

Confronting design:

case studies in the design of
ceramics in New Zealand

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3 **Attestation of authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which, to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due recognition is acknowledged.

Christopher Withiel Russell Thompson

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5 **Abstract**

This study maps a way of looking at design history in New Zealand through the investigation of a taxon of industrially manufactured ceramics. Understanding design as an enfolded process of production, distribution, mediation and consumption, three threshold moments are identified as occurring within the European settlement period: the internationalisation of commodity production and consumption; the emergence of import substitution; and the deregulation of the market. While production has formed an element in the design of ceramics in New Zealand, it is contended that greater significance lies in both the trade and the mediation of these commodities and in particular in the way these have influenced local consumer choice. Emerging from this study, a series of key binaries become apparent: between the metropolitan centre and the frontier; between state and business; and between the traditional and the progressive. Likewise, the positioning of design within the institutionalised sites of power—or its absence from them—has been a prime force both in the development of manufacturing industry and in determining the nature of the consumer market.

6 Introduction

This study aims at developing an understanding of how a particular taxon of industrially manufactured ceramic artefacts used and made in Aotearoa/New Zealand from the early 1800s until the late 1980s reflects overarching developments in the country's design culture. Thus it covers a period that spans from the arrival of European settlers in Aotearoa to the implementation of neo-liberal economic reforms by the fourth Labour government of New Zealand. The ceramics comprising the taxon are industrially produced tableware and related items such as vases and ornaments but it is exclusive of studio-made ceramics, constructional and sanitary wares. The approach adopted in addressing the subject is not intended as either an empirical or a comprehensive account of the design of ceramics, either imported or made, in New Zealand. Rather, in addressing broader cultural themes, it aims at discerning a connection between a particular understanding of design and the social, political and economic contexts that have framed the production, distribution and consumption of the taxon; it thus shuttles between a general history and the specificities of the subject.

Conventionally, the few studies that deal with ceramics in New Zealand from an historical perspective ignore the critical purchase that the material can provide by focussing on ceramics as objects of connoisseurship and/or through the purview of a thinly defined canon of modernism.¹ Equally, in the extant histories of New Zealand material culture, ceramics are either ignored or perceived through the distorted lens of a nationalism that focuses on those artefacts that were manufactured in the country: in the contexts of distribution and consumption, this perception disregards the reality that, in terms of quantity, most of the ceramics used in the country were and are of overseas origin. Moreover, in design history theory, ceramics have a tendency to fall below the horizon of critical visibility; while they are ubiquitous, their commonplaceness renders them invisible. By questioning the reliability of these premises, this study posits a view that this selfsame ubiquity suggests that ceramics in their generality are well placed to be objects of critical investigation for both the ideologies of culture and the theories of design history.

The industrial manufacture of ceramics was an inherent part of both the humanist and, later, the technological and consumer revolutions that materialised in Europe during the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. It is no coincidence that workshops

producing ceramics in renaissance Italy were conducted on proto-industrial bases with each stage of production undertaken by workers with clearly demarcated functions, acting under the direction of a manager or master potter. As well, the distribution and ownership of the products of these *maiolica* factories located them firmly within proto-capitalist systems of trade and finance.² As with art and architecture, attempts were made to provide a theoretical base for this production, to translate the production of ceramics from the mechanical to the liberal arts, most notably with Cipriano Piccolpasso's 1548 manuscript treatise *I tre libri dell'arte del vasaio*, a text written 'not for artisans ("persons of small consideration") but for "men of lofty spirit and speculative minds"'.³ In his text, Piccolpasso, while primarily concerned with practical matters, developed a theoretical basis for his study in accordance with current Neo-Platonic thinking. Thus, viewed through the medium of theory, the production of renaissance ceramics might be considered as a component part in the prefiguring of a European modernity in that it defined a binary between structure and ornament, between form and decoration, between producer and consumer.

The second stage of this state of modernity, the technological, industrial and consumer revolutions that occurred from the late eighteenth century ran concomitantly with European expansion in the south Pacific. Just as Europe became obsessed by the potentiality of what it viewed as unknown, so too, it became enthralled by the commodities of the ceramics industry although, in societal terms, more pervasively. Neil McKendrick makes the salient point that:

The simple fact that most people had possessed so little pottery—and were increasingly presented with both the ability to afford it and ample opportunity to acquire it—offers some explanation of the depth to which the new consumer spending reached down the social scale.⁴

At the time the British navigator James Cook was returning to Europe, having completed the mapping of the islands he knew as New Zealand, the British manufacturer Josiah Wedgwood was successfully planning to be appointed potter to his monarch in an attempt to widen the marketing base for his products: both men would be rewarded by election to the Royal Society. Cook's five visits to Aotearoa between 1769 and 1777 may well have occasioned the first ceramic import—intentional or otherwise—into the country.⁵ The introduction of these incidental imports saw the extension of the technological, industrial and consumer revolutions to the inhabitants of Aotearoa; as they became traders and consumers, the Māori

outlook on the exchange of commodities transmogrified. In the light of production, these European processes of mapping a ceramic modernity would be re-explored in New Zealand over the one hundred and sixty odd years in which its inhabitants sought to develop a ceramic industry. And in the process of settling New Zealand colonising Europeans brought in their cultural baggage fully fledged, contemporary expectations of what a ceramics market should embody. But the transfer of these models to the new country was flawed; the resulting hiatus between production and consumption, between consumer expectations and both what was made available through rudimentary distribution systems and the standards of production achieved locally established a distorted model of design, one where the site of production was alienated from the site of consumption. This spatial disjunction might, quite reasonably, be identified simply as the inevitable consequences of trade with the metropolitan centre and the technological lag inherent at the frontier. But, in the New Zealand instance, it engendered an effect beyond the normal patterns of commodity exchange or cultural transference in that it became an institutionalised gap, creating a permanent sense of cultural dependency, a cultural cringe.

This erratic genealogy of European industrial ceramics, while providing a summary context for the subject material, raises the overarching question of how to develop an appropriate understanding of the identified ceramic taxon in Aotearoa/New Zealand, one that might respond to Foucault's delineation of a genealogy as requiring:

Patience and a knowledge of details and it depends on a vast accumulation of source materials [...] Genealogy does not oppose itself to history [...] on the contrary, it rejects the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies. It opposes itself to the search for "origins".⁶

Three questions arise when considering the issue: firstly, how, within the structural limitations of this study, can either an history or a genealogy be perceived through the lens of design? Secondly, how is design to be understood within a New Zealand historical context? Finally, how can a suitable theoretical model be developed to initiate a design historical enquiry in a field of study that is, as yet, undefined?

Design history

In undertaking this study, certain theoretical approaches have been adopted from without the (proto) discipline of design history in order to explain and expand on the information evidenced by the taxonic archive, defined in a Foucauldian sense as

‘systems of statements (whether events or things) [...] the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events’⁷; hence it is designed to respond to a methodological imperative defined by certain theoretical concerns. And as such, it must be viewed as an exploration, a tentative mapping, through the vehicle of a range of disciplines in an attempt to draw a set of definable parameters for the study of a design history in New Zealand. These ‘borrowed disciplines’ include anthropology, political, social and economic history. But the thrust of this study is predicated on a perception of design as an ‘ideologically encoded commodity, the value and significance of which [is] dependent on dominant modes of consumption.’⁸ As Tony Fry has argued:

Design history is not a[n] history of objects which sit out there in the world waiting for us to find them, order them, place them on display—as a certain category of evidence. Rather the object of study of design history is always constituted by theory.⁹

Extending this position might be the proposition outlined by Daniel Miller that:

‘Theory itself is identified with the modern institution, while consumption by contrast is identified with a series of practices which are by their very nature embedded and pluralistic.’¹⁰

In his 1988 publication *Design history Australia*—self-described as ‘one of the founding works of design history in Australia’—Fry observed that ‘there is no common understanding of what design is [...] It follows that because no common understanding exists, a definition must be given as a reference point’¹¹. Fry identifies design as a faceted process:

Design is used to order, organise, make operational, make visible, and to promote the ‘modern’ world. Design is essential in the economic and cultural production (the encoding) of our world as well as in its economic and cultural consumption (the decoding) [...] Design, therefore, is implicated in how our cultural and economic circumstances are reproduced.¹²

Design, he adds, should be read as a ‘terrain of economic and social practice’ and, in support of this proposition, he argues that an ontology of design is predicated ‘at its crudest’ on the development of capitalism. Underlying Fry’s perception of design is an objective that urges an ontological exploration of what design as a process is and means, as it is dispersed over the micro sites of production, distribution and consumption. Fry’s generalist definition of design is a useful starting point for this study in that it is both framed by the colonial condition and rejects the presumption ‘of a universal narrative, a single global story with a few dominant powers at its centre.’¹³ But if it is accepted that this ontological urge is an

a priori then this study might be viewed as a process of examination that re-defines modernism as a diachronic process that relays with the conditions of modernity found in a post-enlightenment society, specifically in this instance, the dislocated society of New Zealand.

The history of New Zealand's material culture after European settlement—the very substance of early European settler identity in the new country—is neither well documented nor, until recently, has it been the subject of sustained synthetic analysis, let alone theoretical critique. As a significant, portable, component of that culture, industrially-produced ceramics provide a visual and functional link—a physical intervention—between the colonising country of origin and the colonised site; in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ceramic artefacts in the form of table wares, ornaments and even building bricks were imported to the new country by settlers and the agents of settlement not only for their functional purpose but also as tangible symbols of the old country. It is this concept that needs deciphering, to be understood within the context of what remains in terms of artefacts and texts, those materials that might be designated generally as *documents*. As Foucault establishes:

The document, then, is no longer for history an inert material through which it tries to reconstitute what men have done or said, the events of which only a trace remains. Moreover, on the basis of this analysis, the results must be placed within a relevant theoretical framework so that what has been identified is understood; history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations.¹⁴

The theory of consumption of material culture, as articulated by Daniel Miller in his 1987 text *Material culture and mass consumption*, is derived both from a reading of certain themes identified within Hegel's *Phenomenology of the spirit*, notably the concept of 'objectification'—defined as a series of processes consisting of externalisation (self alienation) and sublation (reabsorption), and the historical trend toward increasing abstraction—and from Georg Simmel's critique—as outlined in his *Philosophy of money*—that:

Material objects provide immense specificity, but potentially also extreme fragmentation [...] Thus the two end products of the development of modern culture, its degree of abstraction and its degree of specificity, are the component parts of the sense of alienation in the modern world.¹⁵

Fundamentally, Miller's proposition is predicated on the empirical observation of the exponential growth of mass consumerism, that is, a phenomenal increase in the quantity of consumer goods. Further, it is 'an attempt to develop a non-dualist

model of the relations between people and things [...] approaching “objectification” as a process of development in which neither society nor cultural form is privileged as prior, but rather seen as mutually constitutive.’¹⁶ Pertinent to this study, Miller concludes that:

Mass goods represent culture, not because they are merely there as the environment within which we operate, but because they are an integral part of that process of objectification by which we create ourselves as an industrial society: our identities, our social affiliations, our lived everyday practices.¹⁷

But, as Hal Foster has observed, the contribution of anthropological methodology to the study of visual culture is problematic in that—in essence—it posits a denial of historicity; in a sense it disavows the identification of the thing under study in favour of a probing of synchronic processes of exchange.¹⁸ In addition, at least one of the foundations of the scenario outlined by Miller is that, by comparison with the European paradigm, it is moot as to whether or not the New Zealand state can be—at least for the greater part of period under scrutiny—regarded as ‘a strong state [...] which alone can provide the instruments with which social agents might bring about the possibilities of equality, and which can control those forces in modernization tending towards autonomous interest and rectification.’¹⁹ Hence there is no integral duality within the concept of nation state or within the colonised society because what is identified as ‘the state’ in New Zealand might arguably be viewed as an incomplete entity as a result of its historical social, political and economic dependence on a colonial power which thus institutes a condition of imbalance between production, which exists marginally, and consumption, which exists implicitly. Yet in viewing consumer society in New Zealand, the design of artefacts can be appropriated as a critical tool in unravelling the indicators of commodity consumption: it acts as a differential between what is functionally necessary and what is socially required. At the very beginning of European settlement, in the absence of conventional marketing manoeuvres such as advertisement or the formation of conventional retail outlets, the acquisition of ceramic artefacts was predicated by the concept of a perceived need that emphasised social rather than economic exchange value. By way of contrast, the acquisition of iron artefacts—where the differential content was minimal as the ‘design’ would be applied by the buyer—was actuated by a need for artefacts with an economic (or proto-economic) exchange value. Both instances affirm that the process of design can be seen to extend beyond the limited, production-driven

definition of form giving. As Fry has more recently asserted ‘Design goes before what is made and continues on after it has arrived.’²⁰ The identity of the design—over and beyond its economic value—becomes not only a social signifier, but also a spatial signifier, the space being defined by the location of the exchange.

Design is an essential factor in the production, distribution and consumption of material culture artefacts. In terms of production, design is a conscious element in the manufacturing process. For the purposes of distribution, design mediates the mechanisms of availability and specifies potential demand. For the purposes of consumption, design invests the artefact with an identifiable ‘text’, be it form, pattern or decoration. Moreover, this ‘investment’ in the mediated artefact is realised through its circulation. As Fran Hannah and Tim Putnam aver:

We would [...] look askance at any attempt to discuss the history of design in terms of social activities or needs which did not take the existence of those categories as an historical problem, or which failed to recognise that a fundamental characteristic of design is that it exists in a multiplicity of relations, which cut across each other.²¹

Furthermore, in discussing the purpose of the discipline, Woodham argues that ‘design history may provide rich insights into the material culture of different times and locations, intersecting with other discipline areas, from social history to social anthropology, from economic history to cultural and consumer studies.’²²

Design in an historical context

Post-colonial history draws on anthropological methodologies to focus on the modes of exchange between settler and indigenous society in the colonised place or, to extrapolate the position into material culture, between settler society and the colonised place without the intervention or involvement of the indigenous society. It appears from a search of the literature that the discourse of design history, unlike that of art history, has not been incorporated into the historiography of those processes of societal exchange, except in as much as it can be regarded as being either a given component in the process of consumption or a subset of theories of visual culture. As Paul Glennie recounts, ‘earlier this [the twentieth] century, industrial and agricultural revolutions were being discovered almost everywhere that historians looked. Recently it has been consumer revolutions, at least among European and American historians.’²³ He discerns that:

Despite differences in chronology and emphasis, most accounts incorporate [...] certain attributes of consumer societies: growing per capita consumption of commodities;

intensifying production and reorganised distribution systems; increasing social divisions of labour and increasing social mobility (both symbolised by consumer goods); growing individualism in social life; and consumer acquisitiveness tied to fashion and increasingly, advertising.²⁴

In effect Glennie defines those contextual elements in which a design historical text must be positioned. These comments might be localised within the argument made by Miles Fairburn that what characterises New Zealand society up to the 1920s is a condition of being ‘atomised’, albeit within a context of stability²⁵ while meeting certain criteria of being in a state of pre-industrialisation and yet appropriating many of the characteristics of industrialised society; there is, in effect, no cohesive sense of society. This condition suggests that design can also be viewed within the context of post-colonial history: in this state of ‘atomisation’ the individual seeks to institute a dialogue between themselves and the place that accords with a preconceived perception of the new society; that dialogue is framed by a need for identity although how to frame that identity is, potentially, problematic. Acknowledging alienation from the new society, settlers attempt to personalise their new (immediate?) environment, to restructure it into their vision of a world, one that is neither utopian nor invested with a dread of the industrialised horrors of the ‘old country’ but one that is predicated on a tacit vision of Arcadia.

In looking beyond the documents comprising the archive, contemporaneous texts should be viewed as essential tools for an understanding of the position design takes in forming its history, in a sense providing a palimpsest of use; perceived, appropriated, valued and acquired. These texts become participants in the discourse of the object. But, as Bronwen Douglas has warned, ‘Texts, though, do not simply mirror unproblematic fixed reality but derive from a dynamic interplay of producers, subjects, contexts, discourse and audience.’²⁶ Thus, framing this study is the proposition that design should be seen in terms of a conceptualised historical space; this space should be conceptualised both through a synchronic post-colonial construct and through the diachronic narratives of social, economic and political histories. The significance of this study lies within its location as a design history in a place where there is, as yet, a largely unformulated design history. Currently, design history holds a tenuous position in the discourses of visual and material culture in New Zealand; the extant literature is slight and uncritical. Analysing the development of design history as a discipline in the United Kingdom, Hannah and

Putnam observed in 1980 that approaches to design history had generally avoided the conceptualisation of historical space in favour of an approach where ‘the empirical “consolidation” of the subject has largely taken place around the [aspirational] formula *the history of design in social-economic context*.’²⁷ Much the same observation could be made of the subject as it is understood in New Zealand nowadays: arguably it has yet to shed its art historical origins, if indeed it can be viewed as having emerged as an independent academic discipline. Outdated as they are even in the ‘parent’ discipline, this proto-discipline is still fixated with notions of ‘designer’, ‘style’ and ‘material’; context is determined by a hotchpotch of histories; by implication, design is still posited within a dialectic of ‘high’ and ‘low’ art, loosely constrained by a thin veneer of canonical modernism.

In his study of design history in Australia—a text in which he articulated the plausible view that there is no such thing as Australian design history—Fry identified design history as having developed a number of autonomous approaches that he identified as: connoisseurship; canonisation; design and gender; and design as economy. It was the latter method that he characterised as being the most truthful and which he championed in his text. While Fry stated that his reading was based on Marxist theories of production—as outlined by David Noble in his 1977 publication *America by design*²⁸—it seemingly owed more in its general conception to the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and specifically to early theoretical interventions of Necdet Teymur who, likewise, advocated a production-orientated approach to design history, although he later suggested that it ‘tended to over-politicise or over-economise the subject’.²⁹ No revisionist, Fry summarised that ‘Noble shows that design and technology have been integrated as a specific force of social production and that this duo is a kind of particular formation, and one with a recoverable history.’³⁰ Notwithstanding its constrained archive and its polemical emphasis on social production, Fry’s approach can be considered as a paradigm for investigating design history in New Zealand in that certain parallel societal conditions exist between Australia and New Zealand. But an identifiable fallacy in his stance lies in its marginalising of consumption, its failure to address the issues raised by the existence of a body of products manufactured outside the country where they were/are consumed. Fry’s recognition of the existence of imported commodities lay in the preface to his case

studies where he argued that design development in Australia was constrained by a small consumer market, its lack of control over its development, the bonding 'of economic growth to the creation and extension of a home market' and the absence of an indigenous cultural hegemony. Design as production can not only be regarded in the skewed light of social production; it should also embody Baudrillard's critique of the fallibility of the Marxist concepts of 'use value' and 'the value of labour power' and his proposition that 'the exchange value of labour power is what makes its use value' thus enfolding the orders of production, consumption and signification.³¹ It is contended that any empirically-based study of design history in New Zealand—and in any colonial or neo-colonial economy, including that of Australia—must necessarily emanate from and to the point of consumption in that, with the possible exception of items of furniture, the majority of artefacts of portable material culture located in such economies were and continue to be produced overseas. Likewise, a design history of ceramics in New Zealand must focus on issues of distribution and consumption rather than on the social condition of production. And while issues of technology and design may be relevant in discussion of production—when it did evolve in New Zealand—it must be seen as a secondary factor in the preliminary analyses. While attempts were made to manufacture table and ornamental wares in New Zealand after 1865, imported wares continued to define the ceramics market.

Thus this study is based on a process of recovering and re-forming processes of production, distribution and consumption predicated on the manufactured or constructed *documents* that comprise the archive. These reside within a multiplicity of historical spaces which in effect define their texts and which in turn are mediated by the disciplines of social, economic and political histories, anthropology, economics, geography and, not least, visual culture.

Methodology

The scope of this study was defined initially by a review of current literature and accessible holdings of artefacts relating to the subject matter of the study: the design of ceramics in New Zealand. It became apparent immediately that, inapplicable as it may have been to the situation as it then existed in the United Kingdom, Miller's 1987 comment that 'there is an extraordinary lack of academic discussion pertaining to artefacts as objects, despite their pervasive presence as the

context for modern life'³² is entirely germane in considering the field of study in New Zealand.³³ More recently and locally, Gavin McLean has observed, in respect of historic places, 'that New Zealand historians are comparative newcomers to material cultural studies.'³⁴ The proposed methodology resulting from the initial review identified three 'threshold moments' as being suitable arenas of investigation, that is those moments in the history of design in New Zealand that might be identified as signifying a slippage between one condition of cultural perception and the next. These moments, derived from a reading of generalist histories, were defined in the broadest sense as: the initiation of settlement; the encounter with industrialisation; and the emergence of what might be described as a mature commodities market for ceramics. In this methodological model, the documents comprising the archive as the subject of the study, would have encompassed a selection of artefacts from public collections including 'decorative arts' objects and archaeological material, along with a series of identified published texts such as settler journals, articles from newspapers and serial publications in which mention might be made both of ceramic artefacts and the design of those artefacts.

Further investigation of potential source material in New Zealand and the United Kingdom suggested both that this model would fail to actuate a sense of the historical reality and that there was a considerable body of primary material relating to the production and consumption of ceramics in New Zealand held in public archives, particularly in respect of the activities of those government departments involved in regulating and promoting trade such as the United Kingdom Board of Trade and, in New Zealand, the Department of Industries and Commerce. The existence of such material generally in New Zealand had hitherto been assumed but, given both a lack of any published history of the Department of Industries and Commerce and the financial, logistical and physical impediments confronted by an Auckland-based researcher obtaining access to departmental papers held by Archives New Zealand in Wellington, identification of specific holdings was problematic. Partial resolution of these problems was assisted by access to the holdings in and use of the online search tools made available by the United Kingdom National Archives (Public Record Office) that revealed both the structure and the content of these records and identified the existence of further material

pertinent to the study, notably that generated by the British Council and, in New Zealand, the New Zealand Board of Trade, the Tariff and Development Board and the New Zealand Industrial Design Council among others.³⁵ While, ultimately, it proved impossible to conduct a comprehensive search of these holdings, it was possible to obtain sufficient information for the purpose of this study.

Another obstacle to implementation of the proposed methodology lay with access to and information about ceramic artefacts held in public collections. It is to be regretted that much of this material is poorly documented. This status reflects not on those currently responsible for curating these collections, but rather on the historical fact that collections of industrially-produced artefacts have ranked low in terms of institutional allocations of resources: financial, logistical and human. As a result of this prioritising, collections of ceramics in New Zealand museums are, more often than not, alienated from accurate information, whether it relates to material, origin, date, production, consumption or provenance. A notable exception to this state of affairs is, appropriately, the Auckland War Memorial Museum's holding of ceramics produced by the Auckland manufacturer Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd: this collection is both comprehensive in its scope and comparatively well-documented. But, as this study contends, in terms of quantities and values, the majority of ceramic articles consumed in New Zealand have been and still are produced elsewhere.

