sanitarium, which had been

marketing breakfast cereals and meat alternatives to New Zealanders for over a hundred years.[1] In a sense VegFest 2013 encapsulated vegetarianism in Aotearoa today, in all its contradictions and idealism, hope and history. The political and ethical currents of past and present rippled through the crowd. There were peace and animal rights people, socialists, Buddhists, Christians, and environmentalists—and many passers-by who had stumbled into VegFest in the course of a morning stroll by the waterfront. As the sunlight shifted across the grass, and a mild breeze blew in from the sea, they were happy to stay around for a while, browse the stalls, and try some savoury dumplings or fair trade chocolate.

Today vegetarianism is no longer a 'pernicious doctrine'—it is part of our everyday life. The Ministry of Health puts out a friendly pamphlet, full of smiling faces and colourful salads, reassuring families that 'you can get all the essential nutrients from food without eating animal products.'[2] New Zealanders are slowly cutting down on steak and chops. In 2009, each person chomped on around 88 kilograms of meat, down from 103 kilogrammes in 2007. Young Māori may be somewhat more likely to be vegetarian than Pākehā. Though there are no recent figures, in 1997 three per cent of Māori women between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four were following a vegan diet.[3] Among those who eat meat and eggs, free-range products are becoming more popular. Less pork shifted off supermarket shelves after TVNZ screened footage of caged pigs in 2009. Even Prime Minister John Key claimed to be shocked.[4] Fewer pigs were slaughtered that year.[5] Recently I was sitting on a bus behind a young man who was describing his new flat to a friend; he complained that his flatmates bought battery eggs, and he refused to eat these; if he wanted eggs, he went out and bought free range ones.

Our world has changed in so many ways, and the question arises, where do we go from here? Today vegetarians and animal advocates tend to put their efforts into encouraging ethical consumption. They ask consumers to boycott 'cruel' products, and purchase 'ethical' ones instead. Although straightforward and appealing, this approach unfortunately has its limitations. There is a gulf between the labelling of food as 'humane' and the reality behind the label. 'Free range' products may still carry the shadow of agony and death. Back in 1995 an article in *New Zealand Vegetarian* magazine explained:

> 'In order to keep the supply of eggs rolling off the 'production' line, female chickens need to be bred. Those that are unfortunate enough

> to be born male may be kept to be killed at another date, but many will be gassed or just tossed out on a rubbish heap…Although I fully support free range eggs over battery farmed ones, at the end of the day most chickens will be murdered.'[6]

Even if one avoids all animal products, some animals will still die, as any gardener who slices a worm in half by mistake knows. Vegetarian and organic companies may still exploit human labour, or hide subtle links to animal cruelty. In 2007 environmental writer Heather Roger investigated certified fair trade and organic sugar farms in Paraguay, and found that the workers barely received a living wage.[7] She visited organic sugar farms that reeked of ammonia from chicken manure, brought in from the local intensive poultry farms.[8] Within the green business sector, the rules of the marketplace favour industrial-scale organic producers, who often follow the cheapest and poorest standards possible.[9] These are not new dilemmas. In the early twentieth century, workers at Australasian Sanitarium vegetarian cafés and factories endured low pay and poor conditions.[10]

A more fundamental difficulty with 'ethical shopping' is that this reduces compassion to supermarket decisions. Relying on consumer influence to protect animals disempowers those who cannot afford the luxury of choosing more expensive 'ethical' products. It puts too much emphasis on personal choices, and allows those in power to evade responsibility for their actions.[11] As American political scientist and vegetarian Patrick Hossay explains, 'by focusing on individual choices we atomize our resistance and undercut our capacity for solidarity…the truth is we can't consume our way to sustainability and justice.'[12]

Perhaps history can help us here, offering us a broader view of social change. As British historian Hilda Kean explains, the roots of Western vegetarianism 'owe much less to Linda McCartney and the advent of soya sausages than to Shelley and the French Revolution.'[13] The New Zealand pacifists and feminists of the early twentieth century sought a new world for both humans and animals. Utopians at heart, they hoped to create new ways of relating to each other, and to other living beings. As the poet Jessie Mackay, who campaigned for the rights of women, animals and minorities in the early twentieth century once wrote, 'the miseries…[in the world] do not come to us by chance, but by a system of utterly false relations of people to one another and towards the animal creation.'[14] New Zealand's economy remains based on animal products, and meat and dairy are increasingly popular in China and India.[15] Yet just because an industry is

profitable, this does not make it ethical. Economies can and do change. In eighteenth century England, the jobs of Sheffield factory workers depended on the slave trade. They made scissors, scythes, knives, and razors that were traded for slaves in Africa. Entirely against their own self-interest, the same workers signed petitions against slavery. The British slave trade and then slavery itself were eventually abolished, costing Britain 1.8 per cent of its annual national income over more than half a century.[16] Today New Zealanders who are concerned about animal rights and the environment could join forces to oppose practices such as factory farming and commercial dairying, which are cruel to animals, destructive to the environment, exploit human workers, produce unhealthy food, and are dominated by large companies.[17] As SAFE's Hans Kriek puts it, 'if we can sow the seeds of a more caring attitude now, it will open the way towards a better future for humans and other animals alike.'[18] Moreover, our world cannot sustain vast populations of heavy meat-eaters. In the not too distant future, there may be a worldwide resurgence of beans and lentils, quinoa and amaranth—and our society will just have to adapt.

The links between food, power and justice remain complex. Nonetheless, following a thoughtful vegetarian diet can reduce harm both to animals and the planet, while bringing animal rights, human rights and environmental issues into our daily conversations. The best hope for the future may lie with young people, who tend to be especially sensitive to animal suffering, and concerned about the environment.[19] They may see ways through the dilemmas around loving animals and eating them, and find solutions 'that are not simply products to buy, but ways of engaging with how we live and what we want our world to be.'[20] Will they embrace a worldview that rejects the mass exploitation of humans and animals? A society where buying commercially produced meat is a luxury that is frowned on, rather as ivory ornaments are today? A world based on care and wonder for other living beings, instead of on control and exploitation, on profit for a few, and loss for so many. Yolanda Soryl, formerly of Christchurch's Animal Rights Collective, now has four children, who all find a vegetarian way of life entirely normal, and are shocked at the way we treat animals:

> 'My children have been raised vegan, and so the way they see the world is different from the way I was raised as a child. They see a truck full of animals going off to the slaughterhouse. They want to go and stand in front of the truck and stop it. They go into the supermarket

> and see the dead fish laid out and they're horrified. And that is very inspiring because that's the normal human response.' [21]

Soryl's children and their friends are growing up in a world of entrenched evils—pollution, injustice, climate change, capitalism, and unceasing war. Yet evils have always been with us, and they can be overcome—as those who campaigned against the slave trade or worked for women's suffrage realised so well. Our world is also full of hope that future generations may see paths through all the horrors and find ways to live with respect and compassion towards all living beings.

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