Given these constraints, a revised methodology was proposed that, rather than focussing on the artefact, redefined the archive by framing it within a series of political moments: from settlement to colony; from colony to dominion and dominion to realm. In rudimentary economic terms, using a New Zealand specific model developed by Priyatosh Maitra, this political evolution is mirrored by the disjunctions resulting from the globalisation of capitalist production in trade and economics; through the development of import substituting industrialisation and the rise of the state as a factor in domestic manufacturing and consumption; and ending with the de-regulation of the market place and the shift to export substitution.³⁶ Likewise, the shift of focus from artefactual to textual documents made it possible to sift, sample and analyse the data more precisely, according to the weight it gave the subject. These primary textual documents included parliamentary papers,

statistical publications, governmental, business and institutional records, journals and correspondence and contemporary articles in newspapers and other serial publications. Overlying this group of primary materials is a sampling of advertisements inserted by retailers, auctioneers, importers and producers, dating from the 1840s to the present, retrieved from various media including newspapers, journals, catalogues and, more recently, the internet. The role of the print media in determining patterns of demand for manufactured commodities in New Zealand forms a critical component in an understanding of the distribution and consumption of manufactured commodities and ceramics in particular. Yet while the prominence of advertisements for ceramics in newspapers has formed a key tool in this study, there is little understanding as to how these advertisements may have influenced demand, other than to indicate the availability of supply.³⁷ Moreover, the printing technologies obtained prior to the widespread introduction of photolithography and associated technologies meant that advertisements only provided limited, verbally descriptive, levels of information: for the consumer a knowledge of their meaning was often dependent on previous exposure to the product. Thus when a consumer was alerted by name to the existence of a particular ceramic pattern, for example the ubiquitous transfer-printed 'willow-pattern', there was an expectation that the written description would match what was commonly described as a 'willow pattern' decoration: it would be transfer-printed in blue and would feature a chinoiserie image of a willow tree, a bridge and a pagoda all in a two dimensional landscape. And it would be presented on an earthenware ground. This inability to *see* the new reinforced conventional patterns of consumer behaviour in New Zealand, entrenching the familiar—the traditional—as a sine qua non of consumption. Thus while the traditional must be recognised as one of the genealogical fragments among the many of this study, it must be differentiated from the historical idealism of tradition. As Foucault, critiquing historical procedures that have recourse to monolithic certainties observes, 'the notion of the tradition [...] allows a reduction of the difference proper to every beginning, in order to pursue without discontinuity the endless search for the origin; tradition enables us to isolate the new against a background of permanence.'³⁸ Far from being isolated, the new must be seen within the shifting background of its own past.

Thus the design historiography forming the methodological basis of this study might be seen as a discourse on a series of dialectical disjunctions identified from within the archive as between tradition and modernism, the state and business and the metropolitan centre and the frontier. This discourse is framed by tripartite political and economic historical contexts and activated by the subject of the design of ceramics within that space occupied by New Zealand.

Note on terminology

There is understandable confusion as to what manufacturers, merchants, retailers and consumers have meant by the broad terms: crockery, china, earthenware, porcelain, bone china, etc. It is a long standing grievance: in her 1880 publication, *Practical ceramics for students*, Catherine Janvier complained that ‘it would save trouble if manufacturers would adopt some system, instead of adhering to names that often mislead as to the character of the ware.’³⁹ Regrettably, no manufacturer saw fit to take up Janvier’s challenge and the muddle persists to the present. Adding to that confusion, in the two hundred or so years since ceramics were introduced to Aotearoa/New Zealand, a set of locally inflected meanings of certain English ceramic terms has evolved. Unfortunately for the sake of this study, the 1997 *Dictionary of New Zealand English: a dictionary of New Zealandisms on historical principles* fails to record them.⁴⁰ But these subtle shifts in meaning reflect a diverse range of influences and experiences: of particular note is the generalising of certain words such as ‘china’ to mean not only articles made from porcelain but any ceramic article used in the house. Similarly, over the last four decades, a number of north American terms—such as ‘dinnerware’—have come into common use. But while the former use may reflect the scarcity in New Zealand of articles made of porcelain during the nineteenth century, the latter seems more likely to have evolved as a result of marketing practices adapted from the United States from the 1960s onwards.

Some general definitions, reflecting the terms as used in this study, are given below. For the main part these are based on the relevant entries in George Savage and Harold Newman’s *Illustrated dictionary of ceramics*, still after thirty years, the most authoritative single source for descriptions of the material.⁴¹

Art pottery: an archaic term for studio ceramics. In New Zealand the term is also used in relation to ornamental, often non-functional, earthenware and stoneware articles such as vases, wall plaques and figures, often produced as an added line in brickwork potteries; art in New Zealand is commonly assumed to be non-functional.

Bone china: a porcelain body modified by the addition of calcined animal bones generally restricted to use in the United Kingdom but produced between 1976 and about 1990 in New Zealand.

China: a common English term for porcelain. In New Zealand used to designate any type of ceramic article that although potentially used for eating and drinking is often displayed as an ornament.

Crockery: a general term applied to ceramic articles usually made of earthenware for daily household use.

Dinnerware: an American-derived term employed to designate ceramics articles used at formal meals.

Earthenware: a type of pottery fired at about 800°C that is not vitrified and is porous unless glazed.

Ornamental ware: a general term for ceramic articles whose primary function is ornamental or decorative.

Parian porcelain: an unglazed porcelain with a superficial resemblance to marble introduced by the English manufacturer W T Copeland & Son in 1846.

Porcelain: a type of hard-fired (at about 1450°C) ceramic material that is generally translucent when viewed by transmitted light.

Pottery: a generic term for all ceramic ware without exception, but in normal use employed to designate all wares that are not made of porcelain. The word is also used generically to designate a place where such materials are fabricated.

Sanitary ware: ceramic wares used for hygienic purposes including water closet pedestals, urinals, wash hand basins, wash-basins, chamber pots and bed-pans.

Stoneware: A type of partially vitrified pottery falling between earthenware and porcelain.

Studio ceramics: A class of pottery made by artists-craftsmen rather than by workmen in a factory.

Tableware: a general term for ceramic articles used for eating and drinking, in particular those articles placed on a table during meals.

1 For example see: Gail Henry, *New Zealand pottery: commercial and collectable*, new edn. (Auckland: Reed Books, 1999); Douglas Lloyd Jenkins, *Frank Carpay*, (Napier: Hawkes Bay Cultural Trust, 2003).

2 See: Richard Goldthwaite, 'The economic and social world of renaissance maiolica', *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 1 (Spring 1989), (pp. 1-32), 2.

3 Cipriano Piccolpasso, *The three books of the potter's art = I tre libri dell'arte del vasaio: a facsimile of the manuscript in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London*, trans. by Ronald Lightbown and Alan Caiger-Smith, (London: Scholar Press, 1980), quoted in: Goldthwaite, p. 29.

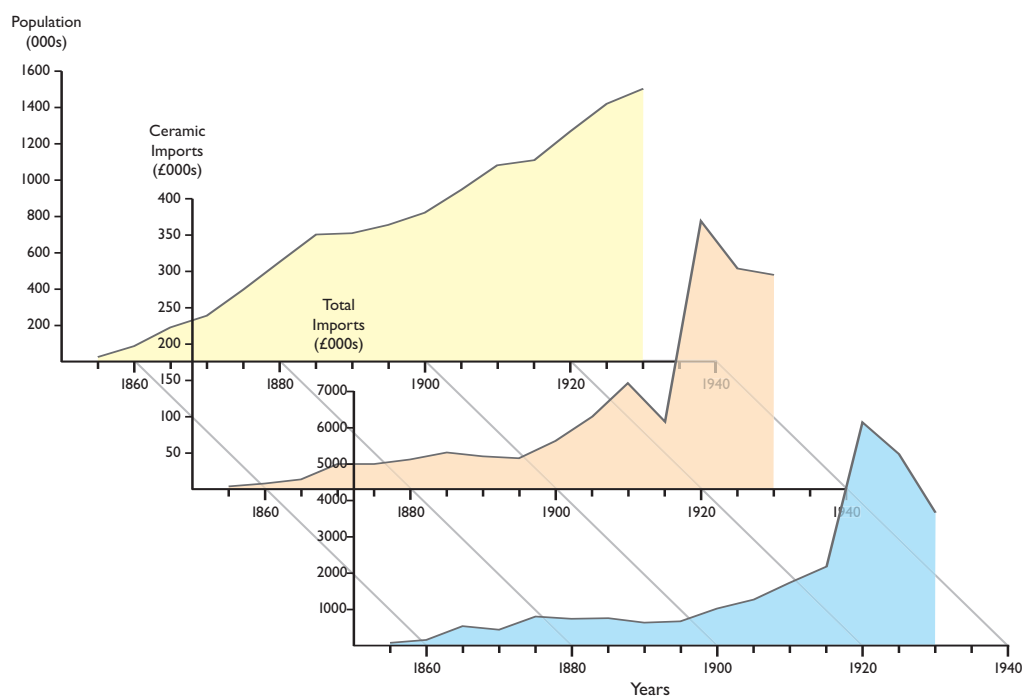
4 Neil McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood and the commercialisation of the potteries', in *The birth of a consumer society: the commercialization of eighteenth-century England*, ed. by John Brewer Neil McKendrick, J H Plumb, (London: Europa, 1982), pp. 100-145, (100). Although McKendrick argues a top-down, emulative,

- influence on middle and working class consumption habits and is based largely on producer and trader sources, more recent studies suggest that the new consumers were adaptors rather than adopters of upper class consumer preferences. It could be argued that a similar situation applied to Māori in Aotearoa. See: Jonathan Barry, 'Provincial town culture, 1640-1780: urbane or civic', in *Interpretation and cultural history*, ed. by Andrew Wear, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 198-234, 199.
- 5 Cook recorded in his journal for 9 November 1774 that he 'made my friend Pedero [Pitere] a present of an Oyle Jarr which made him happy as a prince'. See: Nicholas Thomas, *Discoveries: the voyages of Captain Cook*, (London: Allen Lane, 2003), p. 245, from *The journals of Captain James Cook on his voyages of discovery*, ed. by J C Beaglehole, vol. 2, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1969), p. 578. Anne Salmond suggests that the jar was of glass and that Pitere's delight at the gift was prompted by its resemblance to clear greenstone but there is a distinct possibility that it would have been made of earthenware, at the time a more usual material for oil storage containers. See: Anne Salmond, *The trial of the cannibal dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas*, (London: Allen Lane, 2003), p. 286.
 - 6 Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *Language, counter-memory, practice: selected essays and interviews*, ed. by Donald F Bouchard, trans. by Donald F Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 140.
 - 7 Michel Foucault, *The archaeology of knowledge*, trans. by A M Sheridan Smith, (London; New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 145.
 - 8 'Part II: Design History: Introduction', in *The BLOCK reader in visual culture*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 131-133, (132-33).
 - 9 Tony Fry, *Design history Australia*, (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1988), p. 53.
 - 10 Daniel Miller, *Material culture and mass consumption*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), p. 18.
 - 11 Fry, p. 16.
 - 12 Ibid., p.17.
 - 13 Ibid., p.14.
 - 14 Foucault, *The archaeology of knowledge*, p. 7.
 - 15 Miller, p. 14.
 - 16 Ibid., p. 18.
 - 17 Ibid., p. 215.
 - 18 Hal Foster, 'The archive without museums', *October*, no. 77 (Summer 1996), (pp. 97-119), 104-106.
 - 19 Miller, p. 216.
 - 20 Tony Fry, *Remakings: ecology, design, philosophy*, (Sydney: Envirobook, 1994), p. 10.
 - 21 Fran Hannah and Tim Putnam, 'Taking stock in design history', in *The BLOCK reader in visual culture*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 134-147, (143).
 - 22 Jonathan M Woodham, 'Designing design history: from Pevsner to postmodernism'. *Auckland University of Technology, Centre for Communication Research*, [2002], Available: www.aut.ac.nz/research_showcase/research_activity_areas/communication_research/pdf/jonathan_woodham.pdf, 20 November 2002, p. [1].
 - 23 Paul Glennie, 'Consumption within historical studies', in *Acknowledging consumption: a review of new studies*, ed. by Daniel Miller, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 164-203, (164).
 - 24 Ibid., (165).
 - 25 Miles Fairburn, *The ideal society and its enemies: the foundations of modern New Zealand society, 1850-1900*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1989), pp. 265-266.
 - 26 Bronwen Douglas, 'Art as ethno-historical text: science, representation and indigenous presence in eighteenth and nineteenth century oceanic voyage literature', in *Double vision: art histories and colonial histories in the Pacific*, ed. by Diane Losche Nicholas Thomas, Jennifer Newell, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 65-99, (68).
 - 27 Hannah and Putnam, (135).
 - 28 David F Noble, *America by design: science, technology, and the rise of corporate capitalism*, 1st edn. (New York: Knopf, 1977).
 - 29 Necdet Teymur, 'The materiality of design', in *The BLOCK reader in visual culture*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 148-166, (148).

- 30 Fry, *Design history Australia*, p. 41.
- 31 Jean Baudrillard, *The mirror of production*, trans. by Mark Poster, (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975), p. 30.
- 32 Miller, p. 85.
- 33 See: Jonathan M Woodham, 'Resisting colonization: design history has its own identity', *Design Issues*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Spring 1995), (pp. 22-37), 32-33.
- 34 Gavin McLean, "'It's history, Jim, but not as we know it': historians and the New Zealand heritage industry", in *Going public: the changing face of New Zealand history*, ed. by Jock Phillips, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), pp. 158-174, (170-171).
- 35 Some discussion of the role of government in New Zealand has emerged recently outlining both its departmental structures and regulatory interventions. See, for example: Michael Bassett, *The state in New Zealand, 1840-1984: socialism without doctrines?*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1998).
- 36 Priyatosh Maitra, 'The globalisation of capitalism and economic transition in New Zealand', in *The political economy of New Zealand*, ed. by Brian Roper, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 22-39, (22-23).
- 37 With the notable exception of work undertaken by Louise Shaw and Barabara Brookes, there has been little study on the impact of advertising on either design practice or the consumption of manufactured commodities in New Zealand. See: Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes, 'Constructing homes: gender and advertising in *Home and Building*, 1936-1970', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 33, no. 2 (1999), (pp. 200-220), 200. The situation in Australia is less dire: Fry analysed advertisements to explore ideas of mythmaking in his *Design history Australia*; more recently, Paul Hogben has posited Australian building product advertisements as a way of reading 'the history of the material, symbolic and mythical constructions of modern architecture.' See: Paul Hogben, 'The look of expertise: towards a history of building product advertising', *Transition*, vol. 61-62, (2000), (pp. 30-39), 30.
- 38 Foucault, *The archaeology of knowledge*, p. 23.
- 39 Catharine A Janvier, *Practical ceramics for students*, (London, New York: Chatto & Windus, H. Holt and Co., 1880), p. 124, cited in: Christopher Thompson and Andrew Wilson, 'A guide to the identification of nineteenth century ceramic body types', *Australian Society for Historical Archaeology Inc Research Bulletin*, no. 5 (Summer 1987), (pp. 1-4), 1.
- 40 *The dictionary of New Zealand English: a dictionary of New Zealandisms on historical principles*, ed. by Orsman, H W, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- 41 George Savage and Harold Newman, *An illustrated dictionary of ceramics*, 2nd edn. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976).

7 Acts of settlement (1814–1935)

The arrival of Europeans in Aotearoa at the end of the eighteenth century not only introduced both a new material culture and a radically different social order to the country's indigenous inhabitants but also internationalised existing patterns of communication and commodity exchange. Starting as a trickle of whalers and sealers, the flow of Europeans into the country grew exponentially so that by the end of the nineteenth century the Māori were swamped under a deluge of settlers. Thus a society which had no need for manufacturing industry or a demand for its products, no requirement for a monetary system and no want of a central government found itself obliged to become accustomed to these mechanisms of power in order to survive: in material terms what they encountered was a vast enlargement of a world of goods.



Tab. I Value of New Zealand ceramics imports, 1855–1930, measured against value of total imports and population.

Statistics of [...] New Zealand (1855–1920), Statistical report [...] of New Zealand (1920–1930).

But for both the colonising power and the settlers, the survival of the Māori as an independent culture was incidental to the aims of developing free trade and establishing planned colonies as outlets for surplus capital and overpopulation. From a British perspective New Zealand would soon become not only a source of cheap food necessary to keep its domestic wages low and thus maintain industrial

growth, but also a market for its manufactured products. For the colonists, the country was a site both for personal wealth production and the creation of an idealised Britain; a space where the comforting patterns of middle class life could be reproduced in relative safety far from the polluted and overcrowded sites of industrial manufacture: potentially it could be a relocated consumer paradise albeit one removed from the pressing requirements of fashion at the metropolitan centre.

In this newly reconstituted country the importation of ceramics activated a process of design by enabling consumption, as well as providing models for local production. Exported in casks, crates and packages for the most part from Britain, these ceramics were not only functional necessities but also signifiers of imperial power and personal status. Individual rank in a mobile and aspirationally egalitarian society could be displayed by the quantity and type of ceramics owned. Thus the 18 per cent of households observed by Fairburn as employing domestic servants in 1891 would have been large consumers of ceramics acquiring a range of types in order to satisfy the obligations of their position in society.¹ These would have encompassed different functional as well as material types: breakfast, tea and dinner services, as well as ‘common’ items for everyday use; porcelain, as well as earthenware. Even in the servant-less working ranks it is possible to infer an increase in the quantity of ceramics consumed, matching the physical expansion of houses: again drawing on an observation made by Fairburn ‘that the proportion of dwellings of one and two rooms to total dwellings was halved between 1874 and 1901’ suggests that these additional spaces may have been social spaces: sitting and dining rooms, rather than additional bedrooms.² Statistics showing the values of ceramic against total imports imply that this expansion in the physical properties of dwellings matched the steady growth of ceramics consumption during the same period, notwithstanding the economic impact of the ‘Long Depression’ of the late 1870s to early 1890s. The statistical correlation between the value of total imports and ceramic imports was maintained during the economic boom of the first decade of the twentieth century. It is only with the reduction of supply that occurred with the onset of World War I that the pattern of demand was broken. But reduced supply did not prompt any increase in demand for local production of table and ornamental wares.

¹ Fairburn, p. 87.

² Ibid., p. 109.

7.1 Importing culture

Viewed through the perspective of portable material culture, colonisation by Europeans of the three main islands they identified as New Zealand began in the late eighteenth century when the crews of whaling and sealing ships, sailing from Port Jackson in the British penal colony of New South Wales, established shore stations around the coastline. The inhabitants of these rudimentary sites were temporary colonists: their intentions were extractive and their motivation was profit; their material needs were few and, in the light of conventional nineteenth century European culture, their existence abnormal. In terms of material culture history, this abnormality impinges on their usefulness: to initiate an investigation into the place of design in New Zealand through the medium of ceramics, it is necessary to identify a category of colonist whose duration in the country was more permanent and whose activities are better documented. These requirements can be discerned in the colonising activities of the Church Missionary Society—an evangelizing sect of the Church of England—that arrived in Aotearoa from New South Wales at the end of 1814 with the purpose of civilizing the inhabitants of the islands—the Māori—and, in the process, converting them to Christianity. Unlike the whalers and sealers, the missionaries, from the first, sought to replicate the materiality of that which they knew amongst that which to them was unknown.

A micromorphology of the missions

Discussing the involvement of the Church Missionary Society in a commercial whaling venture in 1821, Captain Francis Irvine, a member of its Australasian Corresponding Committee, speculated that:

It is allowed on all hands that the hopes of civilizing the islanders of these seas rests in a great measure on the introduction of commerce. The natives of New Zealand, unlike those of Tahyte, readily contract a liking for the products of European industry, which they are willing to purchase with the articles of their own country. The Pork, Timber, Mats, Hemp and Fish of New Zealand are perhaps destined at no very distant period to render it a country of great note in the Commercial world.¹

By the 1830s, a small trade in one of the products of European industry—ceramics—had developed to supply the wants of missionary and other European settlers resident in the north of Aotearoa and, possibly, to be used as an item of barter for trade with the Māori, notwithstanding a perception that the latter displayed a distinct preference for iron articles, in particular scissors, muskets and hatchets. While contravening instructions from the Church Missionary Society,

missionary trade in muskets and hatchets was driven by a necessity for foodstuffs and entered into with a show of apparent reluctance ‘as the natives always use them as implements of war.’² But, for the missionaries, the supply of food was a matter of abiding concern, more so, perhaps, than the conversion of the ‘heathen’³; other colonisers—including whalers and sealers, timber merchants, flax traders and ‘persons of the worst character, Prisoners and others who have run from their ships’⁴—had no such scruples.

In July 1832, the Reverend William Yate, wrote to the London secretaries of the Church Missionary Society requesting them to indent to the private accounts of the missionary families an order of ceramics:

1 Crate containing meat, pudding & cheese plates, ea 30 doz
 1 do do meat, pie & vegetable dishes, ea 10 sets
 1 do do blue and white basins in sizes, 30 doz
 1 do do white wash hand basins and ewers, ea 30 doz
 1 do do white Chambers, 5 doz
 1 do do blue & white breakfast cups & saucers, 30 doz
 1 do do Jugs in sizes, 30 doz [...]

We shall be much obliged if you will have the packers charged to be particularly careful in packing as goods transshipped in N.S.W. are liable to so much damage.⁵

Yate’s ‘indent for supplies’—while not the first order for commodities dispatched by the missionaries—is the largest and most descriptive surviving document conveying the plaintive requests for familiar commodities to the Church Missionary Society secretariat from those Europeans who had isolated themselves at the bottom of the world in order to induce a want of what they perceived as the civilizing and spiritual benefits of Christianity amongst the Māori: a written language; European technology and agricultural practices; and—of equal importance—the profits of a free and unhindered trade.⁶ The missionaries reasoned that exposing the civilizing commodities of European industry to the Māori would be sufficient to convince them of the rightness of Christianity.

As it is most probable that the order was written as a sort of ceramic palimpsest—or as an extrapolation of the ceramics that remained from earlier importations to the settlements—Yate’s order can be viewed as a demonstration of the pervasiveness of how early nineteenth century ceramic manufacturers had adumbrated a sense of their products—and its design—onto the collective sensibilities of the European consumer, no matter how distant they were from both the sites of production and the more conventional sites of consumption. In one respect the items comprising the order might be viewed as one of the more visible manifestations in the country

of ‘the products of European industry’ and thus as evidence of the ‘superiority’ of missionary civilization. But Māori had no functional need for a ceramic culture—hue gourds were cultivated for use as containers—although they soon became involved in early attempts to manufacture bricks.⁷ And while possibly intrigued by the brittleness of the material and the colouration of blue transfer-printed decorations, there is no indication that the Māori had any use for industrially produced tableware or sought it for barter purposes.⁸ And while there is evidence of the prurient shock expressed by Europeans at the sight of Māori design—‘grotesquely-carved figures with goggling eyes and tongues thrust out’⁹—there is, apparently, no record of how Māori responded to either the mechanical designs of European transfer-printed ceramics or the industrially converted material.¹⁰

For the missionaries though, ceramics were tangible symbols of the sophistries of their abandoned metropolitan lives; the newly imported ceramics may have been used to replace the humble but more practical tin articles that were recommended to the ‘lower orders’ as appropriate for use in the new country as well as playing a part in the ritual ordering of domestic life.¹¹ As Judith Binney observes:

Physical isolation was very real. The settlers were aware that they lived in New Zealand on Māori sufferance. The toleration of the existence of the community was inspired, not by a desire to learn the new religion, but by a desire to acquire the trade that the settlers offered. At the same time the existence of the community attracted further European shipping and its trade goods. None of the first settlers feared for their physical safety, but their sense of preservation took other forms. Strict adherence to their own social observances, to their own formal patterns of middle-class living, and to their own middle-class values was marked.¹²

Such formal observances served to alleviate the horror of the vacuum of isolation: the tableware employed in some of these social rituals acquired significance beyond its immediate, functional, purpose. In a sense these everyday objects became more than commodities but evocative symbols of that which had been had forsaken. And in both metaphorical and functional senses, symbols of missionary shame: what they consumed from their tableware was the result not of their own labours but of a trade in lethal wares, muskets and hatchets. As Binney construes, ‘the settlers were soon forced to realize that the gun was the coin of this realm.’¹³

Other than the information recorded in Yate’s request, there is no surviving indication of where the ceramics listed in his order were acquired, their cost or even if and when they arrived.¹⁴ Nor does there appear to be any written record—in either journals or correspondence—of what the missionary settlers brought with them by way of ceramic items. Likewise, to date, there have been only limited controlled archaeological excavations in or around the vicinity of the sites of both

Church Missionary Society and Wesleyan Missionary Society settlements.¹⁵ Yet while no accurately documented body of ceramic material has been identified, there exist in the collection of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, ceramic items with possible provenances to early missionary families. Comprising plates and bowls, the predominant decoration of the Auckland War Memorial Museum material suggests that the 1832 order for ‘blue and white tableware and tea wares’ referred to blue transfer-printed earthenware. Within the limitations inherent in this assemblage—there are problems associated with the accuracy of the provenances—its significance lies in how it describes what was then absent: there is, for example, no pre-nineteenth century material; a number of objects in the collection claimed as having antiquity—‘salt-glazed jug reputed to be 350 years old’—were, in fact, produced contemporaneously.¹⁶ What was brought to the country seems to have been newly manufactured.¹⁷ Similarly, it might be deduced that the imported ceramics represented an attempt by the missionary families to evoke both an absent past and to play a part in the replication of contemporary European social rituals; an endeavour to normalise their own abnormal condition in the new country.

While the missionary settlements in Aotearoa—like the prison-colony settlements in New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land—had a strictly defined hierarchical social order imposed on them by the Church Missionary Society, it was not as marked as the distinctions between officer/administrator and convict settlers in those places of despair. Nevertheless class distinctions were present, between ordained missionaries and missionary ‘mechanics’, although over the twenty-six years in which the missionary settlements constituted the most pervasive ‘permanent’ face of European colonisation, these differences would, in the face of isolation and the small size of the settlements, become less obvious.¹⁸ For the ordained, acquisition of earthenware, rather than porcelain, tableware items might be perceived as indicators of their diminishing, ‘superior’ status; for the socially restive ‘mechanics’, indicators of their increasing social equality. While the surviving missionary ceramics, such as those held in the Auckland War Memorial Museum, are a relatively cohesive group in terms of material and decoration, a more expensive Coalbrookdale-manufactured porcelain service, purportedly associated with George Augustus Selwyn—the Anglican bishop of New Zealand—and his family intimates that ceramics should not only reflect the class origins of their owners in the old country but also their superior administrative status in the new settlement.¹⁹

Although imported directly from the United Kingdom, rather than supplied from Sydney, as was often the case with other commodities such as blankets and hardware, it is reasonable to assume, on the basis of similar descriptions, that the ceramics presumably dispatched by the Church Missionary Society secretariat in 1832 were comparable to that material available in Sydney where, from the late 1820s, a number of specialist china retailers had been established. As early as September 1830, Ralph Darling, governor of New South Wales, was forwarding details of the trade between New South Wales and Aotearoa to the Colonial Office indicating that between January and August of that year £75 worth of earthen and glass ware had been despatched to New Zealand.²⁰ In her study of the ceramic market in Sydney, Megan Atkins has identified the existence of ‘between 1826 and 1840 [...] eight establishments who specialized in the sale of ceramic goods.’²¹ Advertisements in Sydney newspapers suggest that blue printed wares were becoming available in Sydney from about 1816 and, increasingly, became the predominant form of decoration on tableware and, later, other ceramic shapes.²² On the basis of a well-provenanced attribution, one English manufacturer known to have supplied the Sydney market in the 1830s was Joseph Clementson who, based at the Phoenix Works in Hanley, specialised in the production of transfer-printed earthenware from 1832 and developed a specialist market for export wares to the United States²³: the Sydney market would have been a logical extension of this trade.²⁴

Without question, Sydney was the source of most trade goods imported into Aotearoa for both Europeans and Māori and the principal market for the timber and flax and foodstuffs exported from the country. Moreover, it was the last ‘civilized’ outpost for Aotearoa’s growing European population: by the 1830s the Ngā Puhi nurtured village of Kororāreka in the Bay of Islands was inhabited not only by godly missionaries but also ‘by a set of lawless fellows, the greater part of whom are convicts escaped from New South Wales.’²⁵ In the widest sense of the term, trade defined the relationship between Māori and the colonisers. And although the great bulk of trade passed through Kororāreka, numerous Māori iwi had developed independent trading connections with Europeans. By 1840, a sizeable population of traffickers in European manufactured commodities had permanent bases in or around Māori settlements throughout the country, in many instances assimilating with their hosts to become Pākehā Māori.

Between May and November 1840, the Kororāreka-based *New Zealand Advertiser and Bay of Islands Gazette* carried advertisements for the sort of imported goods seen as necessary both for European settlement and ‘the native trade’: on 20 June Messrs Spicer & Weavell announced a sale by public auction of ‘Duck, canvass (*sic*), rope, boots, crockery and glassware [...] in consequence of the Proprietor’s going to Sydney.’ Three weeks later, W Wilson was auctioning the contents of the Commercial Hotel including ‘A dinner service [and] Crockeryware’. And on 16 July, the trader David Nathan announced the opening of his Sydney Store on Kororarika (*sic*) Beach to the:

Inhabitants of the Bay of Islands and its vicinity [...] with a new and extensive stock of Merchandise, which he has just received, ex *Diana*, amongst which will be found [...] CROCKERYWARE, Consisting of—Cups and Saucers, Plates, Dishes, Tureens, Jugs, Wash-hand Basins and Ewers, and a Variety of other Articles too numerous to mention.²⁶

But this enthusiastic commercial activity was premature: in what may have been an attempt to impose a degree of control over the burgeoning European population, certain Māori rangatira agreed in February 1840 to cede a measure of control over parts of the northern island of Aotearoa to the British crown. Known subsequently as the Treaty of Waitangi, the document they signed was viewed by the United Kingdom government not only as an acceptance of the British rule of law but also a cessation of sovereignty by the Māori. And whereas previously trade had not been subject to any regulation, other than that exercised by individual Māori iwi, the advent of British rule would temporarily interrupt the trajectory of both Māori and Pākehā trading ambitions. By November 1840 the Kororāreka traders were selling up: an advertisement in the *New Zealand Advertiser* announced a ‘Great sale of merchandize; W Wilson is instructed to offer for Sale by auction, at the stores of Messrs Henry Thompson & Co [...] twelve thousand pounds worth of merchandize [including] 3 Four roomed houses, in frame [and] 23 Crates assorted Earthenware’; everything by way of commodities an intending settler could want.²⁷ But the prefabricated houses and the crates of earthenware were not destined for use in Kororāreka but in the newly established capital at Auckland, some two hundred kilometres to the south.

Urban distinctions

With his decision in September 1840 to establish a capital at Tāmaki makau rau ‘on the Southern Bank of the Wai te Mata River, in the central District of the Northern Island’, William Hobson, lieutenant governor of the British colony of New Zealand, brought about a radical change not only in the patterns of European settlement but also in the manner in which trade was entered in to by both Māori and European.²⁸

In anticipating a new urban focus for European life in the colony, Hobson can be seen as both recreating the social, administrative and trading models of the European paradigm and removing the locus of sovereignty from Māori influence. By contrast with Ngā Puhi-dominated Kororāreka—Hobson re-named the town Russell after the then British Home Secretary in late 1840²⁹—there were relatively few members of the Tāmaki iwi, Ngāti Whātua and Ngāti Paoa, remaining on the southern shore of the Waitemata Harbour; Ngā Puhi had exiled them from the isthmus in a series of battles with trader and missionary brokered muskets between 1821 and 1826 and, as the 1987 *Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Orakei claim* records, ‘settlers came not as conquerors, not as interlopers, but as Te Kawau’s invitees to share the land with Ngāti Whātua.’³⁰ But, ultimately, Hobson’s process of centralizing power at Auckland not only diminished the hegemony that Māori held over their land and trade but also regularised what was brought into the country by establishing administrative mechanisms for policing commodity demand.

Trade was established in Auckland even prior to its official foundation when the Scottish doctor John Logan Campbell and his compatriot, the lawyer William Brown, began trading as Brown & Campbell from Motukorea Island in the Hauraki Gulf in early 1840; they moved to the mainland soon after where they first operated from a small tent on the foreshore of Commercial Bay. Under these straitened circumstances, conventional retailing was impossible; supplies were determined by the arrival of ships and commodities and, rather than being stocked, goods were dispersed promptly by auction. This pattern of retailing characterized commodity consumption in Auckland until well into the 1860s. Brown & Campbell’s opening trading activities included sales of British-manufactured tableware imported initially through Sydney and, later, as the business became more established, directly from the United Kingdom. In his published reminiscences, *Poenamo*, Campbell recollected that his first bed was constructed of ‘an empty crockery crate.’³¹

The newspapers too followed the exodus from Kororāreka: in April 1843 Brown & Campbell founded the *Southern Cross*, *New Zealand Guardian and Auckland, Thames and Bay of Islands Advertiser*, Auckland’s second newspaper: the first issue carried an advertisement from the reformed Nathan trading concern, Messrs Nathan & Joseph, announcing the auction of a range of commodities including ‘Crockery-ware’.³² Other traders also advertised tableware: Robinson & Dawson, a week following the Nathan & Joseph auction, were declaring that ‘in consequence of

declining business in the town of Auckland, they will immediately commence Selling Off their Stock, consisting of:—Crockery and Flint Ware’ and in June Henry R Cretnay was auctioning crockery ‘to close consignment’, as were Brown & Campbell who auctioned off their ‘whole stock at hand, without reserve, consisting of—Crockery in Lots assorted convenient for Families.’

An early, if not the first, attempt to retail tableware by means other than auction seems to have been undertaken by Edward Allarton who by January 1844 had established premises in Shortland Crescent selling a wide range of household goods including ironmongery and crockery. In an advertisement inserted in the *Southern Cross*, headed ‘Earthenware’, he publicised a stock of tableware that by contemporary metropolitan standards would have appeared limited in range and possibly quality: the advertisement suggests that the bulk of his wares were of blue transfer-printed earthenware.³³ But Allarton, like many other would-be Auckland merchants, failed soon after establishing his business: with a population of just under three thousand in 1844, an apparent lack of ready capital, an unstable economy, uncertain shipping and a lack of social infrastructure, this small, ‘dirty town ravaged periodically by fevers’ played havoc with the ambitions of many settlers-cum-would-be merchants.³⁴ R C J Stone observes that Brown & Campbell—one of the few trading companies to survive those uncertain times—sought to minimise their risk by curtailing credit, stopping guarantee sales and limiting their stock: ‘Within their showrooms there was, as a general rule, no great quantity or wide selection of goods. Only standard, good-selling lines were kept in stock.’³⁵ Campbell bemoaned that: ‘Business of every description has utterly stopt & nothing but cash sales are transacted, every one distrusting his neighbours. Some have failed, some have bolted & others have given up business.’³⁶

<p style="text-align: center;">EARTHENWARE</p> <p>ON Sale by the Undersigned, consisting of—</p> <p>Large Breakfast Cups and Saucers: Tea Services complete, Willow pattern Plates and Dishes, Ditto ditto Soup Tureens, Vegetable Dishes, &c., Blue printed Jugs, Bowls, Mugs, &c., Chamber Services, &c., &c.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EDWARD ALLARTON.</p> <p>Shortland Crescent, } 1st January, 1844. }</p>
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Fig. 1 Edward Allarton's advertisement for earthenware, *Southern Cross*, 6 January 1844.

In the eyes of the traders, responsibility for this state of affairs lay with the colonial administration whose first attempt to regulate the flow of goods into the country was instituted with the proclamation of a customs ordinance in 1841 which imposed a duty on wines, spirits and tobacco and a ten percent levy on ‘all other goods (except goods the produce of the United Kingdom, or of New South Wales, or Van Diemen’s Land).’³⁷ This revenue raising measure would both pay for the government’s activities and give preference to goods of British origin. Given the small size of the European population in 1842—about 10,000 persons—it was inevitable that the

burden of this duty would fall on the Māori—who numbered about 80,000 persons—and in particular on their trading activities at Kororāreka³⁸, which, until 1846, remained the prime destination for most shipping.³⁹ While the duty had little impact on any imported ceramics, as most originated from the United Kingdom, it affected trade generally and became an early point of contention between settlers and the government. Until his premature death in 1842, Hobson desperate to raise revenue to operate his ‘large cumbrous Government machinery’ remained unbending in the face of demands from the Auckland merchants that the tariff be done away with as an obstacle to commerce. It was only one of many grievances that the colonists and the colonised held against the new British administration.

Set thy house and table in order

Even before his arrival, Hobson’s successor as governor, Robert FitzRoy, was hailed as the colony’s saviour, one who would ‘set capital afloat locked up now through fear and bad faith’; Stone describes the phenomenon as the ‘waiting for Fitzroy cult.’⁴⁰ On 11 November 1843 the trader J Jones inserted a prolix advertisement in the *Southern Cross* exhorting householders to ‘Set thy house and table in order [...] Welcome Governor Fitzroy! and (*sic*) may you long reign in the hearts of the people, be an honor (*sic*) to society in this world and a companion of the blessed in eternity.’ One’s table could be set in order by the purchase of ‘a Dinner Service for eight shillings, Breakfast and Tea Service for six shillings each set.’⁴¹ In slightly more sober terms, the paper’s editor Samuel Martin cut to the quick of the matter of customs duties, asserting that:

Whatever arguments may be brought forward against free trade in an old commercial and manufacturing country like England, it is quite plain, as has been expressed by His Excellency, that these cannot be made applicable to a new colony like New Zealand, where we have as yet neither manufactures nor anything else to protect by import duties or taxes. We are yet too young to produce even the common necessities of life.⁴²

It was a call FitzRoy heeded: two months after his arrival, ignoring the dire financial straits of the colony, but motivated by a desire to placate both European and Māori disaffection he attempted to replace the vexatious customs duties with an ordinance that raised revenue on property and income: if anything, it was an even more unpopular move. FitzRoy also sought to resolve the colony’s financial crisis—in 1845 government expenditure amounted to £49,000 while revenue was a mere £20,000—a circumstance brought about by a failure of the Colonial Office to consider either the costs of annexation or its impact on the local economy. His response was to issue government debentures bearing five per cent. As he later justified, ‘There were then no exports the colony was drained of its small stock of

specie by payments for goods and the usual necessities of life; and scarcely any circulating medium remained except notes of the Union Bank of Australia.’⁴³ The debentures failed to cover either the administration’s outgoings or to boost the colonial economy and in April 1845 customs duties were restored.

Administratively illegal and economically short-sighted, FitzRoy’s inept measures, while alleviating short term political difficulties, drove him to propose more desperate means of raising revenue, including condoning the sale of Māori land directly to settlers for a fee. Paul Moon argues that in proposing this measure ‘FitzRoy saw Māori taking an active part in the country’s economy—not merely existing as impoverished appendages to it.’⁴⁴ They were after all, as FitzRoy himself observed, ‘the best customers of the settlers’ not only for what they consumed but also for what they produced and sold. But, ultimately, it was the excuse of FitzRoy’s overt, if paternalistic, sympathy for Māori that prompted the Colonial Office, under pressure from vested colonising interests such as the New Zealand Company with its ‘planned’ settlements in Port Nicholson, Nelson, New Plymouth and Whanganui, to terminate his administration in May 1845.⁴⁵

Under conventional circumstances, gubernatorial changeovers in a British colonial possession were launched on a raft of social occasions with the pomp and panoply of the empire on display both on the person of the new governor and at his table⁴⁶; in the meantime, the departing governor would set about disposing of his unwanted chattels. The departure from Sydney in 1846 of Sir George Gipps, governor of New South Wales—a colony that for fifteen months between 1840 and 1841 had incorporated New Zealand—was the occasion for what, in colonial terms, was an impressive two-day sale of his surplus effects. It included a vast consignment of ceramics including—in the drawing room—‘One pair of splendidly gilt enamelled green and gold vases, very large size, square pedestals, and superbly painted medallions [...] One pair of superb and costly Chinese vases, large, and extremely handsome.’ Separate categories were listed for ‘China, &c.’ and ‘Earthenware’, the former included:

One very excellent china dinner service, consisting o (*sic*) two water dishes, one salad bowl, sixteen flat dishes, eighty-four dinner plates, thirty-two soup plates, two sauce tureens, four stands [...] One very handsome china desert service, blue and gold, thirty-six plates, sixteen shaped dishes, two sugar stands, two cake stands.

In the ‘Earthenware’ category Gipps had acquired—presumably for ball suppers—‘One willow pattern dinner service, consisting of one hundred and thirty-two dinner plates, twenty-three small flat dishes,— — —large flat dishes, four vegetable dishes, four sauce tureens, one soup tureen and ladle.’⁴⁷ Appointed governor of New South

Wales in 1838, Gipps' ceramic chattels were representative of those acquired by others of his class and position and mirror those purchased in Sydney and London by the wealthy New South Wales landholder and legislator James Macarthur for his estate at Camden Park also in the late 1830s.⁴⁸ In a commentary on the acquisition of a dinner service by another wealthy New South Wales colonist, Sir John Jamison, Andrew Wilson suggests both that gubernatorial taste played a part in the selection process and that dinner services also functioned as demonstrations of wealth and statements of social status within the colony.⁴⁹

Given that FitzRoy was a scion of the upper echelons of the British aristocracy, a former Tory member of parliament and a captain in the Royal Navy it might have been expected by the denizens of Auckland that the arrival of this paragon might have sparked such a spectacle, notwithstanding the fact that FitzRoy was housed in a small, prefabricated residence—'a clapboard barn'—while Gipps had enjoyed the baronial splendours of Edward Blore's neo-Gothic pile.⁵⁰ While FitzRoy's arrival was, at least in the eyes of his detractors, a *dénouement*: 'his landing in Commercial Bay was eminently ridiculous [...] the two drummer boys and the fifer of the guard of honour struck up "The king of the Cannibal islands", to which appropriate air His Excellency marched to Government House', he seems to have been well supplied with chattels.⁵¹ In October 1845, following his ignominious recall by the Colonial Office after a mere twenty two months in office, FitzRoy instructed Brown & Campbell to auction his effects. The firm inserted advertisements for two weeks running in the *New Zealander* declaring that they:

Have the honor (*sic*) to announce, that they have been instructed to offer for Sale, By Public Auction, At Government House, on Wednesday the 22nd instant, at Eleven o'Clock, A Quantity of Household Furniture. Catalogues and other particulars to be had at the Auctioneer's, previous to the Sale, where Tickets to view can also be obtained.⁵²

No detailed records of local gubernatorial sales appear to survive, either for FitzRoy or his successor, George Grey.⁵³ However, on 22 September 1858, the Auckland auctioneers Connell and Ridings conducted a sale of the 'household furniture and effects' of Colonel Robert Wynyard, acting governor of New Zealand from 1854 to 1855.⁵⁴ Wynyard had been first posted to New Zealand as lieutenant colonel of the 58th Regiment in 1845 and after a short sojourn in New South Wales returned in 1847 to his home in Official Bay in Auckland where he would remain for the next eleven years. He and his wife Anne Catherine (née McDonell) are known to have entertained lavishly, a fact reflected in the auctioned chattels that, on the basis of the laconic entries in the sale catalogue, were both prolific in their extent and contemporary in taste.⁵⁵ The drawing room alone accounted for 144 lots

including porcelain vases, lamps, baskets, scent bottles and figures, a chocolate set, two teapots (one broken) and an assortment of cups and saucers. One of the figures is identified as '[lot] 29—One statue (the Greek Slave) in Parian marble' that, in all probability, was a Parian porcelain reproduction of Hiram Powers' *Greek Slave*, manufactured by Copeland from 1848; it was, in the view of Thad Logan, 'perhaps the single most popular nude figure [...] because it ultimately reasserted, by the spectacle of an unusual juxtaposition, the difference between an enlightened modern world and a barbaric past.'⁵⁶ Its desirability can be attested by it being sold for the extraordinarily high sum of £9 10s, although the laconic catalogue entry suggests that both auctioneer and purchaser confused this reproduction porcelain figure for a marble original.

The plenitude of objects found in the Wynyards' drawing room carried over into the 'general store'—a sort of butler's pantry—which housed two dinner services, most probably made of porcelain: one in white and gold and another in red and gold. The former comprised thirteen [serving] dishes, twenty-four soup plates, fifty eight dinner plates and twenty-four cheese plates sold for £8 5s, while the latter, while having only half as many settings but with additional parts, sold for £10. Included in the bounty were a dessert service, a supper tray, a twelve-person breakfast service, a (part) twelve-person coffee service in blue and gold and a twelve-person coffee service in white and gold and a 'broken set'. As well, in the kitchen, was found a 'Common Dinner Service'—presumably in earthenware—along with a 'soup toureen (*sic*)', soup plates, dinner plates, small dinner plates, cheese plates, 'dishes all sizes'. Additionally, in the pantry, a further assortment of breakfast cups and saucers, plates, tea cups and saucers and in the cellar a further selection of—presumably discarded—tableware.

The Wynyards most likely acquired the porcelain services and sets, along with the ornaments and vases in London, rather than in Auckland or even Sydney; in her reminiscences of settler life in the 1860s, Lady Barker counselled that:

When we were packing up things to come here, our friends expressed their astonishment at our taking so many of the little elegancies of life, such as drawing room ornaments, pictures, etc. Now it is a great mistake not to bring such things, at all events a few of them, for they are not to be bought here, and they give the new home a certain likeness to the old one which is always delightful.⁵⁷

Likewise, the ownership of a porcelain service, as opposed to a set of transfer-printed earthenware plates betokened social status; in a letter to her mother, Charlotte Godley, wife of the founder of the Canterbury settlement, lamented the fact that she had not brought more things with her from the United Kingdom:

All imported goods from England are about double their original price in the [Wellington] shops here; sometimes more. For instance [...] crockery and glass, with something additional from breakage [...] whenever we go and *take up our station* at Port Cooper [Lyttleton] even [her husband] says that we must have a dinner service, instead of a few willow pattern plates and dishes, which we now all use, so as to be able to ask people, at least to dinner, if not to stay in the house, as soon as they land, after their long voyage, which will be expected of us.⁵⁸

Notwithstanding the superfluity of items put up for sale by the Wynyards, it might be assumed that they retained certain objects but were happy to dispose of services and ornaments that, on their return to the metropolitan centre—via a sojourn in the Cape Colony—might have been regarded as unfashionable: the Wynyards departed Auckland in November 1858 burdened with ‘a piece of plate [...] presented to him by the inhabitants of Auckland.’⁵⁹ And even after the death of her husband in 1864, Anne Wynyard was noted as being ‘a prominent social figure’ in London.

In purchasing his Coalbrookdale porcelain crested dinner service in 1838 from the fashionable London retailer ‘John Mortlock, Chinaman to their Majesties Royal Family’, James Macarthur paid a total of £59 14s for a one hundred and ninety four piece dinner service—it included duplicates in anticipation of breakages—and a further 7d each for painted crests. This contrasts with the 4s 6d he paid for ‘1 doz [transfer-printed earthenware] dinner plates’ he acquired in 1836 from the Sydney retailers ‘Levick & Younger, Wholesale and Retail Ironmongers, &c. &c. importers of china, glass, earthenware, sadlery (*sic*), plated ware &c. &c.’.⁶⁰ The difference appears to relate to his marital status: whilst in London he had married Amelia (Emily) Stone, the daughter of a Lombard Street banker; conveniently, she came with a £10,000 dowry. The Coalbrookdale service was complemented by other tableware and ornaments: a dessert service at eighteen guineas, a coffee service, teacups and saucers, an ink stand, flower vases, toilet and kitchen ware to a total value of £117 1s 5d. In May the same year, Macarthur had acquired a somewhat smaller order of two breakfast services and an array of smaller table ware from Rittener & Saxby, ‘Manufacturers & Importers of French & Dresden Porcelaine, Clocks, Girondeles and Bronze’ to a value of £32 9s 6d. For the wealthy, distance was no impediment to fashionability. By the mid nineteenth century a distinct pattern of commodity acquisition can be discerned in the possessions of the ‘governing classes’ in both New South Wales and New Zealand. It can be argued that, notwithstanding the colonial context in which they lived and the social obligations often concomitant with the official positions of their spouses, upper middle class women were able to replicate the social conventions of the metropolis—in this instance conspicuous consumption of commodities—by, as

Logan observes, being ‘both creators and guarantors of a new kind of world, a domestic realm in which bourgeois identity was nurtured.’⁶¹ Ceramic tableware and ornaments were signifiers of not only gentility but also of connections with the metropolitan centre and thus to authority.

Not always of the best quality

In his *New Zealand settler’s guide*, published in London in 1857, Isaac Rhodes Cooper, a captain in Wynyard’s 58th Regiment of Foot opined that ‘hitherto New Zealand colonists have generally been contented to live in a frugal manner, and have not attempted to imitate the extravagance of the old country.’⁶² One reason for this reputation for fiscal prudence might be attributable to the social background of the settlers; as Sinclair opined, they ‘were people, who while poor, while usually from the upper working class or the lower middle class—the “anxious classes”, [Edward Gibbon] Wakefield called them—had lost neither enterprise nor ambition.’⁶³ Another factor contributing to this state of affairs included the scarcity and cost of imported commodities, suggesting a pragmatic impediment to demand, rather than a puritanical desire to live economically.

In 1851 import duties were nearly doubled so that for ‘Earthen and china ware’ valued at £100 a charge of £19 duty was levied, notwithstanding its point of origin. Statistics for 1853 indicate that 305 crates and casks of crockery with a value of £1229—‘not always of the best quality’—were imported through the port of Auckland; this was just under ten times the value what Macarthur, fifteen years previously, had spent equipping and ornamenting his—admittedly commodious—country retreat in New South Wales.⁶⁴ The statistics suggest that the primary—but not the only—source of the ceramics used in Auckland was the United Kingdom and that local retailers supplied the lower end of the market or dealt with the consequence of breakages. Writing for the information of intending immigrants in 1856, Edward Brown Fitton warned that:

The freight of bulky goods is now very heavy, and the expenses of travel by sea, and after landing, frequently amount to more than the value of the same articles at an auction sale in the colony. In the case of families, a good supply of crockery should certainly be taken out, not for sale, but for service. As all glass and china ware must be imported from England, it is always expensive to purchase, and a good many pieces are frequently broken in the early unsettled state of the household.⁶⁵

By 1853, Auckland’s population had risen to 10,853 persons and for some—particularly those few susceptible to the demands and fluctuations of fashion—the flow of imports may have been perceived as insufficient, particularly after news of

the abundance of manufactured commodities displayed in London at the Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations (the Great Exhibition) of 1851: not only was the exhibition long anticipated and reported widely in the local press⁶⁶ but also copies of popular illustrated journals such as the *Illustrated London News* were readily available, albeit up to six months following the date of publication.

Imports into Auckland were on such a limited scale that the *Southern Cross* reported each shipment in detail: on 12 April 1850, the Belgian vessel *Océanie* sailing from Antwerp—carrying as passengers the returning Roman Catholic Bishop Pompallier and his suite—was reported as shipping a cargo that included nine cases of porcelain; it was soon after advertised for auction—as earthenware—on 16 April by James Macky; on 23 May 1850 the *Constantinople* from London docked with a cargo of goods which included ‘Breakfast Cups and Saucers [and] Soup and flat Plates’ that, shortly after, was advertised for sale by the importers Gibson & Mitchell.⁶⁷ But, as evidenced in the auction columns, all was not well in the retail sector: on 26 February 1850, the auctioneer Hart & Sons, advertised the sale of ‘The whole of the very extensive stock of Mr Gardiner, without the least reserve’ which consisted of ‘China, glass, earthenware, soft goods, tobacco, snuffs, cigars, &c., &c.’⁶⁸ Gardiner’s ‘China, Glass and Earthenware Establishment’ appears to have commenced trading in about 1847⁶⁹: Hart’s sale of Gardiner’s stock of china and earthenware is suggestive of the range of ceramics that he may have stocked during his three years of operation. It included:

- 3 Complete Dinner Services,
- 3 Complete Sets China Breakfast Services,
- 6 Complete Sets China Tea Services,
- 30 Dozen Soup Plates,—60 Doz. Meat Plates,
- 30 Dozen Pudding Plates,—20 doz. Cheese Plates,
- 30 Dozen Meat Dishes,—6 doz. Pie Plates,
- 5 Dozen assorted Dishes,
- 6 Dozen Pudding Bowls,—20 doz. Basins,
- 20 Dozen Tea Cups and Saucers,
- 20 Dozen Breakfast Cups and Saucers,
- 8 Dozen Assorted Jugs,
- 4 Complete Chamber Services,
- 2 Pairs China Candlesticks,
- 3 Dozen Chimney Ornaments,
- 2 Sets Vases,—Ewers and Basins,
- Honey Pots,—Cheese Stands, &c., &c.

While reflecting the failed state of the concern, Gardiner’s stock was more comprehensive in the range of forms carried than those stocked by Allerton in 1843. But by Sydney standards, it was insignificant; in 1851 Sydney’s population

stood at around 50,000 persons—five times that of Auckland—and by 1856 it was importing 14,052 packages of crockery as opposed to the 152 casks and crates that entered Auckland that same year.⁷⁰ By 1856, only two general merchants were advertising the retail sale of tableware in that year's *Auckland almanac*: P A Phillips at Victoria Lane, Shortland Street and Thomas C Law in Parnell. Auctioning remained the preferred method of sale throughout the colonies, even in Sydney with its relatively extensive retail establishments; Lieutenant Colonel Godfrey Mundy, deputy adjutant general in New South Wales, observed that:

The number of auctions daily going on in Sydney is quite extraordinary; not auctions for the purpose of selling off the houses and effects of departed and departing persons [...] but for the disposal by wholesale of imported goods, or by retail of tradesmen's stock on hand. A stranger would almost suppose that the buyers and sellers of the colony were too idle to transact business without the intermediary of a paid agent.⁷¹

Unsurprisingly, little data exists as to the specifics of the wares sold by either auction or retail. In her survey of ceramic advertisements found in three Auckland newspapers between 1840 and 1880, Mica Plowman identifies four advertisements naming manufacturers: Davenport (twice), Spode and Copeland (in 1862 and 1870, 1852, and 1858, respectively) although a number of transfer printed patterns are identified including: 'Willow pattern'; 'Rhine'; 'Bouquet'; 'Princess Alexandra'; 'Union'; 'Festoon'; and 'Dove'.

Archaeological excavations undertaken in Auckland over the past two decades have identified considerably more data: the site of His Majesty's Theatre—excavated in 1988—revealed fifty-seven identifiable transfer-printed patterns including 'Asiatic Pheasant'—after 'Willow pattern' the most popular of printed patterns—and 'Wild Rose', another pattern highly popular from the 1830s to 50s. At the same excavation, a number of manufacturers' marks were also identified including sixteen from Staffordshire, four from Scotland, two from Yorkshire and one each from Derbyshire and Newcastle-on-Tyne.⁷² The relatively high proportion of wares emanating from Scotland could reflect the influence of two Scottish merchant houses trading in Auckland, Brown & Campbell and Gibson & Mitchell: Stone records an early Brown & Campbell advertisement for a 'Most Extensive, Varied and Choice ASSORTMENT OF GOODS [...] all selected by one

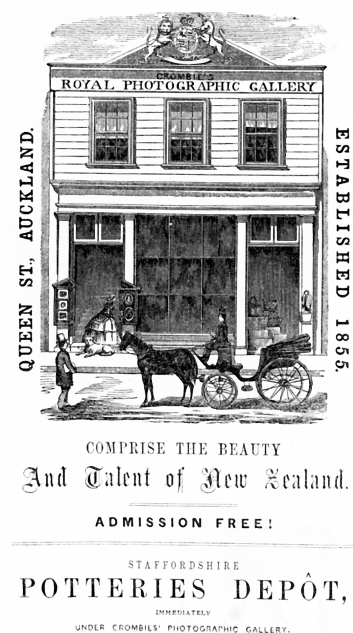


Fig. 2 Advertisement for the Staffordshire Potteries Depôt, Queen Street, Auckland, from Chapman's *New Zealand almanac*, 1862. Auckland City Library, Special Collections.

of the Partners in the Mother Country with the most scrupulous care, at the different English and Scottish manufactories.’⁷³ Plowman concludes, in respect of the material recovered from excavations of the sites of low socio-economic activity that characterised the early occupation of the His Majesty’s Theatre site, that ‘it is difficult to characterise an assemblage in socioeconomic terms or interpret variation on the basis of basic proportional measures alone’. Nonetheless, it is possible in conjunction with available documentary material to discern a number of overarching tendencies in assessing the type of ceramic tableware imported commercially into Auckland during the first quarter century of European settlement.⁷⁴ It derived substantially from Staffordshire, being predominantly earthenware it fell into cheaper price categories and, in most instances, was imported in small quantities. A necessarily nominal review of the remaining archives of selected nineteenth century pottery companies in the United Kingdom has failed to reveal any substantial trading connections with New Zealand.⁷⁵ This absence of documentation suggests that trade was carried out through the medium of brokers, based in the United Kingdom and New South Wales, acting on indent from local merchants: Graeme Dunstall notes that Brown & Campbell at first relied on their connections with the shipbrokers H H Willis & Co to arrange consignments of goods with English merchants.⁷⁶ This limited supply led to a state of affairs where speculation in ceramics became rife, even amongst the genteel middle classes. The Reverend Vicesimus Lush included two casks of tableware amongst the possessions he brought from Britain in 1850: one was packed with highly priced Worcester porcelain, the other with common earthenware, for sale. Once unpacked, it was discovered—to the horror of his wife—that the Worcester had been inadvertently sold.⁷⁷

Unlike the situation prevailing in the homes of the governing class, the domestic state of settler homes was not such as to encourage a profusion of ornament or a plethora of tableware and given a systemic lack of servants in the colony, there was little time to contemplate the pleasures of drawing and dining rooms. The role of women in ordering the house tended to be subordinated to the pressure of its maintenance, to the survival of the household. Fitton alerted the intending settler to the material consequences of this condition when he argued that they should bring with them a selection of ornaments from ‘home’:

Little trifles that ornament or enliven our houses in England, also give a rough cottage a cheerful look of home [...] Such notions are not effeminate or ridiculous in a colonist. Indeed, people who imagine they would greatly like “roughing it” in a colony, and, that they would “enjoy the fun” of being in want of many articles in daily use at home, would be both

surprised and gratified to find how easily a small wooden or cob-built house in New Zealand may be made to approach the comfortable appearance of the pleasantest English houses, merely by the arrangement of a few little articles of ornament or luxury, with which the good taste of the owner has supplied them.⁷⁸

Equally, Fitton was observant of the drawing room as a feminised space and moreover, in the context of the colony, as a privileged space. But the pervading tone of his comments suggests a need for the settler to replicate, in a small way, the delights of the metropolis: the retention of ceramic ornament by the intending settler acts as a signifier of not only ‘good taste’ but also that identity which will be lost in the new land. As Stephen Turner has commented ‘the new country is the site of contradictory demands: the need, ultimately, to forget the old country. To resist the indigenous presence the settler must retain some sense of the old country self to be able to draw on a strong and authoritative identity.’⁷⁹ In this reading of settlement, imported ceramics—and almost all were—can be viewed as haptic remembrances of the metropolis, where functionality and utility were overshadowed by the significance of what they represented: they became the inhabitants of a virtual colonial china cabinet.

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- 1 Church Missionary Society, *Archives relating to the Australian and New Zealand Missions, 1808-1884*, Microform, Australian Joint Copying Project, Canberra, 1959, CN/05: Sydney Committee correspondence with missionaries, 1820-1852.
 - 2 Ibid., CN/05: Letter from W Williams to Revd Richard Hill, Sydney, dated 10 July 1827.
 - 3 See: Judith Binney, *The legacy of guilt: a life of Thomas Kendall*, (Auckland: Oxford University Press for the University of Auckland, 1968), p. 43.
 - 4 Henry Williams, *The early journals of Henry Williams, senior missionary in New Zealand of the Church Missionary Society; 1826-40*, (Christchurch: Pegasus Press, 1961), p. 59.
 - 5 Church Missionary Society, CN/08a: Letter from Will^m Yate to the Secretaries, CMS, London, dated July 6 1832.
 - 6 Ibid., CN/05: Letter from G Clarke to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society, dated 20 June 1835; CN/09a, Letter from William Yate to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society, dated 05 January 1830.
 - 7 The Māori used and burnt clays as pigments for painting. See: Roger Neich, *Painted histories: early Māori figurative painting*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1993), p. 26.
 - 8 The Māori are recorded as using glass and nails to make personal ornaments, although not, apparently, ceramics. Roger Neich, pers. comm., 21 October 2003. In a letter to the CMS dated 10 July 1826 William Williams requests wooden trenchers (10 dozen) and 150 tin dishes for use in the mission school, adding that ‘We shall be glad of some tinware for our own use, to be purchased by individuals from the store, viz Double block tin dishes of up to 14 inches diameter.’ See: Church Missionary Society, CN/05: Letter from W Williams to [the Secretaries, CMS, London], dated 10 July 1826.
 - 9 Mary Anne Martin, *Our Māoris*, (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1884), p. 34.
 - 10 In her discussion of Māori commodity exchanges during the nineteenth century, the social historian Ann R Parsonson asserts the significance of new European manufactured commodities as a medium of exchange in Māori social intercourse but makes no mention of the role other industrially produced European items such as clothing, jewellery and ceramics. See: Ann R Parsonson, ‘The expansion of a competitive society: a study in nineteenth century Māori social history’, *Journal of New Zealand History*, vol. 14, no. 1 (April 1980), (pp. 45-60), 53.

- 11 Church Missionary Society, CN/05: Letter from W Williams to Sydney Committee, dated 10 July 1826: 'We shall be glad of some tinware for our own use to be purchased by individual from the store, viz. Double block tin dishes up to 14 inches diameter 2 doz each size.'
- 12 Binney, p. 30.
- 13 Ibid., p. 37.
- 14 A reading of the published journals maintained by the Rev Henry Williams, the senior missionary in New Zealand of the CMS has failed to reveal any mention of ceramics.
- 15 The first CMS settlement in New Zealand was established at Rangihoua in 1814; the Wesleyan Missionary Society settled initially at Hokianga in 1822.
- 16 Auckland War Memorial Museum collection: 1965/78/317, Jug–stoneware, England, about 1840. Old Colonists Museum collection, gift of Mrs Jean Wrennall.
- 17 AWMML, MS 98/64, John M Stacpoole papers, Waimate Mission House and other historic buildings, 1963-1978, Box 1, Folder 5: Correspondence between Ruth Ross, Fenwick (Fen) Barrett, and Ormond Wilson 1964-1965. Notes on Waimate Mission House by R I M Burnett and Ruth M Ross. Working with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Stacpoole was responsible for the restoration and furnishing of the Church Missionary Society's Waimate Mission House during the 1960s. In furnishing the house he contacted a number of the descendants of missionary families in an attempt to ascertain the whereabouts of any items of portable material culture that may have been used in the house. While Stacpoole's research was systematic and prescient for the time, the results are problematic in being based on partially documented hearsay.
- 18 Sinclair estimates that in 1838 there were 'about two thousand Europeans living in New Zealand. Five or six hundred of them had settled around the Bay of Islands, where Kororāreka had become a busy little town.' See: Keith Sinclair, *A history of New Zealand*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961)p. 31.
- 19 See: *Catalogue: loan exhibition of antiques. In aid of the Girl Guides Association and the Plunket Society. September 26th to October 4th, 1935*, (Auckland: Wilson & Horton, 1935), [np]: 'Item no: 449: Soup tureen and two plates. Part of a Coalport dinner service once the property of Bishop John Selwyn – Mrs Bull.' John Selwyn, bishop of Melanesia, was the son of G A Selwyn.
- 20 *Historical records of New Zealand*, ed. Robert McNab, (Wellington: Govt. Printer, 1908), vol. 1, 714.
- 21 Megan Atkins, 'Not to be excelled for elegance or utility: a study of the availability of ceramics in Sydney 1803-1868' (BA (Hons) thesis, Historical Archaeology, University of Sydney, 1991), p. 84.
- 22 The Sydney-based Methodist cleric, the Rev Ralph Mansfield, writing to his brother at the Herculaneum pottery in Liverpool commented that 'Earthenware sells remarkably well here, and we have only 1 shop in that trade in the whole colony [...] The people here don't like white ware. Blue print is used even by the lowest of them.' National Library of Australia, MS 2045, Correspondence 1819-1855, Letter from Rev Ralph Mansfield to Archibald Mansfield, dated 24 September 1832, cited in Grace Karskens and Susan Lawrence, 'The archaeology of cities: what is it we want to know?' in *Exploring the modern city: recent approaches to urban history and archaeology*, ed. by Tim Murray, (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2003), pp. 89-111, (92).
- 23 Steve Birks, 'A-Z of Stoke-on-Trent Potters: J Clementson'. 2003, Available: <http://www.thepotteries.org/allpotters/272.htm>, 26 August 2003.
- 24 See plate at Camden Park, Menangle, New South Wales (C391).
- 25 Letter from James Clendon, United States Consul in New Zealand to Secretary of State, Washington, dated 26 October 1839. Cited in: ed. McNab, vol. 2, 608.
- 26 Ceramic material recovered during an archaeological excavation of a limited scope conducted at Russell (formerly Kororāreka) in 1993 suggests parallels with similar nineteenth century 'urban' sites in Sydney. See: Wayne J England, *Archaeological investigations in connection with the Russell sewerage scheme*, ([Whangarei]: Department of Conservation Northland Conservancy, 1994). Cf. Grahame Wilson, 'Ceramics and tobacco pipes artifact report', in *The Cumberland/Gloucester Streets site, The Rocks: archaeological investigation report*, vol. 4, (Redfern, NSW: Godden Mackay Pty Ltd, 1999), pp. 207-365, (315).
- 27 'Sales by auction', *New Zealand Advertiser and Bay of Islands Gazette*, 22 October 1840, p. 1.
- 28 'Gazette', *The New Zealand Advertiser and Bay of Islands Gazette*, 12 November 1840, p. 1.
- 29 The town's change of name from Kororāreka to Russell is mentioned in government notices published in the *New Zealand Advertiser*, 4 October 1840, p. 1.

- 30 New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal, *Orakei report: report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Orakei claim (Wai 9)* (Wellington, Waitangi Tribunal, 1987), p. 23.
- 31 John Logan Campbell, *Poenamo: sketches of the early days of New Zealand: romance and reality of antipodean life in the infancy of a new colony*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1881), p. 340.
- 32 The first Auckland newspaper was the *Auckland Times*, published by Henry Falwasser between 29 August 1842 and 17 January 1866.
- 33 Edward Allarton, 'Earthenware', *Southern Cross*, 6 January 1844, p. 1. A Mr Atherton or Allarton is recorded in the Auckland passenger shipping records as departing Auckland for Sydney in the *Deborah* on 20 April 1842. Speculatively, this may have been a buying trip for the new venture. See: <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/dbtw-wpd/passengers/passenger.html>.
- 34 R C J Stone, *Young Logan Campbell*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1982), p. 126.
- 35 Ibid., p. 111.
- 36 Ibid., p. 102.
- 37 Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, *Irish University Press series of British Parliamentary Papers. Colonies: New Zealand*, (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1968), vol. 3, 303.
- 38 Sinclair, quoting an estimate by the governor Thomas Gore Browne, suggests that, as late as 1857, Māori paid two thirds of total customs revenue through the purchase of European goods. See: Keith Sinclair, *The origins of the Maori wars*, 2d edn. ([Auckland]: Auckland University Press, 1961), p. 91.
- 39 Bruce G Hardie, *Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony period, 1840-1852*, ([Auckland]: Auckland University College, Department of Economics, 1955), Tab 1.
- 40 J Logan Campbell quoted in: Stone, p. 116.
- 41 'Governor Fitzroy is coming', *Southern Cross*, 11 November 1843, p. 1.
- 42 [Samuel Martin], 'Free trade', Ibid., 13 January 1844, p. 2.
- 43 Robert FitzRoy, *Remarks on New Zealand, in February 1846*, (London: W and H White, 1846), p. 26.
- 44 Paul Moon, *FitzRoy: governor in crisis, 1843-1845*, (Auckland: David Ling, 2000), p. 202.
- 45 News of Fitzroy's dismissal and the debates in the House of Commons that prompted it arrived in Auckland in late September 1845. See: 'Recall of Governor Fitzroy', *New Zealander*, 04 October 1845, p. 2.
- 46 Such colonial expectations have a long history; Tacitus observes in respect of Agricola's governorship in Britain in AD78 '[he] immediately on his arrival – a time usually devoted to pageantry and a round of ceremonial visits - chose hard work and peril'. See: Cornelius Tacitus, *Agricola; Germania; Dialogus*, ed. by R.M. Ogilvie, trans. by M. Hutton, The Loeb classical library; LCL 35, Revised edn. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 62-63.
- 47 Blackman, *A catalogue of plate, books, household furniture, pianoforte, horses, carriages, cows, &c., &c., the properties of His Excellency Sir George Gipps [...]*, (Sydney: Printed by Kemp & Fairfax, 1846), pp. 3-7.
- 48 See: Camden Park, C-13: Dinner service—porcelain, John Rose & Co, England, about 1838.
- 49 Andrew Wilson, 'Historical archaeological excavations at Regentville'. *Centre for Historical Archaeology, University of Sydney*, 1999, Available: <http://acl.arts.usyd.edu.au/research/regentville/>, 13 September 2003.
- 50 FitzRoy received a salary of £1200 per annum; by contrast his private secretary received £150.
- 51 Arthur S Thomson, *The story of New Zealand: past and present, savage and civilized*, (Christchurch: Capper Press, 1974), vol. 2, 83.
- 52 'Brown & Campbell', *New Zealander*, 11 October 1845, p. 1.
- 53 A search of archival material in the collections at the Alexander Turnbull Library, the Auckland City Library and the Auckland War Memorial Museum Library has failed to reveal any catalogues of sales of the effects of colonial governors other than that indicated below, an un-sourced photocopy held in the Auckland City Library.
- 54 Connell and Ridings, *Catalogue of household furniture & effects, house and landed property, horses, cows, and carriages, books, music, and pictures, glass, china and plate, curiosities, &c. &c., to be sold by auction at Colonel Wynyard's, Emily Place, commencing on Wednesday Sept. 22 [1858], at eleven o'clock*, (Auckland: Connell and Ridings, [1858]), pp. 5-8, 10.
- 55 Frank Rogers, 'Wynyard, Robert Henry 1802 - 1864'. *Dictionary of New Zealand biography*, 2003, Available: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/>, 25 August 2003.

- 56 Thad Logan, *The Victorian parlour*, Cambridge studies in nineteenth-century literature and culture; 30, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 129-131.
- 57 Mary Anne Barker, *Station life in New Zealand*, (Auckland: Vintage, 2000), p. 111. Lady Barker's Minton references were probably made in the course of a correspondence with her friend Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, a patron of Mintons Ltd.
- 58 Charlotte Wynne Godley, *Letters from early New Zealand, 1850-1853*, (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1951), pp. 69-70.
- 59 Thomson, vol. 2, 235.
- 60 SLNSW, Mitchell Library, MLA 3004⁻², (A2973), Macarthur papers, Camden Park, furniture and pictures, John Mortlock & Co, London, Bill of Sale, dated 13 September 1838.
- 61 Logan, p. 26.
- 62 I Rhodes Cooper, *The New Zealand settler's guide: a sketch of the present state of the six provinces, with a digest of the constitution and land regulations, and two maps*, facsimile edn. (Christchurch: Kiwi Publishers, 1997), p. 27.
- 63 Sinclair, *A history of New Zealand*, p. 86.
- 64 Edward Brown Fitton, *New Zealand: its present condition, prospects and resources; being a description of the country and general mode of life among New Zealand colonists, for the information of intending emigrants*, (London: E Stanford, 1856), p. 59.
- 65 Ibid., p. 282.
- 66 '[New Zealand representation at the Grand Exhibition]', *Southern Cross*, 14 May 1850, p. 2.
- 67 Plowman estimates that each crate could contain around five hundred items. See: Mica Catherine Plowman, 'The archaeological use of historic ceramics as indicators of status and class: His Majesty's Theatre ceramic assemblage: a case study' (MA dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland, 2000), p. 22.
- 68 Plowman records an advertisement for J Gardiner's 'China Glass and Earthenware Establishment' in the *Southern Cross* for 18 January 1850. See: Ibid., p. 176.
- 69 Ibid., p.20. Plowman does not cite her source for this information.
- 70 See: Atkins, p. 84. Atkins speculates that 'It is unclear what volume of ceramics these two measurements indicate, but a crate probably held a greater volume of ceramics than did a package.'
- 71 Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our Antipodes; or, residence and rambles in the Australian colonies, with a glimpse of the gold fields*, (London: Richard Bentley, 1852), vol. 1, 56.
- 72 Plowman, p. 110-118.
- 73 Stone, p. 112.
- 74 Plowman, p. 174.
- 75 Minton, Spode and Davenport: the curators of both the Minton and Spode Museums report finding few references to New Zealand for this period and Major David Davenport, owner of the remaining papers of John Davenport, Son & Co, held in the Herefordshire Record Office, is unaware of the existence of any New Zealand reference within that body of material.
- 76 Graeme Dunstall, 'Colonial merchant: J. T. MacKelvie, Brown Campbell and Co., and the business community of Auckland, 1835-71' (MA thesis, Department of History, University of Auckland, 1970), p. 5.
- 77 *The Auckland journals of Vicesimus Lush, 1850-63*, ed. Alison Drummond, ([Christchurch]: Pegasus, 1971), p. 21.
- 78 Fitton, p. 282.
- 79 Stephen Turner, 'Settlement as forgetting', in *Quicksands: foundational histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. by Nicholas Thomas, Hilary Eriksen and Klaus Neumann, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999), pp. 20-38, (21).

7.2 Naissance: birthing industry

An abiding myth of British colonisation of New Zealand is that this ‘Arcadia’ was settled primarily by sturdy yeomen intent on bettering themselves through farming and secondly by the handmaidens of trade, the merchants, who exchanged the fruits and fleeces of the new country for manufactured commodities of the old.¹ The myth is qualified to take account of selective extractive industries such as mining, gum fossicking and timber getting and admits the existence of a small professional class. But if manufacturing industry—indelibly associated with the ‘great wen and industrial unrest, the urban price of progress’² of the old country—has no part to play in this vision it nonetheless existed, if on a limited scale, from the start; similarly, the majority of settlers were of urban origin and, in all likelihood, had urban or, at least, suburban inclinations and skills, if not ambitions. Miles Fairburn in his study of nineteenth century New Zealand social patterns estimated that in 1874, 62 per cent of the non-Māori population lived in urban or semi-urban clusters; by 1901 this had increased to 68 per cent.³ A compelling need for manufacturing industry in the colony and a rationale for its purpose was clearly articulated by one of numerous bodies established during the 1880s to promote non-pastoral production.⁴ The Association for the Fostering and Encouragement of Native Industries and Productions, formed in Christchurch in 1880, envisaged manufacturing as a viable alternative to primary production:

The time has arrived when, from the fact of many of our leading articles of export being practically shut out from the neighbouring Colonies, the low price of our great staples, wool and wheat, and the rapid increase of our population, it has become imperatively necessary that a large portion of the people should be employed in ways other than farming: and this can only be effected by judicious fostering and encouragement of local industries.⁵

Other arguments were adduced: in an 1886 lecture to the New Zealand Manufacturers’ Association, Rear Admiral Robert Scott recognised that such a development required the support of the state: ‘The promotion of home manufactures in New Zealand is in the hands of our legislators, and merely needs a discriminating adjustment of the tariff to give our now dormant industries a new and vigorous life.’⁶

Notwithstanding an expansion in migration and the amount of capital investment that occurred from the 1870s, New Zealand administrations of the second half of the nineteenth century were increasingly dominated by agricultural interests; for

them immigrants should be, by preference, farm workers and capital-funded infrastructure development was a way of unlocking land for further pastoral and extractive production. For more conservative colonial governments, such as those led by Edward Stafford and John Hall, the promotion of non-pastoral manufacturing industry was near tantamount to a form of heresy⁷: with a few exceptions local industry implied a need for some form of protection, a move that could affect adversely metropolitan demand for the ‘great staples’ of wool and wheat and, later, following the introduction of refrigerated shipping in 1882, butter and mutton.⁸

Deficient in finish and form

The statistical returns for 1845, forwarded by government officials to the Colonial Office, seem to infer the existence of a potter working in Auckland.⁹ Tantalising as it is, there appears to be no supporting evidence for the existence of such a craftsman and, given the chaotic nature of FitzRoy’s administration, it is possible that it resulted from either a clerical error or a mistaken description of the brickmaker Matthew Lawrie who, on 23 December 1843, announced in the *Southern Cross* that he had commenced making bricks: by 1850 there were nine brick kilns in Auckland. Another fugitive reference to the existence of a working potter appears in Chapman’s *New Zealand Almanac for the year 1862* where, under the heading ‘commercial trades’, one G R Ellis is listed as a potter.¹⁰ Unfortunately, there is no further record of Ellis but it is possible that he may have been associated with the establishment of a small pottery in a brickworks erected between 1852 and 1855 on land owned by Dr Daniel Pollen, an established settler and a then member of Wynyard’s executive council.¹¹ The brickworks were located on the banks of the Whau river in the upper reaches of the Waitemata Harbour, a site recognised for its deposits of sedimentary clays. About 1863 the brickworks began producing a range of reputedly high quality ceramics: this move may have been prompted by the arrival in 1863 of a Staffordshire potter, James Wright along with his family, which included two sons who had served pottery apprenticeships.¹²

Pollen exhibited examples of Wright’s productions at the 1864 Auckland Horticultural Show and the 1865 New Zealand Exhibition in Dunedin:¹³ it was the only manifestation of colonial-made pottery at the exhibition and the anonymous juror complained that ‘it was to be regretted that no information is given with regard to their manufacture.’¹⁴ The display comprised a range of products that were described as being produced in ‘common stoneware and earthenware, porcelain and

terracotta'; the 'porcelain' was most probably a white-bodied earthenware as porcelain clays had yet to be discovered in New Zealand and the primitive Scottish kiln that has been identified on the site of the works could not have achieved a temperature of 1450° Celsius required for the production of porcelain.¹⁵ The juror observed that the items of 'common pottery are useful and fair specimens of this description of wares, and should, if they can be sold at a lower price than the imported goods, command a ready sale.' But their appearance was condemned:

The fruit plates and centre fruit stand are too heavy and clumsy, and the color (sic) is a disagreeable one; still, as examples of what has been done, with only very inefficient appliances, these productions are very creditable [although, referring to a 'porcelain' butter cooler] it is pleasing that the ornamentation betrays considerable knowledge of the principles of taste.

Notwithstanding being awarded an 'honorary certificate [...] for Pottery of Colonial manufacture', the production of 'common pottery' at Whau seems to have had a short span: while both raw materials and limited expertise were available, the works lacked the technology needed to produce sufficient quantities to ensure profitability, labour costs were relatively high in comparison with those in the United Kingdom, the local market was of limited scope and the competition provided by imports militated against the likelihood of a viable industry developing. Furthermore, the moulds Wright employed in the production of his jugs and kitchenware, were imported from Britain and, by the late 1860s, would—in comparison with imported wares—have been regarded as unfashionable. Wright was undeterred: after leaving Pollen's establishment he and his sons operated potteries elsewhere in the North Island: at New Lynn in West Auckland; in Paparoa on the Kaipara Harbour; and in Hamilton West. But, as William Swanton, writing 'after several years of varied experience in the colonies', observed:

Brickworks and potteries, of course, exist, as might naturally be supposed. The former do not require much skilled labour [...] Potteries, however, are not in a very advanced state, although very good articles in the shape of common crockery are turned out. But, as in various places the fine clay necessary for the manufacture of porcelain and china is found, there is no reason why these wares should not be produced on the spot, except the absence of skilled workmen. Imported wares bring large prices. But, doubtless, when New Zealand is really inhabited she will no longer be dependent upon outsiders for her teacups.¹⁶

The pattern established by the Pollen/Wright concern, where an existing brickworks was viewed as a potential site for pottery production, was to be repeated throughout the country. As with similarly sized brickworks in the towns and villages of the United Kingdom, a number of colonial concerns developed a sideline in the manufacture of flowerpots, storage jars and porous earthenware water filters: of standard shapes and requiring low technological inputs, these were relatively easily

produced and sold. More ambitious concerns launched into the production of earthen and stoneware garden urns and statuary, kitchenware such as bowls, teapots, spittoons and ornaments such as ‘brooches, pendants, rings and photo frames.’¹⁷ But this was small scale stuff: no matter how they were perceived statistically, production was essentially pre-industrial in terms both of the technologies employed and the methods of distribution and marketing.

One of the brickworks that ventured into pottery production was the Newton Pottery in Auckland, owned and operated by George Boyd, an Irish-born, Scottish-trained potter who migrated to New Zealand in 1851.¹⁸

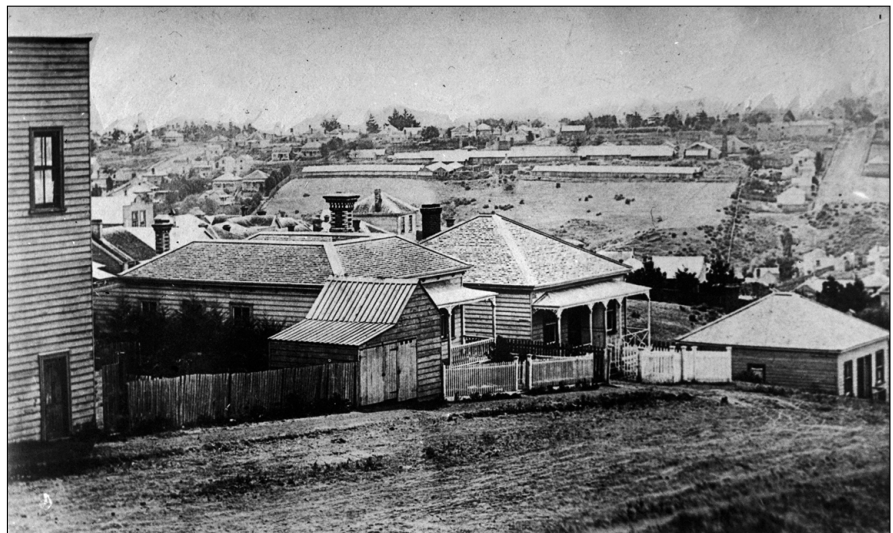


Fig. 3 Boyd's Pottery from Victoria (Virginia) Avenue, Eden Terrace, about 1880. Auckland City Library, Special Collections.

In 1861, after having worked for other Auckland concerns, he opened his own brickworks, producing ‘common machine-made bricks, ventilating or hollow bricks, segmented bricks for barrel drains, large roofing tiles and bricks made with a mixture of scoria ash of the neighbourhood [...] flower pots and garden vases.’¹⁹ Unlike many of its local competitors, the Newton Pottery was technologically efficient: bricks were made using a British Clayton & Co extruding machine and, by the 1870s, fired using five circular down draught kilns.²⁰ Like Pollen, Boyd exhibited at the 1865 Dunedin exhibition, obtaining an honorary certificate ‘for drain pipes and tiles of good manufacture’. The Newton Pottery appears to have moved beyond the manufacture of the conventional range of brickworks ornaments to the manufacture of household ornaments in the mid 1870s. In an 1882 ‘Reference price list’, Boyd listed forty two shapes of vases, pots, brackets and pedestals, including an eleven inch (28 cm) high ‘Grecian Vase for Pottery Decorations [...] Price each 4/6’ and a one foot four inch (40.64 cm) high bust of Shakespeare priced at ten shillings.²¹

As with other New Zealand pottery manufacturers, the moulds used in the production of these wares were most probably sourced from Britain. Boyd's most ambitious production, the so-called 'Garnkirk Wedding Vase', used as the centrepiece for an 1883 advertisement of his wares, was reputedly designed by the architect Alexander 'Greek' Thompson and fabricated for and exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 by the Glasgow pottery Ferguson, Miller & Co. The mould was acquired in 1862 by another Scottish pottery, the Garnkirk Fireclay Co; Boyd either acquired a mould of the vase directly from Scotland or made a cast from an imported example.²² At the New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, held in Wellington in 1885, the Newton Pottery was awarded:

First Prize for ornamental and household pottery: His fancy table-ware is especially handsome, some of the pitchers and vases on the stand being really beautiful, noticeably so one richly-relieved blue jug. Some copies of Wedgwood, in white on blue ground, are well made; and there is an exquisitely designed fruit stand representing storks supporting a dish [...] complete a really beautiful exhibit, and one of great value, as proving the existence of a real art-feeling in the manufacture of cheap and common goods.²³

Boyd died in 1886, instructing his executors to 'close the works, sell the machinery, and destroy all the moulds'.²⁴ With the exception of a limited range of domestic wares produced by brick, pipe and tile makers, no industrially-produced domestic ceramics were manufactured in Auckland until the 1940s.

Showing little sign of progress

Industrial expansion grew concomitantly with the increasing numbers of immigrants into the country: not only did they require to be housed and chattered but also, as the country urbanised, they required employment. And as Scott observed in his lecture to the New Zealand Manufacturers' Association:

All wealth is the product of labour combined with capital, and unless the labouring classes are fully employed, and capital put to its right use of aiding their work in developing the resources of a country, there cannot be prosperity. The closer union of labor (sic) with capital was needed in New Zealand, and instead of companies-who were but small employers of labour [...] we required companies which would complete our railway system and develop our mines. Such companies could profitably engage far more skilled and other labour than the whole mass of unemployed now in the Colony; and the additional workmen settling here and spending their earnings amongst us would soon diffuse a stream of wealth to fructify in New Zealand.²⁵

During 1851, 3,762 persons settled in New Zealand, the majority still finding employment in the rural sector. However, in 1874, the country attracted 43,965

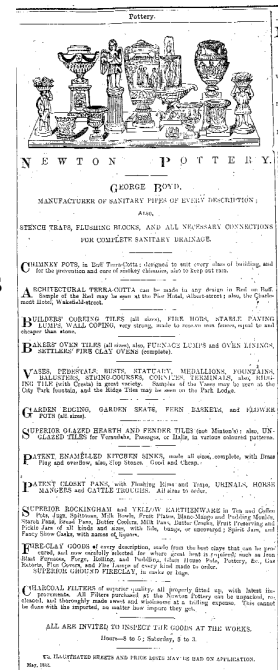


Fig. 4 Advertisement for the Newton Pottery, Auckland, New Zealand Herald, 27 June 1883

immigrants, the result of a ‘grand go-ahead policy’ championed by a liberal government dominated by the entrepreneurial politician Julius Vogel, an 1870 initiative that both provided subsidised immigration from Europe and implemented a loan-financed capital works programme. Most immigrants settled in the three main population centres, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. The resulting process of urbanisation was one of the underlying reasons behind a series of moves emanating principally from the provincial governments—abolished by the Vogel government in 1876—to develop an industrial base in the country. By 1880, the effects of these policies of urbanisation and industrialisation were becoming manifest: an essay on the manufactures of New Zealand—probably written by James Hector, the New Zealand Commissioner at that year’s Melbourne International Exhibition—lamented that:

Manufactures in New Zealand have hitherto received very little notice or encouragement. Beyond the industries naturally arising in connection with the wool trade and agriculture [...] very little has been done in the way of manufactures until lately. Still the progress in the industries referred to, and others not specifically named, has been considerable [...] Several woollen factories, paper mills, pottery works and other industries have been successfully started during the last few years, and the subject of local industries generally is now receiving a share of that consideration which its importance merits, the present superabundance of labour in the colony tending not a little to promote enquiries in this direction.²⁶

Eight years later, at the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition, Messrs Graham and Winter of the Milton Pottery of Tokomairiro, Otago exhibited an extensive range of:

Stoneware, majolica, and general pottery ware - Ivory body pudding bowls; Rockingham tea-pots, “Princess,” “Fuchsia,” and “London” patterns; ivory and coloured tea-pots, “Bamboo” pattern; majolica jugs, fluted, “Laurel” and “Tankard” patterns; majolica spittoons, “Shell” pattern; majolica and terra-cotta water bottles and stands; majolica vases “Etruscan,” “Milton,” “Edina,” “Zealandia,” and crimped edge patterns; terra-cotta vases, “Simplex” and “Cupid” patterns; majolica flower-pots and saucers; majolica jardinière; red flower-pots; pickle jars and covers; butter jars and crocks; starch pan; cane-colour mugs; candlesticks; tobacco jars; demijohns; ivory cups and saucers; majolica cheese stand; lipped bowls; colanders; jelly cans; baking dishes; cane-colour jugs, fluted pattern; blancmange moulds; cane-colour cups and saucers; jugs, “Laurel” pattern; ivory jugs, fluted; tea-pot; baking dish; cane-colour milk bowls, and 8-in. moulds; cane-colour chamber set; decorated majolica vases “Milton” pattern, with designs (floral) of “Spring,” “Summer,” “Autumn,” and “Winter;” jam pots; majolica vases, “Bamboo;” majolica decorated vases, “Milton,” “Etruscan,” “Edina,” “Bamboo,” crimped patterns; blue-ground decorated vases “Milton,” “Etruscan,” “Bamboo”.²⁷

The assemblage, the largest forwarded by any New Zealand ceramic manufacturer to an international exhibition, suggests a range of wares comparable to those produced by Victorian and New South Wales potteries such as Bendigo and Lithgow. Eight years previously, in his evidence to the colonial industries

commission Charles Stephen Reeves, proprietor of the Milton pottery between 1880 and 1882, identified Victorian potteries as being worthy of emulation: 'The manufacturer in Victoria having his home trade secured and doing a large business, anything else he does outside of that must be additional profit.'²⁸

The cyclic rise and fall of the Milton Pottery can be examined as a model of the conditions under which local pottery ventures operated. Established in 1874 as the Tokomairiro Steam Pottery Works by an investor William White and the potter Nathan Welham—formerly of Newcastle, New South Wales—the Milton Pottery was engaged initially in the production of salt-glazed sewerage pipes. By 1875 it had been re-named in imitation of Staffordshire the 'Royal Pottery' and was producing a limited range of domestic wares. The company was floated in 1875 but, failing to attract sufficient capital, closed the following year. However, with the support of a member of the Otago Provincial Council, another company was formed to take over the pottery's assets but, by 1877, it was again placed on the market. By 1887 the factory had been owned by six proprietors—including an Anglican bishop of Dunedin—and managed by a succession of former Staffordshire potters. Around 1880, under the ownership of Reeves—a former mayor of Dunedin (1876-77)—it began producing transfer-printed white-bodied tableware and chamber sets to a standard unequalled in New Zealand until the 1960s: the transfer printed decorations, along with much of the machinery was imported from the United Kingdom. Despite his ambition—'If I am able to overcome the prejudice [...] against colonial manufactures, I think I shall be able to make the pottery business a success in this colony'—Reeves, like his predecessors and successors, was fated to fail; the factory burned down in 1882 and the company folded, yet again. In his optimistic submission to the 1880 Colonial Industries Commission, Reeves had positioned himself in direct competition with the importers of British earthenware:

The importers of earthenware here, as soon as they can see I am able to supply the market, will write Home to their friends to that effect, and there can be no question but that rather than lose the trade they will make considerable reduction in their business. Thus it is that the Staffordshire people have been completely cut out of the American trade, with the result that potteries have been established in various parts of America. The same result will be observable here in the course of time.²⁹

While Reeves argued that the future success of the enterprise would lie in his ability to recruit suitable labour in order to produce the quality of ware sought by local consumers and that he was satisfied with tariff protection of fifteen per cent on the value of imported wares—'with that duty I think that if the manufacture of

earthenware does not succeed, the time has not arrived when it should be established'—it was not enough. Reeves exhibited his wares at the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition where—in stiff competition with British ceramic manufacturers including the pre-eminent Mintons concern—he was, with a display of 'a capital trophy of earthenware', awarded a Fourth Order of Merit certificate for porcelain and earthenware.³⁰ But despite the high quality of the production and its very 'English' appearance—the transfer prints he imported from Britain included that favourite of the Staffordshire manufacturers, the 'Asiatic Pheasant' pattern—the consuming public remained unconvinced.³¹ By the time of its final demise in 1915, the pottery had been owned by twelve proprietors, including a workers' co-operative. Whereas other colonial manufacturers of products such as boots and shoes, furniture and coaches were able to surmount buyer resistance to local productions, the pottery firms failed. This inability to convince local consumers may have been the inevitable consequence of a number of factors: settler familiarity with and loyalty to British products, a low level of local design and production quality, logistical difficulties both in obtaining raw materials and distributing the finished product, low capitalisation of the concerns, the small size of the market and the relatively low cost of imported wares. And while boots and shoes—and to a lesser extent items such as furniture and vehicles—were essential to survival in the colony, ceramics, were perhaps deemed luxury goods; one could always 'make do' with substitutes for day to day use. The settler-imported crockery from Home would remain unused and locked in the colonially-manufactured china cabinet as a talisman of another sort of life.

Labouring under considerable disadvantages

In many respects the problems encountered at Milton were indicative of those encountered by industrial concerns throughout the country: a lack of capital and technical expertise, a limited design capacity, a small local market, the high cost of transport, competition from overseas goods and the prejudice against locally produced goods. Well might the pamphleteer and lawyer Alexander Bathgate, delivering the inaugural address at the opening of the Dunedin Industrial Exhibition of 1881, evoke the possibility that:

We can rise in the morning from beneath the soft Kaikori blankets on a handsome bedstead made of New Zealand wood; we put on a suit of well-made colonial tweeds; our toilet ware is from the Royal Pottery at Milton; [...] our breakfast ware is, like the toilet set, of colonial make [...] When our educational institutions are better adapted to the establishment of technical classes to train up our young artisans in the best ways of their respective trades, and our laws are wisely administered for the encouragement of labour, New Zealand craftsmen will have nothing to fear in the competition is (*sic*) the market of the world.³²

Bathgate's recognition of a lack of both training and a sufficiently rigorous employment framework identified but two of the problems confronting industrial manufacturing in New Zealand as it attempted to move from its systemic condition of pre-industrialization. By the late 1870s, the government lead by the conservative Hall—a former British post office official and Canterbury runholder—came to recognise that in order to repair the economic chaos brought about by both depressed prices for primary produce and the rapid expansion of settlement during the 1870s it was necessary to develop non-primary industry. In 1879 tariffs on imported goods were adjusted upwards by five percent to fifteen per cent *ad valorem*, and while, for example, the value of imports of earthenware dropped by some fourteen per cent—from £50,219 in 1877 to £43,031 in 1881—this was probably more the effect of the economic depression that gripped the country from the late 1870s into the 1890s, rather than reflecting any increase in the consumption of the few locally-produced goods. In March 1880, probably in order to be seen to respond specifically to calls for a manufacturing industry, the government appointed a Royal Commission—the Colonial Industries Commission—with:

The purpose of inquiring whether any industries or manufactures that are [...] carried on in [the] colony should be in any manner promoted or aided by the Government, and to examine into the best means of so aiding or promoting any such local industries or manufactures, having due regard to the circumstances of [the] colony.³³

The Commission reported to the governor in July that same year. Its ideological stance was clearly articulated when it declared that 'the great staple industries of the country [...] are too firmly established to need any assistance from the Government' and it warned that damage to these might ensue 'by capricious alterations of the fiscal laws'. In observing the effects that the imposition of protective tariffs might have on developing industry, the Commission declared not only that they were satisfied with the current rates and the evidence they had heard was contradictory, but also that 'in the nascent stage of the industrial energies of the colony, there is every danger of the protection of one trade proving detrimental, if not positively destructive, of others.' In any case, industry was its own worst enemy: the high cost of local production, it opined, was due to 'the natural desire to widen the proportions and increase the profits' and, moreover, 'the exceptionally high rate of wages which prevails'.

In its assessment of the 'earthenware industry' the Commission based its observations on eleven submissions received from established ceramic manufacturers including Reeves of the Milton Pottery, Henry Bland Kirk of the Christchurch pottery Austin, Kirk & Co and Boyd of the Newton Pottery. Kirk

observed that most of his trade was local although ‘we ship a few of our goods to Napier and Oamaru’ and called for a twenty per cent duty on imported pottery and, as the Commission would later recommend, a lowering of rail freight charges. Boyd, in a somewhat laconic submission, called for a ‘heavy duty on common potteryware’ but recommended a ‘lighter duty on all china, porcelain or parian, as it will be a long time before we could manufacture goods of that description here.’ Both these manufacturers depended on the production of bricks and drainpipes for their survival; pottery was an adjunct to the main thrust of production. And while Boyd could not see that imported ‘china, porcelain or parian’ would affect the sales of his ornamental earthenware, others were not so sanguine: Peter Woodnorth of the Waikiwi Pottery in Southland suggested optimistically that, on the basis of samples he had received from the Waikato, he would be able to manufacture porcelain; in his view it only required ‘a little capital (say £1,000) [...] to develop the trade.’ In its summary report on the industry the Commission concluded that ‘although labouring under considerable disadvantages, [it] is steadily making headway, and is likely to become of considerable importance’. The industry’s problem it concluded was ‘the excessive cost of bringing the manufactured goods to market’ and the solution was to lower the cost of rail freight. Emulating the now abolished provincial governments, the government might offer incentives or bonuses for new industries but it was to be understood that this would mean merely ‘a guarantee of interest on capital invested up to five per cent for a period of from four to six years.’³⁴

In fact, the Commission rebutted resolutely any suggestion that the government might have a role in industry. Reflecting its conservative composition, it shied from a suggestion recommending the establishment of a ‘Department of Industry and Commerce’ explaining that:

Nothing is farther from their mind than to recommend the creation of costly official machinery to do what could best be done at little or no cost, and without any official form. What is really needed is an active, practical man of business, or several active, practical men of business, with an aptitude for work, and above all things, free from either scientific or political crotchets [...] reporting to the Government from time to time.³⁵

And notwithstanding British parliamentary precedents, design — which was possibly confused with ‘scientific crotchets’ — was not considered. The Commission’s declared partiality for primary and extractive industries was equally demonstrated in its assessment of the need for technical education: excusing itself from any detailed examination of the matter by citing a lack of time available to consider the issue, it declared that ‘there should be a careful enquiry into the issue and

recommended careful attention to ‘the prospectus of the School of Agriculture of the Canterbury College’; technical training, it implied, should be for agricultural gentlemen, not industrial workers. The Commission’s anathema to envisaging a governmental role in the industrial process established a precedent for continued non-intervention, a condition that would prevail for nearly half a century, notwithstanding the political colour of elected governments. In his submission Reeves had pleaded that: ‘Every day confirms me in the position I have taken up now with regard to the manufacturing industries of this country—namely, that they must be supported in every shape and form. We must have manufactures in this country.’ But it was a stance the Commission chose to ignore; its failure to investigate properly the issues raised by industrialisation and the impact this policy of benign neglect would have on wage earners, not to mention capitalists, was predicated on the assumption that agricultural production must continue to play the primary role in the economic future of New Zealand. Intentional or not, it suggests either a fundamental ignorance of the conditions under which nineteenth century manufacturers laboured, or a failure on the part of the industry to promote its interests and to articulate where assistance might be required.

The problems of the ceramics industry in New Zealand during the latter half of the nineteenth century were recognised by a number of writers who for an essay competition held as part of the 1885 New Zealand Industrial Exhibition held at Wellington were required to address the subject of ‘New Zealand Industries, the Past and the Present’. All three published prize-winners identified ceramics manufacture as being a key component in the country’s industrial future. Richard Winter observed that:

Although this industry has made great strides in New Zealand—there are few large cities which do not possess earthenware and pottery works—and although the industry has apparently checked the importation from other countries and given employment to a large number of hands, it is still beset with difficulties. The success is chiefly at present in the coarser kinds of earthenware; and it is much to be desired that the finer kinds of delf (sic) should be manufactured in the colony. The earthenware makers all give the same reasons for the languishing state of the industry. They ask that the cost of transit of goods in the colony by rail should be reduced; that facilities should be offered by the Government to induce skilled labourers to come out to the colony; and that the Government should offer a bonus on the first five hundred pounds’ worth of goods turned out say, for example, willow-pattern plates and equally common cups and saucers.³⁶

Yet notwithstanding this recognition by a sector of government—the civil service—political ignorance of the needs of industry in general, and the ceramic industry in particular, continued to be a problem. In an 1895 Parliamentary debate William Fergusson Massey, the then opposition member for Waitemata—a constituency that

covered the west Auckland clay fields—raised a question as to whether the government would be interested in encouraging the establishment of a pottery in the colony on the basis that suitable clays had been identified? The question was prompted by a letter from an Auckland resident outlining that:

I am a representative of a well-known Staffordshire firm, and therefore am much interested in some clays found not far from Auckland. I forwarded samples Home for analysis, and have invited an expert out here, being confident that if reasonable encouragement were given a pottery could be erected, which could supply household-ware at half the prices charged here.³⁷

Richard Seddon, the Liberal premier, rising to the bait, argued that a pottery existed in [Milton] Otago, although ‘He did not think, however, that they had been a financial success’; even for a so ardent a nationalist like Seddon, a local tableware industry was unthinkable. This parliamentary grandstanding between the two key figures of early twentieth century New Zealand politics, encapsulates the state of thinking about the New Zealand ceramic industry at the beginning of the century: a source for raw material was identified although an understanding of the technical and managerial skills, the technological, distributional and marketing requirements needed to produce a manufactured product were excluded from the equation; in a phrase, the design was absented. Central to the exchange is an underlying belief, suggested both by the conservative Massey and his correspondent, that for a pottery to succeed there was a need for government assistance ‘by bonus, subsidy or in any other way’. But the significance of Massey’s speculation and Seddon’s response lay in their perception of the production of commodities as a matter of mere material transmutation.

Scandinavian parallels?

In the light of later twentieth century arguments that sought to establish a Scandinavian model for New Zealand industrial production it is tempting to find analogies between ceramic production in a proto-industrialised New Zealand and in partially industrialised European countries such as Denmark. These correlations might be based on a series of outwardly relevant parallels: in both countries, local production was centred on small, pre-industrial, production units. Both had to confront significant competition from imported products, largely emanating from the United Kingdom: in 1885, Denmark, with a population of 2,096,467 in 1880, imported 3,002,596 Danish Kroner (equivalent to approximately £166,810) worth of ceramics (equivalent to approximately 2 shillings per head), compared with New Zealand, with an 1881 population of 534,030, which imported ceramics to a value of £43,031 (equivalent to 1s 8d per head).³⁸ Both had to deal with the effects of war

and were isolated, to varying extents: New Zealand by time and distance; Denmark by language. Both sought to use international exhibitions as a means of promoting external perceptions of local industrial development and to develop a sense of internal ‘confidence’. Both, in confronting problems of primitive transport infrastructures, relied to an extent on the vagaries of coastal shipping to widen their access to potential markets. Both drew on skills developed in larger industrial concerns: in the case of New Zealand, from Staffordshire; in Denmark from the metropolitan porcelain manufacturing concerns, *Den kongelige Porcelainsfabrik* (the Royal Copenhagen Porcelain Factory), established in 1775 and the Bing & Grøndahl factory, incorporated in 1853.

In Denmark the manufacture of earthenware for much of the nineteenth century was characterised by small, localised factories such as *Københavns Lervarefabrik*, *Frauens Lervarefabrik*, *P Ipsens Enke* and *Utterslev Pottemageri*, all of which were located on the outskirts of Copenhagen, and *Herman A Kählers Værksted* located in Næstved, about sixty kilometres south of Copenhagen. In terms of their production and distribution, size and the technologies they employed, they were not too dissimilar to the Milton or Newton potteries. Most were established in the mid-nineteenth century: the Kähler concern by an emigrant German in 1839.³⁹ The Danish factories exhibited variously at national, regional and international exhibitions, most evidently at *Den nordisk Industri, Landbrug og Kunstudstilling* (The Nordic Industrial, Agricultural and Art Exhibition) held at Copenhagen in 1888. The parallels with the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition of the same year are noteworthy, with the exception that in terms of manufacturing industry, the predominant metropolitan power represented at the Nordic exhibition was France—as an active observer—as against the United Kingdom in Melbourne where, coincidentally, Denmark was represented. But there, the parallels cease: unlike the New Zealand firms, the Danish potteries continued production well into the twentieth century, and in the case of the Kähler works, until as late as 1969. The reasons for this relative durability lay not only in the greater size and social cohesiveness of the markets they supplied, but also in the way that they employed design (*kunstindustri*) to respond to the challenges of surviving in an increasingly competitive environment.⁴⁰ Where Denmark, in the aftermath of two disastrous wars with Prussia (in 1848 and 1864) sought to assert a separate national identity for itself through participation in international exhibitions, New Zealand was content to see itself portrayed at those same exhibitions and—more importantly—to be perceived as an adjunct of Britain, ‘a Britain of the South’ or, as James Belich has postulated, a ‘Better Britain’.⁴¹

In what amounted to a micro industrial revolution in the Danish ceramics industry, earthenware production began to be industrialised with the establishment of the Alumina factory in Copenhagen in the early 1860s, under the ‘youthfully optimistic and highly energetic’ management of Philip Schou.⁴² The factory imported machinery from Britain, its productions initially imitated those of Staffordshire; like the Milton Pottery in New Zealand a decade later its transfer-prints were purchased in Britain.⁴³ Schou was one of the forces behind the re-establishment of the Copenhagen industrial association, *Industriforeningen*, which re-emerged in the aftermath of the 1864 Schleswig-Holstein war with a policy promoting the beneficial relationships that could exist between art and industry. It was not simply a Danish design council, *avant la lettre*; it acted as co-ordinator of industrial entries for the Danish courts at international exhibitions and was the driving force behind both the 1888 Nordic Exhibition and *Det danske Kunstindustrimuseum* (The Danish Museum of Decorative Arts and Design). To extend the range and scope of these activities it published from 1885 an illustrated journal *Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri*, promoting and critiquing Danish industrial production. The association’s vitality and success depended on its mix of business, craft, architecture and art and on a sense of cohesiveness between practitioner and businessman. Moreover this was based on the high level of training available to both professional ‘designers’, such as artists and architects, and craftsmen provided through both *Det kongelige danske Kunstakademi* (the Danish Royal Academy of Arts) and *Den Polytekniske Læreanstalt* (the Polytechnical College).⁴⁴ As Pietro Krohn—a painter and art director of the Bing & Grøndahl porcelain factory between 1885 and 1892—pronounced in 1857: ‘For us design (*kunstindustri*) means articles for everyday use, excellently made and decorated according to the nature of the article with the craftsman’s good taste and not in any former art style.’⁴⁵ It was a level of thinking about ceramic production far removed from the pragmatic concerns of the managers of New Zealand’s struggling potteries.

There was no such cohesiveness apparent in New Zealand either between practitioners of the various branches of the arts or between the arts and industry. Design training was almost non-existent although, from the 1870s, schools of art and design and art societies, which had a teaching remit, were established in Auckland (1878 and 1869, respectively); Christchurch (1882 and 1880); Dunedin (1870 and 1876); Wellington (1886 and 1882); an art school was established in Whanganui in 1892.⁴⁶ In due course, the primary function of these institutions became the training of artists, preponderantly painters, and although design was

taught there was a focus on handicrafts such as metalwork, woodcarving and textile arts. In her study of the arts and crafts movement in New Zealand, Ann Calhoun reproduces an 1886 advertisement for the Wellington School of Design whose first principal was Arthur Dewhurst Riley, a graduate of the National Art Training School at South Kensington and a former lecturer for the progressive New South Wales Education Department in Sydney. Aimed at ‘The Working Trades of Wellington’ the advertisement outlined a range of night classes that it declared would be useful:

To Carpenters, Painters, Masons, Bricklayers, Blacksmiths, Cabinetmakers, Printers, Mechanics, Bookbinders, Tailors, Boatbuilders, Cart and Coachbuilders, Casters, Engravers, Jewellers, Plumbers, Potters, Woodcarvers, Turners, &c., &c., and Architectural and Engineers apprentices.⁴⁷

But despite this initial announcement, directed at almost entirely male trades, the majority of students at the Wellington School of Design, as Calhoun records, were bourgeois women who, while they may have been enfranchised politically from 1893, were alienated from industrial management; in its translation from South Kensington to Wellington, design had been feminised. And no matter the availability of a design practice, its existence was ignored by local industries, without exception. Moreover, in terms of New Zealand-manufactured ceramics, the availability of design training was redundant: no pottery employed an art director until the late 1940s. The ‘great leap forward’ in tableware production that had been anticipated in 1880 had evaporated under the combined weight of competition from imports, a technological and capital deficit, managerial inexperience, political indifference and a resolutely sentimental market.

1 The myth appears to have derived from uncritical readings of early immigration-promoting texts, the most panegyric being that by Charles Hursthouse, *New Zealand or Zealandia: the Britain of the South*, (London: Edward Stanford, 1857). For a critical analysis of this specific genre of idealizing literature see: Fairburn, , pp. 19-27. For a more general discussion of the role of myth in New Zealand history see: W H Oliver, ‘Myths in New Zealand history’, in *An encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, ed. by A H McLintock, (Wellington: Government Printer, 1966), pp. 83-88, (83). See also: James Belich, *Making peoples: a history of the New Zealanders: from Polynesian settlement to the end of the nineteenth century*, (Auckland: Penguin Press, 1996), pp. 297-312.

2 Belich, p. 305.

3 Fairburn, p. 174, tab. 6.2.

4 The New Zealand Manufacturers Association was formed in 1884. See: Geoffrey G Thornton, *New Zealand’s industrial heritage*, (Wellington: Reed, 1982), p. 2.

5 *Christchurch Industrial Exhibition, 1880: to be held at the Drill shed, July 15, 16, & 17: catalogue of exhibits*, (Christchurch: J T Smith and Co, 1880), p. 2.

6 Robert Scott, *A lecture on the economic defence of our commerce and the development of our industrial resources: delivered by Admiral Scott under the auspices of the New Zealand Manufacturers’ Association, May 28, 1886*, (Dunedin: New Zealand Manufacturers’ Association, 1886), p. 8.

7 In his account of the role of the state in New Zealand, Michael Bassett argues that both Stafford and Hall at

- various stages in their careers were prepared to grant assistance for the development of industry: Stafford for various schemes including forestry and Hall notably for the flax industry. Significantly, neither product was exported from Britain; as Bassett remarks approvingly of the cautious Stafford, he 'also sought to widen the country's economic base by fostering industries deemed to have economic possibilities.' See: Bassett, p. 46.
- 8 In 1870, a Joint Parliamentary Committee on Colonial Industries, chaired by G M Waterhouse, recommended a level of government support for gold, tin and coal mining, forestry, sericulture, the manufacture of rope, paper and woolpacks from flax (*Phormium tenax*), tweeds, soap, starch, leather, malt, beet sugar and, oddly, common glass bottles which the committee declared 'were fast becoming scarce and too bulky to be imported to advantage'. The manufacture of ceramics was not referred to. See: New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report of the Joint Committee on Colonial Industries: together with notes (sic) of evidence and appendices.' *AJHR*, vol. 4, no. F-1 (1870), (pp. 1-28), 1.
- 9 Hardie, p. 46. It is unclear as to where Hardie located the information: microfilmed copies held in the University of Auckland Library of the relevant Colonial Office papers (PRO, CO 213) do not contain the Blue Books for 1845 and 1846.
- 10 *Auckland almanac for the year 1862*, (Auckland: George T Chapman, 1861), p. 236.
- 11 Simon Best and Rod Clough, *Pollen brickyard and Wright potteries: early colonial ceramic industries of the Whau Peninsula, Site R11/1509*, Science and Research Internal Report no 11, (Wellington: [New Zealand] Department of Conservation, 1986), pp. 5-7. Pollen (1813-1896) was premier of New Zealand between July 1875 and February 1876 in lieu of Julius Vogel who had returned to the United Kingdom. There is neither a contemporary biography of Pollen nor, apparently, any public holding of his papers.
- 12 Henry, p. 132.
- 13 David and Sherry Reynolds, 'The colonial potteries of James Wright', *Historic Places*, (March 1985), (pp. 11-13), 11.
- 14 *New Zealand Exhibition: reports and awards of the jurors; and appendix*, (Dunedin: Mills, Dick & Co for the Commissioners, 1866), p. 314.
- 15 Best and Clough, p. 7.
- 16 W. E. Swanton, *Notes on New Zealand*, (London: Eden Remington, 1892), pp. 208-209.
- 17 *New Zealand Court: International Exhibition, 1880, Melbourne: catalogue*, (Melbourne: [New Zealand Commissioners], 1880), p. 30.
- 18 There is some confusion regarding Boyd's background. Henry contends that he was born in Ireland and speculates that he might have come from an area of Ireland settled by Scots while Diamond declares him to have been born in Scotland. As a result of both the Irish famines of 1846-48 and Scottish industrialisation there was considerable migration from Ireland to Scotland. It is contended here that Boyd may well have been born in Ireland but he certainly trained as a potter in Scotland and appears to have had links with at least one Scottish pottery, the Garnkirk Fire Clay Company in Lanarkshire: at least two of the models produced at the Newton Pottery were also produced at Garnkirk. See: Alistair Morris, *Antiques from the garden*, 2nd edn. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Garden Art Press, 1999), p. 135. I am grateful to Louis Le Vaillant for bringing this connection to my attention.
- 19 *New Zealand Exhibition: reports and awards of the jurors; and appendix*, p. 308.
- 20 J T Diamond, 'George Boyd 'Newton Potteries' Auckland', *New Zealand Memories*, vol. 3, no. 19 (1999), (pp. 311-313), 312.
- 21 George Boyd, *Newton Pottery, Auckland, New Zealand: reference price list. June, 1882; manufacturer of sanitary pipes, fire-clay goods, and every description of builders' terra-cotta, vases, pedestals, fountains, &c., &c.: all former price lists cancelled*, (Auckland: 1882), pp. 12-13.
- 22 See: 'The Garnkirk Wedding Vase'. Chelminski Gallery, London, 2002, Available: http://www.chelminski.com/continentalterracottas/garnkirk_vase.htm, 01 October 2002.
- 23 *New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, 1885, Wellington: catalogue.*, (Wellington: Lyon & Blair, 1885), p. 46. Following the exhibition, Boyd presented specimens of his work to the Colonial Museum, now Te Papa Tongarewa: (CG641 - CG644).
- 24 Unsourced reference in Henry, p. 140.
- 25 Scott, p. 6.
- 26 *Melbourne, International Exhibition, 1880. The official catalogue of exhibits*, 1st edn. (Melbourne: Victorian Commissioners, 1880), p. 101.

- 27 *New Zealand court: catalogue: Centennial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888*, (Melbourne: Mason, Firth M'Cutcheon for the New Zealand Commissioners, 1888), p. 27.
- 28 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report of the Colonial Industries Commission', *AJHR*, vol. 2, no. H-22 (1880), (pp. 1-90), 81.
- 29 *Ibid.* (80).
- 30 'New Zealand Court', *Argus*, 6 October 1880, p. 6.
- 31 Reeves seems also to have been responsible for other attempts to obscure the difference between colonial and English productions including the re-naming of the pottery as 'Royal Milton' and the introduction of a backstamp decorated with a crown and garter. In adopting these outward marks of 'Britishness' the Milton Pottery responded to imported wares in much the same way as a number of ceramic manufacturers in the United States. See: Jack Welch, 'The Homer Laughlin China Company History'. The Homer Laughlin China Company, [2003], Available: <http://www.hlchina.com/historybyJackWelch.htm>, 22 September 2003.
- 32 'Progress of colonial industry', *NZH*, 25 June 1881, p. 6.
- 33 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report of the Colonial Industries Commission', (H-22, 1). The Commission comprised James Walker Bain, Arthur John Burns, William Archibald Murray, Theodore Frederick Sanbach Tinne and Edward Wakefield. Bassett observes that Baine 'was a conservative Southland identity. He also favoured less government intervention in the economy.' See: Bassett, p. 73. Of Scandinavian descent, Tinne was an engineer, foundry proprietor and shipowner, Wakefield was married to Hall's niece.
- 34 Thornton, p. 5.
- 35 A Bureau of Industries began functioning in June 1891 and was concerned primarily with conditions of employment. The Department of Industries and Commerce was established, finally, in February 1901; its earliest preoccupations would appear to have been with the frozen meat industry and tourism.
- 36 Richard Winter, 'New Zealand Industries; the Past, the Present, and the Future', in *New Zealand Industrial Exhibition 1885: prize essays on the industries of New Zealand*, (Wellington: George Didsbury, Government Printer, 1886), pp. 3-36, (pp. 20-21).
- 37 New Zealand. Parliament. Legislative Council, *NZPD: Second session, sixth Parliament*, vol. 25, (24 August - 27 September 1877) vol. 25, 123-124.
- 38 Denmark. Statistiske Bureau, *Sammendrag af statistiske Oplysninger angående Kongeriget Danmark, nr. 10*, (Copenhagen: Danmarks Statistiske Bureau, 1889), pp. 72-73, tab. 30. The conversion is based on an approximate exchange rate of £1=DKr18.
- 39 *Kühler keramik, 1839-1969*, (Copenhagen: Det danske Kunstindustrimuseum, 2002).
- 40 Viggo Sten Møller, *Dansk Kunstindustri, 1850-1900*, (Copenhagen: Rhodos, 1969), vol. 1, 9. Møller observes that the term kunstindustri was first used in Denmark about 1870. Traditionally the terms is translated as 'applied art'.
- 41 Belich, p. 448.
- 42 P Koch Jensen, 'Schou, Philip Julius, 1838-1922, Industridrivende', in *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, ed. by Povl Engelstoft, (Copenhagen: J H Schultz Forlag, 1941), pp. 320-323, (320).
- 43 One of the Alumina transfer prints purchased from British suppliers was 'Princess Alexandra' printed to commemorate the marriage of a daughter of Christian IX to the Prince of Wales in 1863. On British-produced wares it has been found in a number of archaeological sites in Auckland. See: Møller, vol. 1, 110; Robert Brassey and Sarah Macready, *The history and archaeology of the Victoria Hotel, Fort Street, Auckland (site R11/1530)*, (Auckland: [New Zealand] Department of Conservation, Auckland Conservancy, 1994), pp. 48, 54, fig. 23.
- 44 G F Hetsch, a tenured professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Arts, was delivering courses in design to craftsmen as early as the 1830s and publishing the results. See: G F Hetsch, *Fortegninger for Haandværkere*, (Copenhagen: Udgiverens Forlag, 1839-1843). Sten Møller notes that as early as 1837 the master cabinetmaker Lasenius Kramp was conducting a course in 'advanced proficiency in professional theory'. See: Møller, vol.1, 10.
- 45 Quoted in: Møller, vol. 1, 200.
- 46 Ann Calhoun, *The arts & crafts movement in New Zealand, 1870-1940: women make their mark*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), p. 21.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

7.3 Envisioning empire: the exhibition phenomenon

No matter the distance from the metropolitan centre, exhibitions—whether international, national or local, industrial or agricultural—were key events in the New Zealand calendar during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the subject of parliamentary debate and of gubernatorial and departmental correspondence; accounts of their progress filled the columns of the newspapers and illustrated journals. The structures that housed them were not only sites of wonder, hope and occasional success, but also—more often than not—disappointment for colonial producers. Exhibitions were locations for the new and innovative, massive displays of commodities and a palpable link between the frontier and the metropolitan centre. As Philip Hoffenberg contends, exhibitions ‘were at the heart of imperial and national, social and commercial enterprise. They were spectacles of tangible fantasy, in which participants forged nations and the Empire, both imaginary and material.’¹ For the inhabitants of New Zealand—both producers and consumers—exhibitions were vast, haptic, catalogues of things they would never have seen in the usual course of colonial life. But beyond their function as tasters of commodities, these ponderous manifestations of imperial might were primarily the showcases of free trade, and specifically, of British free trade.

Behold the fruits of the soil

New Zealand interest in the exhibition phenomenon can be discerned well before the Great Exhibition opened, let alone before reports of its opening reached the colony in late 1851. Writing to her mother from the newly established settlement at Christchurch in May 1851, Charlotte Godley observed:

I suppose London is now nearly mad, with the Great Exhibition just opened, and so on [...] What a squeeze it will be. I think we are rather well out of it; it makes me feel quite tired only to think about going to see such a monster exhibition. But, perhaps, after all, the grapes are sour.²

Popular interest in the Great Exhibition was not an accidental occurrence, neither in the United Kingdom nor in New Zealand. As early as March 1850 the *Southern Cross* was suggesting that there should be a New Zealand contribution to the exhibition, declaring that:

The advantage to be derived by such a contribution must be obvious to every one, since, however comparatively obscured by the more gorgeous displays of the arts and industrial skills of wealthy and populous Europe, the very fact of the productions of the Colony being admitted into such gay and goodly fellowship, must prove to be an instrument far more effective than the most elaborate Standing Advertisement, the most powerful Leading Article,

or the most painstaking Book. It will be a standard reference, at the command of the friends of the colony to point to and say,—“Look here! Behold the fruits of the soil—the produce of the sea—and the arts and industrial capacities of New Zealand during the first year of her second decade!”³

Finally, in April 1850, the Colonial Office circularised colonial governors regarding possible articles suitable for display at the exhibition. The circular was published in the *Government Gazette* on 6 September 1850 prompting complaints from local collectors of exhibits ‘of the short time allowed us to collect specimens for the Exhibition’. Eventually, a selection of colonial products including wool, rope, timber and geological samples, soap, leather, specimens of ‘native’ manufacture and a model of a ‘New Zealand War Pā presented by Lieut H C Balneavis, HM 58th Regt.’ was despatched on board the *Fairy Queen*, ‘sailing for London direct’.⁴ There were no products of any ceramic industry forwarded with the New Zealand displays to London on this occasion, nor to those held at London in 1862, 1908 and 1911; at Paris in 1855, 1867, 1878 and 1889; at St Louis, Missouri in 1904; and at San Francisco in 1939 where New Zealand was represented.

However, in 1873, Austin & Kirk, a Christchurch-based pottery, established as a brickworks ten years earlier, despatched a small consignment of ‘4 flower pots, 5 drain pipes, 1 garden border [and] 3 pickle jars’ to accompany the—by now conventional—New Zealand display of primary products, geological specimens and moa bones at the *Welt-Ausstellung Wien* (the Vienna Universal Exhibition).⁵ For the company, it was an ambitious, if fruitless, exercise. But, for a government keen to lure not only capital but also immigrants, it was a signal promotional tool in that it demonstrated that the new country had a manufacturing industry and was thus attractive not only to rural migrants but also those with urban backgrounds: New Zealand participation had been prompted by a request from its Agent General in London, Dr Isaac Featherston, a former superintendent of the Wellington province and—in London—an enthusiastic recruiter of migrants under the immigration programme initiated by the government of the ‘vastly ambitious’ Julius Vogel.⁶ Writing in June 1872 to William Gisborne, the [New Zealand] colonial secretary, Featherston declared that:

The value to New Zealand of such an advertisement cannot, I think, be overrated. The Colony has never yet had an opportunity of adequately exhibiting its natural and industrial resources. [It] would be sure to attract much attention on the Continent: and, altogether, an exhibition of the kind I have indicated would be calculated to bring the Colony into favourable notice, and to give fresh impetus to our trade and commerce.⁷

The Austin & Kirk ceramics were displayed in a section identified as ‘manufactures’ alongside cases of preserved meats, cheeses, alcohol, textiles and

hides, as if to represent the Colony as it commonly envisaged itself: a boundless cornucopia of primary produce, mineral wealth and, now, processed commodities.⁸ But, notwithstanding the exoticism of the display—the moa bones were particularly popular—it does not appear to have garnered the applause that it sought, notwithstanding visits to the New Zealand section of the Colonial Gallery ‘by a vast number of people—I should roughly estimate by at least two and a half to three million.’⁹ In a report to Featherston, G Phillips Bevan, the agent for the Australian (*sic*) colonies at the exhibition recounted that ‘the exhibitors generally put too high a price on their goods, forgetting that they were competing with all the world, and that the number of buyers was very limited.’¹⁰ The benefits that the government had anticipated would accrue to the colony through participation in the exhibition were dissipated by the commercial exhibitors in their efforts to recover the costs of transporting their productions to the other side of the world. Despite attracting over seven million visitors, the Vienna exhibition was regarded by many at the time as a disastrous failure but this was no impediment to the New Zealand government who launched into an energetic if somewhat disorganised programme of displaying the pastoral and mineral wealth of New Zealand and its idiosyncratic flora and fauna at international exhibitions around the world: at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876, the Paris *Exposition Universelle* of 1878 and the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879. Pragmatically, the residue of the New Zealand section of the Vienna exhibition was recycled at the American Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia prompting a member of the Legislative Council to express his disappointment ‘at the small number of articles sent from New Zealand’ while another parliamentary visitor was astonished that ‘nothing appeared in the [New Zealand] court but a case like a large packing-case made of rough timber, something like a large cucumber frame, [...] covered over with wire netting [and] all the wool and grain exhibits.’¹¹ The level of unpreparedness became apparent during preparations for the 1878 Paris *Exposition Universelle*; the result was an apologetic note in the *Catalogue of the British colonies* which explained that:

Owing to administrative changes in New Zealand, and the consequent delay in obtaining Parliamentary authority for the necessary expenditure, the Government of that Colony came to the conclusion that time did not admit to making adequate arrangements to fully represent the Colony at the Paris exhibition.¹²

It was, undoubtedly, its historical connection and geographical proximity that attracted the 450 exhibitors from New Zealand to the Sydney International Exhibition, rather than the exhortations of government, although its expenditure on the exhibition amounted to £4,578. Housed in a purpose-built exhibition building, the Garden Palace, designed by the New South Wales government architect, James

Barnett, the exhibition attracted exhibitors from around the world including the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, France, the United States and Japan. It was the first of the international exhibitions to be held in the southern hemisphere and, notwithstanding the fact that another Australian exhibition was scheduled to be held in Melbourne the following year, was viewed by European manufacturers as a way of testing what was for many of them, essentially, a virgin market for industrialised commodities. The New Zealand court at Sydney occupied eleven bays on the main floor and half the eastern gallery space of the Garden Palace along with sections of the basement and a separate machinery hall, in all comprising one thousand one hundred square metres (11,876 square feet), some nine times the space occupied at the Philadelphia exhibition. Additionally, the Ngāti Awa wharenui 'Mataatua' was installed in the exhibition grounds albeit with its interior carvings reconfigured so that they could be seen externally.¹³ Linda Young describes the display as 'typical of the Australasian colonies, with an abundance of natural resources and primary products and a small manufacturing industry, leavened with self-conscious culture in the form of oil paintings, watercolours and woolwork tapestry.'¹⁴ Ten firms exhibited primary products in the ceramics group of the manufactures department (Classes 206 to 216) including Austin & Kirk and the Auckland manufacturer George Boyd. Three awards were made to the New Zealand ceramics manufacturers: Boyd collected a 'second degree of merit [for a] good collection of retorts, crucibles and firebricks' and Austin & Kirk, 'a third degree of merit [for a] closet cistern and pavoirs'.¹⁵ As Young notes, 'Prizes for pottery [...] went chiefly to British firms [while] a Viennese company, Radler & Pilz, showed porcelain judged the finest collection in the Garden Palace.'¹⁶ The contributions of New Zealand's ceramic producers to the exhibition were typical of the wares shown by other colonial manufacturers who, as Young describes, 'showed useful, rather than artistic products—earthenware jars, kegs and bottles, terracotta chimney pots and drainpipes, bricks and firebricks—"in the production of which the colonies are fairly well advanced"'.¹⁷

In subsequent years, New Zealand would exhibit at the Melbourne International Exhibition in 1880, at the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition of 1888, and at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London in 1886 where it was observed that 'the most important feature of the New Zealand commercial exhibits is the representation of the frozen mutton industry.'¹⁸ Three New Zealand firms displayed

ceramics in London: the Christchurch pottery Luke Adams with a show of 'Earthenware, Terra-cotta and glazed household goods; Henry Guy Nevill for the Milton pottery 'with common earthenware for domestic and ornamental use'¹⁹; and George Norbury of Wellington who displayed drain pipes and sanitary goods.²⁰ The exhibition jurors passed over the New Zealand displays in silence. Ultimately, in the face of metropolitan competition, New Zealand ceramic manufacturers appear to have recognised that their output was most appropriate to the basic needs of limited local demand and that the ambitious dream of creating a 'Stafford of the South', of exporting beyond the seas, was unrealisable.²¹

While not the last of the imperial exhibitions attracting a New Zealand display — there was a New Zealand stand at the Johannesburg exhibition of 1937 and a pavilion at the Glasgow exhibition of 1938 — the 1924-25 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley was the most lavish of New Zealand's overseas displays, being housed in a separate pavilion, 'in solid neo-classical style, reminiscent of colonial public buildings [...] the building's façade was decorated with a series of 'typical' New Zealand agricultural scenes in bas relief'²²; no ceramics from the few remaining New Zealand producers were exhibited. Without any sense of irony, one souvenir programme mythologised the New Zealand contribution in distinctly jaunty terms:

New Zealanders are the world's crack-a-jack traders. With a population of 1,300,000, their exports and imports for last year exceeded in value £96,000,000 [...] With facts like these made known through the medium of the British Empire Exhibition, it is not surprising that New Zealand is receiving greater attention than any previous period in its history. People are beginning to wonder how it has happened that a country so marvellous in productiveness, so enchanting to the eye, so satisfactory in every aspect of home comfort, should be working out its destiny as the New Britain of the Pacific with so small a population.²³

Behind the imperial myth, was the primacy of agriculture in the New Zealand economy and the country's singular dependence on United Kingdom producers for its manufactured commodities. In 1925, New Zealand exports to the United Kingdom were valued at £44,073,3223 of a total of £54,521,031 (80.45 per cent) while imports from the same source amounted to £27,263,509, from a total of £52,456,407 (52 per cent); ceramics accounted for 1.8 per cent of imports from Britain and over 90 per cent of ceramics imported into New Zealand were of British origin. Notwithstanding the overwhelming nature of the statistical evidence as to New Zealand's dependence on Britain, in some respects, perception of the Wembley Exhibition was to prove a turning point in New Zealand attitudes to Empire. In his report on the exhibition to the Department of Industries and Commerce, A F Roberts, the New Zealand commissioner, conveyed behind his positive rhetoric a glimmering sense that the relationship between the dominion and

the imperial centre was no longer what it had been:

We are inclined to overlook the fact that, while the Old Country is everything to us, to them we are only part of a vast Empire. Prior to Wembley, to a large proportion of the people of the United Kingdom, New Zealand was merely a name. They had no knowledge of what it looked like, what the people were like, or what it produced. To these people Wembley was an Education [...] This education has brought home to the mass of the people a true conception of their Empire responsibilities, and must result in the Bonds of Empire being drawn closer than ever.²⁴

Yet a certain assuredness is discernable in New Zealand's projection of itself not only as Britain's farm but also as a vast market for Britain's commodities; this change of perception suggests a recognition that the country was shifting from being an exporter of cheap food and a passive importer of commodities to being part of a larger global economy. But, no matter the possible impact the New Zealand pavilion may have had on those Britons who visited the exhibition, within a decade British politicians would spurn New Zealand's perception of itself as the United Kingdom's most favoured trading partner, as a dutiful and recognised affiliate of 'Greater Britain'.

A safe and remunerative investment of capital, labor and scientific skill

In January 1863 a group of Dunedin worthies initiated moves to hold an exhibition in New Zealand modelled on those that had been held in London and Paris. In a letter to the governor, Sir George Grey, they argued that

Such an exhibition, by exemplifying the great national wealth, and the adaptability of the soil and climate of New Zealand for almost every species of production, would increase the confidence of the inhabitants in their resources. While stimulating old industries amongst them, it would give rise to new ones [...] From it, objects would be obtained worthy of being sent to a permanent museum in London, which would supply there the best proof that New Zealand affords abundant opportunity for the safe and remunerative investment of capital, labor (*sic*), and scientific skill.²⁵

In one sense, the proposal amounted to a manifestation of provincial dissatisfaction with Grey's administration: while Dunedin specifically and the South Island generally basked in a sea of gold-induced prosperity, the North Island was involved in debilitating and revenue-draining land wars with Māori, even if the cost of military operations was borne largely by the imperial government. And ignoring the nationally inclusive title, it was envisaged as an opportunity for the south to demarcate its differences with the north, to contrast its prosperity and confidence with the insecurity and violence obtaining north of Cook Strait. Grey does not appear to have subscribed to this provincialist vision of the south; answerable to the Colonial Office, and aside from the more pressing issue of the settler war against Māori, he does not seem to have regarded the exhibition as an event of national significance. Despite lending a display of ferns, he failed to arrive in Dunedin in

time either to open or to visit the exhibition, prompting a degree of provincial resentment of his apparent high handedness.

In the event, the Otago Provincial Government funded the New Zealand Exhibition of 1865, along with the worthies who both issued personal guarantees against future profits and appointed themselves as the exhibition commission. For some, it was the start of a two decades long affair with exhibitions: Julius Vogel, both as premier and as the New Zealand agent general in London, would be closely involved in the promoting New Zealand interests (along with his own and those of his allies) at overseas exhibitions, as would Hector, the provincial geologist—later director of the Colonial Museum in Wellington—who would organise the displays. The commission laboured to produce a result that would impress the sceptical north and, more importantly, lure potential investors to the province. The exhibition's first historian, Alfred Eccles, a son of one of the commissioners, observed that:

They left no stone unturned in their efforts to secure as representative a display as they could procure of the products and industries not only of New Zealand and the Australian colonies, but also of Great Britain, the Continent of Europe, India and elsewhere.

To house the results of their garnering, an impressive exhibition building was erected, designed by William Mason, architect and sometime mayor of Dunedin²⁶; and to enhance the scope of their activities a general agent for the exhibition for Europe was appointed. As a consequence some 1,598 exhibits were collected (exclusive of the Indian exhibits) of which approximately 1,114 were of New Zealand origin, 202 from the Australian colonies and the remainder sourced from the United Kingdom.²⁷

Ceramics, including building materials (bricks, tiles, drain pipes, floor tiles and flower-pots), sanitary appliances and domestic pottery, were a key element of the displays: the building materials section was dominated by the work of Otago manufacturers, although George Boyd despatched a consignment from Auckland. The products of British firms dominated the other sections, most notably those of the Lambeth pottery, Doulton & Watts whose wares were represented in all the sections. The Doulton display was of a distinctly utilitarian character, mostly of salt-glazed stoneware, and was seemingly intended to entice the attention of municipalities interested in constructing drainage and sewerage systems: the success of the display was reflected in the company being awarded an Honorary Certificate 'For superior Stoneware for sanitary and other purposes' and the juror recommended their wares to the attention 'of the Civic Authorities in this Colony'.

The domestic pottery section was all of British origin, with the exception of the exhibit despatched by Daniel Pollen from his pottery in Auckland. These displays were mostly organised by the New Zealand agents of British manufacturers: M Calvert of Dunedin acting for Pinder, Bourne & Co; Matheson & Campbell who 'exhibit a very fine collection of imported China Ware'; and R B Martin & Co, agents for the London retailers James Green. Aside from Doulton & Watts, the only British firm to exhibit in its own right was the London china dealer William P & George Phillips who 'contribute an extensive assortment of Porcelain and Earthenware, remarkable for every quality that is required in articles of this description.'²⁸ While ceramics may have formed but a small component of the exhibition, they registered a more significant development in terms both of their British origin and the organisational frameworks that were established to promote the interests of their manufacturers: agencies were to have an increasing say in what the New Zealand consumer was exposed to. Thus the design of ceramics can be seen to have extended from a metropolitan locus of production to a colonial site of consumption, one now mediated overtly by metropolitan interests, the exporters and agents.

This tendency for overseas and particularly British manufactured exhibits to overwhelm displays of colonial industrial productions was increasingly evident at the later international or imperial exhibitions held in New Zealand: the Christchurch New Zealand International Exhibition of 1906-07; the Dunedin New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibitions of 1889-90 and 1925-26; and the Wellington New Zealand Centennial Exhibition of 1939-40. In addition, an exhibition with international aspirations was held in Christchurch in 1882. Organised by the Australian-based entrepreneurs Jules Joubert and R E N Twopenny in the wake of an exhibition held in Perth, Western Australia in 1881 it attracted 226,000 visitors while recording a significant loss.²⁹ No matter the official rhetoric, these exhibitions rather than being display cases for local 'landmarks of industrial production', became, progressively, marketing opportunities for the agents of overseas manufacturers; vast showcases of the manufactured commodities of Home displayed in tandem with products demonstrating New Zealand's agricultural and horticultural progress.³⁰ From the early 1880s it became usual for local manufactures to be displayed in national or industrial exhibitions such as those held at Dunedin and Wellington in 1881, in Wellington in 1885, Christchurch in 1895, and in Auckland in 1897 and 1913. These exhibitions were organised by local bodies, such as chambers of commerce or associations of manufacturers,

although government funding and support was made available for the 1881 Dunedin and the 1885 Wellington exhibitions.

A distinct impetus to virile nationhood

At both the 1906-07 Christchurch New Zealand International Exhibition and the 1925-26 Dunedin New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition the predominant displays of ceramics were those of British manufacturers in their own right or under the aegis of their local agents: Copeland Spode Ltd exhibited at Christchurch; the Worcester Royal Porcelain Co Ltd, Doulton & Co and Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, the leading manufacturers of the time, displayed at both exhibitions, along with a range of less well-known British manufacturers; six at Christchurch and five at Dunedin. At Christchurch, the local ceramic retailers John Bates & Co were responsible for displays of Doulton and Worcester; the Doulton wares were, according to James Cowan, the exhibition's official historian, 'the finest of all [...] some of these masterpieces of the designer's and potter's arts, were priced as high as £500 each.'³¹ The jurors were equally impressed awarding Doulton not only seventeen gold medals but also a special award for 'enterprise displayed in the development of ceramic art.'³² Doulton took the exhibition as an opportunity to launch a number of products designed specifically for the New Zealand market: two souvenir wares including a beaker commemorating the life and recent death of Seddon to whom Cowan credited the inception of the exhibition; a range of relief moulded stoneware 'art wares', initially branded 'Māori Ware' but later sold under the name 'Kia Ora Ware'; and a service decorated with a 'Māori Art' pattern, ostensibly produced to commemorate a change in national status; from a colony into a British Dominion.³³ Although of conventional form, the service was decorated with a transfer-printed pattern based on a composite of three drawings of pītau kōwhaiwhai recorded by Tamati Ngākaho of Ngāti Porou and illustrated by H W Williams in an essay contained in the second part of Augustus Hamilton's ethnographic study *Māori art*, published in Wellington in 1896.³⁴ The predominant pattern on which the Doulton synthesis was based (Māori rafter patterns number 3) was named Mangōpare (hammerhead shark) and was sourced from the renowned wharenui Te Poho-o-Rāwiri at Kaiti, Gisborne and painted by Natanahira Te Keteiwi in 1849.³⁵ The origin of the Doulton commission is unclear: it may have been ordered by the Bates concern or, equally speculatively, another Antipodean Doulton agent, John Shorter who, while based in Sydney, had commercial links in New Zealand. Shorter was responsible for commissioning Doulton to produce wares depicting the flora of New South Wales and it is entirely possible that he may have recognised kōwhaiwhai as suitable for appropriation by

Europeans as a pattern for tableware. Production of the service was discontinued in 1940, presumably a result in the collapse of orders from New Zealand as World War II impacted on the economy.³⁶

In the context of the Christchurch exhibition, this ‘domestication’ of Māori culture had additional ramifications; Māori taonga were, from 1851, significant elements in the New Zealand displays at international exhibitions. From the time of the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879 the scale of these displays of the commodities of the ‘subjugated’ Māori began to increase in scale with the incorporation of complete wharenui, the most notable being Mataatua exhibited not only in Sydney but also at the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition and the 1882 Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London before it was accessioned by the South Kensington Museum. In 1924 it was removed from storage and exhibited at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley and, the following year, at the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin. By the time of the Christchurch exhibition and inspired by displays of colonised peoples at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exhibition the displays of taonga had been supplemented with the inclusion of the Māori themselves: the anthropological displays had expanded into a ‘Māoriland’ theme park, both to serve settler need for national identity as well as signalling Pākehā hegemony over what was then perceived erroneously as a ‘dying race’. Moreover, as Phillips has observed, ‘For Pākehā the Māori presence and symbolism at the Exhibition provided both a picturesque exoticism designed to appeal to tourists and also an instant mythology of a romantic past which gave Pākehā a sense of history in this “new” land.’³⁷ The Doulton ‘Māori Ware’ and ‘Māori Art’ lines, which most probably represent the first use of Māori derived design on industrially manufactured products, thus fitted into a nascent vision of a New Zealand rather than ‘South British’ identity. But, as with the service, this



Fig. 5 Kōwhaiwhai patterns (Māori rafter patterns, numbers 4 to 6) after Tamati Ngākaho of Ngāti Porou, illustrated in A Hamilton, *Māori Art*, 1897. University of Auckland Library, General Library Special Collections, New Zealand Glass Case.



Fig. 6. Doulton & Co, ‘Māori Art’ plate, designed about 1907.

identity was superficial and—fundamentally—still British both in origin and form; the meaning and significance of the original *kōwhaiwhai* was ignored in favour of its decorative effect.

In terms of local industry though, the overwhelming nature of the sophisticated manufactures of the metropolis aroused a sense of anxiety. Cowan, an early New Zealand nationalist, discerned a problem inherent in the display of these commodities—the results of ‘sweated labour’ and unsanitary conditions—which he contrasted to the basic local model that he identified as ‘essential’ colonial productions and described in proto-utilitarian terms as displaying ‘Good honest material, good workmanship, and attractive finish’. He justified his argument by asserting that:

In a young country like New Zealand, whose recently established manufactures are steadily working their way up from humble beginnings, it is of supreme importance that such goods as can be advantageously made within the country should have a reasonable degree of protection from competition with imported articles made in lands where labour is cheaper and where the cost of production is less [...] But, apart from common necessities, there are a great many lines which local enterprise in a new land is obviously unable to supply, and these, it was seen, were very well represented in the outside exhibits in the big Exposition [...] The very excellent show of New Zealand manufactures was therefore a most gratifying feature of the Exhibition, and, in comparison with previous exhibitions of industries and arts in the colony, it was a practical demonstration of remarkable progress.³⁸

The last exhibition to be held in New Zealand was the 1939-40 New Zealand Centennial Exhibition at Wellington. Planning began in 1930 although it was not until 1936, following the election of the Labour party in 1935, that any commitment was made by government to enable the exhibition to proceed. The legal status of the exhibition was a point of question, up to its opening. Although the exhibition committee at various stages sought to declare it firstly an imperial then an international exhibition, it was formed as a limited company, rather than as a royal commission or under a legislative act as was conventional in Europe, America and Australia. Furthermore the exhibition organisers were unaware that, to be recognised as an international event, they required the sanction of the Bureau International des Expositions under the terms of a 1928 convention to which New Zealand was not a signatory and of which it had no knowledge³⁹: international status had been sought ‘as the New Zealand authorities did not wish to exclude goods of foreign manufacture from the industrial and commercial sectors.’⁴⁰ In the event, the onset of World War II ensured that overseas representation was limited eventually to Australia and the United Kingdom although Canada, Fiji and—

bizarrely for a quasi-‘Empire’ exhibition—the State of California were represented with displays in the transport court.⁴¹ The United Kingdom had contemplated withdrawing from the exhibition due to the likelihood of war however, following representation from the Board of Overseas Trade, it decided to proceed. The displays were subdued and were organised primarily by the respective governments: the United Kingdom pavilion had a theme of communications and transport; and Australia focussed on its fundamental characteristics, ‘Its resources (with special reference to secondary industries), its travel attractions, its developmental trends, and the close association which exists between Australia, New Zealand and other British possessions in the Pacific.’⁴²

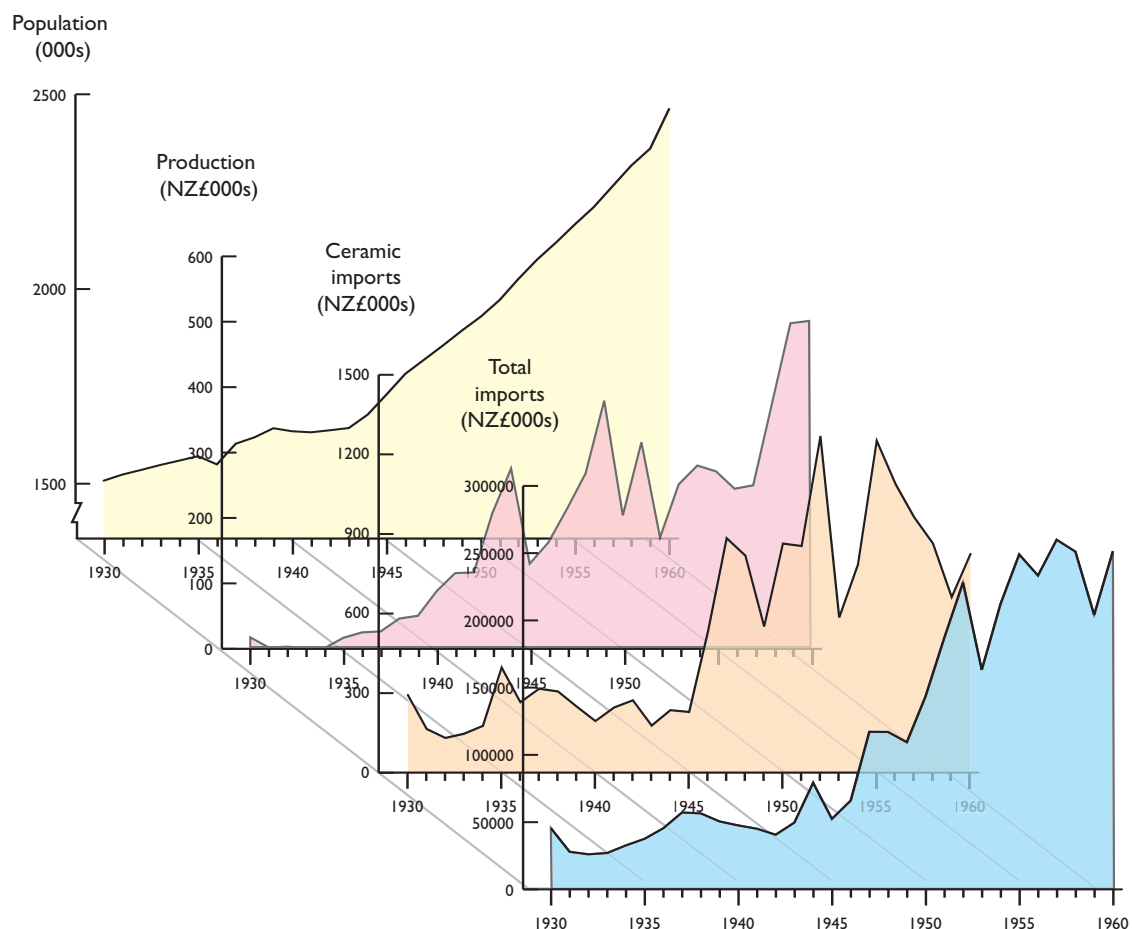
Despite distributing the exhibition prospectus in 1936 ‘to many thousands of manufacturers, merchants, public bodies and others in New Zealand and all parts of the Empire’ there were few commercial displays of manufactured commodities. Even the New Zealand government court, by default the largest in the exhibition, was somewhat statistical in its content.⁴³ The exhibits court attracted a number of New Zealand ceramics manufacturers, including the Auckland brick and pipe makers, Amalgamated Brick & Pipe Co Ltd and the Dunedin sanitary ware makers, mcskimming & Sons Ltd. But by far the largest display of ceramics was to be found in the ‘selling stands’ of which there were one hundred and eight in total. On the basis of a collection of twenty-eight the souvenirs sold through the stands, now held in the collection of Te Papa Tongarewa, it is possible to identify at least eleven British ceramic manufacturers involved in their supply. These items, based on standard lines of tableware and ornamental vases, were homogenous in appearance and deficient in quality, customised with a range of standard lithographic transfers depicting the exhibition’s architectural feature, the Centennial Tower or images of the ‘COMING OF THE GREAT NAVIGATOR, CAPT COOK FIRST LANDED NEW ZEALAND OCT 8TH, 1769’. In all likelihood these tawdry souvenirs were commissioned by New Zealand importers acting as agents for British manufacturers. There was no comparison with the production or design quality of the souvenirs produced for the 1906-07 Christchurch exhibition where British manufacturers were keen to consolidate their position in what they may have discerned as an increasingly wealthy market. If this assemblage is at all representative of the larger situation then, for British manufacturers, the New Zealand ceramics market had to all appearance moved from being a new marketing frontier to a dumping ground for its less-successful productions.

- 1 Peter H. Hoffenberg, *An empire on display: English, Indian, and Australian exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. xv.
- 2 Godley, p. 202.
- 3 '[New Zealand representation at the Grand Exhibition]', p. 2.
- 4 Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, vol. 5, 64: Despatch no. 38, Governor Sir George Grey to Earl Grey, dated 28 October 1850. Balneavis' 'New Zealand war Pā' was deposited at the Canterbury Museum and later exhibited at Te Papa Tongarewa. See: Ewan C Johnston, 'Representing the Pacific at international exhibitions 1851-1940' (PhD thesis, Department of History, University of Auckland, 1999), p. 225.
- 5 *Descriptive catalogue of exhibits sent from New Zealand to the Vienna exhibition, 1873* = *Beschreibender Catalog der Neuseelandischen Abteilung in der Wiener Ausstellung von 1873* = *Catalogue descriptif des objets exposes dans la section de la Nouvelle-Zélande à l'Exposition de Vienne 1873*, (London: Charles Skipper & East, 1873), p. 5.
- 6 David Hamer, 'Featherston, Isaac Earl 1813 - 1876'. *Dictionary of New Zealand biography*, 2003, Available: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>, 03 September 2003.
- 7 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'The Vienna Exhibition (papers relating to)', *AJHR*, vol. 3, no. H-5 (1873), (pp. 1-13), 1.
- 8 'The colony carried off two medals for progress, twelve medals for merit, and twenty-five honorable (sic) mentions,—in all, thirty-nine distinctions'. See: New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'The Vienna Exhibition (papers relative to)', *AJHR*, vol. 2, no. H-7 (1874), (pp. 1-11), 6.
- 9 Ibid. (6): Letter from G Phillips Bevan, Agent for the Australian Colonies at Vienna to the Agent General for New Zealand, 3 December 1873.
- 10 Ibid. (7). The problem of disposing of New Zealand exhibits following their display at international exhibitions caught Vogel's attention. On 15 June 1877, *The Times* published a letter from Vogel suggesting that supplementary [selling] exhibitions be held of all the articles praised by the jurors as 'the tendency of large industrial exhibitions [...] is to become very tedious.'
- 11 New Zealand. Parliament. Legislative Council, (vol. 25, 1-10), 7. See also: New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'The Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876. Papers relating to', *AJHR*, vol. 3, no. H-5 (1875), (pp. 1-12), 2.
- 12 Great Britain. Royal Commission for the Paris Exhibition, *Catalogue of the British colonies*, (London; Paris: Offices of the Royal Commission, 1878), p. 106.
- 13 For a background to the enforced removal of Mataatua and its subsequent use see: Ngapine Allen, 'Maori vision and the imperialist gaze', in *Colonialism and the object: empire, material culture and the museum*, ed. by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 144-152, (147). For comments as to the configuration of the carvings see: Johnston, p. 294.
- 14 Linda Young, 'Interested, entertained and instructed: looking at the exhibition', in *Colonial city, global city: Sydney's International Exhibition 1879*, ed. by Peter R Proudfoot and Roslyn Maguire Robert Freestone, (Darlinghurst, NSW: Crossing Press, 2000), pp. 101-118, (107).
- 15 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Sydney International Exhibition, 1879. Further papers relative to', *AJHR*, vol. 2, no. H-5 (1880), (pp. 1-8), 8.
- 16 Linda Young, 'Let them see how like England we can be: an account of the Sydney International Exhibition 1879' (MA thesis, University of Sydney, 1983), p. 84.
- 17 Ibid., p. 84.
- 18 Frank Cundall and Thomas Riley, *Reminiscences of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition*, (London: W. Clowes, 1886), p. 63.
- 19 Nevill was the manager of the Milton pottery between 1882 and 1887; it was owned at this stage by his uncle, Samuel Tarratt Nevill, Anglican bishop of Dunedin and later primate of New Zealand.
- 20 *Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London, 1886: catalogue of New Zealand exhibits*, (London: William Clowes & Sons Ltd, 1886), p. 58.
- 21 Quoted in: Henry, p. 32.
- 22 Johnston, p. 285.
- 23 *Souvenir of the New Zealand pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, London, 1924*, (Wellington: Tanner Bros. Ltd, 1924), p. 1.
- 24 A F Roberts, 'Report of the New Zealand Exhibition Commissioner to the British Empire Exhibition held at

- Wembley, England 1924-1925' cited in: Johnston, p. 316.
- 25 Quoted in: Alfred Eccles, *The first New Zealand exhibition, and Dunedin in 1865*, (Dunedin: The Crown Print, 1925), p. 5.
- 26 Mason resigned from the mayoralty to design the building; it was occupied subsequently by the Dunedin Hospital and demolished in 1934. See: John Stacpoole, *William Mason: the first New Zealand architect*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press; Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 82-84.
- 27 *New Zealand Exhibition: reports and awards of the jurors; and appendix*, p. 315.
- 28 Ibid., p. 315.
- 29 Gavin McLean, 'The colony commodified: trade, progress and the real business of exhibitions', in *Farewell Colonialism: the New Zealand International Exhibition Christchurch, 1906-07*, ed. by John Mansfield Thomson, (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1998), pp. 27-38, (30).
- 30 J Cowan, *Official record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of arts and industries, held at Christchurch, 1906-7: a descriptive and historical account by J Cowan*, (Wellington: Government Printer, 1910), p. 1.
- 31 Ibid., p. 299.
- 32 Ibid., p. 406.
- 33 Robert Reason, 'Ceramic ware: shaping New Zealand identity' (Post Graduate Diploma in Art Curatorship and Museum Management dissertation, Department of Fine Arts (Art History and Cinema Studies), University of Melbourne, 1996), p. 41. See also: Jennifer Quérée, *Royal Doulton, illustrated with treasures from New Zealand and Australia*, (Christchurch: Bookhouse Publishing Ltd for Canterbury Museum, 1992), pp. 71-72.
- 34 H W Williams, 'Description of Māori rafter patterns', in *Māori art*, ed. by Augustus Hamilton, (Wellington: New Zealand Institute, 1897), pp. 116-117.
- 35 Neich, pp. 30-33.
- 36 Reason, p. 41.
- 37 Jock Phillips, 'Exhibiting ourselves: the exhibition and national identity', in *Farewell colonialism: the New Zealand International Exhibition Christchurch, 1906-07*, ed. by John Mansfield Thomson, (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1998), pp. 17-26, (24).
- 38 Cowan, p. 4.
- 39 New Zealand remains, world wide, one of the few countries not to accede to the convention. See: Bureau International des Expositions, 'BIE'. 2003, Available: <http://www.bie-paris.org/2003>.
- 40 NA (PRO), BT 60/50/5, Great Britain. Board of Trade. Department of Overseas Trade, Centenary Exhibition, New Zealand, 1940, Letter from T St Quintin Hill to Sir E J Harding, Dominions Office, dated 13 May 1938.
- 41 The Californian display may speculatively have been a 'trade off' for New Zealand participation in the 1939 Golden Gate exposition held in San Francisco. See: Johnston, p. 228.
- 42 Nigel B Palethorpe, *Official history of the New Zealand centennial exhibition, Wellington, 1939-1940*, (Wellington: The New Zealand Centennial Exhibition Company Limited, 1941), p. 73.
- 43 Ibid., p. 126.

8.0 Industrial development: industrial art (1935–1957)

The introduction of import licensing by the state in 1938 froze levels of supply and further ossified perceptions of market demand. These trade regulation measures formed a part of the state's post depression moves to adopt a range of demand management policies that included public works schemes, the expansion of social welfare and health provisions and guaranteed prices for producers of agricultural exports. The control of imports formed a part of government policy to reduce New Zealand's susceptibility to fluctuations in its external trade by developing secondary



Tab. 2 Value of New Zealand ceramic imports, 1930–1960, measured against value of total imports, value of total production (tableware production from 1950) and population.
Statistical reports of New Zealand.

industry thus promoting import substitution regimes. In pursuit of these objectives, government sought to develop links between the state and the local manufacturing industry by introducing an Industrial Efficiency Act in 1936. Up to this point there had been little state interest in the manufacturing sector prompting the haphazard

growth 'of small, scattered and inefficient units, many of them endeavouring to supply a wide range of commodities to a very limited market.'¹

The impact of this import substitution policy was enhanced by a considerable reduction in the supply of manufactured commodities from the United Kingdom soon after the outbreak of World War II. In 1942 the state acted to re-establish a local tableware industry to both supply the military and to offset reduced imports: significantly, neither design nor production quality was considered a salient factor in the resulting output. In the aftermath of the war and following the resumption of imports, this quality deficit contributed to an heightened demand for imported ceramics: the local product was viewed widely as inadequate by the consumer, particularly in the light of changing consumer taste. The war also catalysed an increase in exposure to the outside world and fostered a dawning sense of a New Zealand culture distinct from that of Britain. While this timid nationalism gradually diluted its links to the former imperial centre, it replaced them with equally deferential connections to the new imperial power, the United States, and in an uncomfortable synchronicity of purpose, aligned itself to a variant of modernism in order to distinguish itself from what was perceived widely as a traditional and un-progressive culture. But where connections with the United Kingdom had most obviously manifested themselves in trade, particularly in the importation of commodities, the country's new found deference to the United States was best demonstrated in closer geopolitical alliances at government to government level and in the adoption of American management techniques and strategies by business.

If the phenomenal surge in the import of ceramics into New Zealand and the concomitant decrease in the demand for locally produced wares in the decade following World War I had suggested a maturing commodities market, then also it represented the effects of increasingly sophisticated methods of distribution. Similarly, the quantitative growth in demand appears to have been regarded by suppliers as an indication that there was no need to modify the range of wares provided to the market. The general perception of ceramic manufacturers based in the metropolitan centre was that demand in the New Zealand market was characterised by 'traditional' taste with the implication that no progression in design was required. This perception was reinforced by the activities of the manufacturers' agents who, as importers and exporters, between about 1919 and

1955 dominated the market for ceramics in New Zealand. Thus market perceptions of the design of ceramics pivoted primarily around the institutional activities of United Kingdom manufacturers and exporters and their local agents; in terms of the prevailing model of the design of ceramics in New Zealand. With the associated quantitative rise in the value of imported goods, the vectors of production and distribution can be seen as predominating over potential consumer demand. Thus, design, as asserted through the actions of the institution, became an alienating mechanism, a fragment in a macro-political process by which the New Zealand consumer body was sublimated to the commercial imperatives of the United Kingdom producer/distributor institution. This deference was reinforced by a government decision in 1932 to enshrine preferential trade with the United Kingdom as a mechanism for ensuring continued access for New Zealand primary produce to British markets. The weakness of the New Zealand state in the face of institutional pressure is further evidenced in the agreement entered into with the United Kingdom government in 1939—the Nash/Stanley Agreement—which proposed that the United Kingdom producer/distributor institution play a role in the development of New Zealand state’s industrial policy. The repudiation of this agreement in 1947, combined with the country’s escalating involvement in the American-dominated GATT discussions and sustained import substitution production significantly diminished the influence of United Kingdom institutions on the New Zealand economy and weakened its stranglehold on the commodities market. In terms both of production and consumption this change is marked in the confused state of the ceramics market, as it switched adherence from one design paradigm to another, from the ‘traditional’ to the ‘modern’, in not only its choice of shapes and patterns but also in terms of the organisation of production and distribution of ceramics.

1 B R Turner, ‘The state and industry’, *Economic Record*, vol. 13, Supplement (October 1939), (pp. 104-122), 113.

8.1 Another Albion: the New Zealand ceramics industry and trade

The New Zealand ceramic manufacturing industry of the mid 1930s—never in a position to compete successfully with imported British products—gave every appearance of being in terminal decline. Local producers attributed this state of affairs to economic failure as a result of the economic depression of 1931-35, the small market and a lack of import protection.¹ Issues of design do not appear to have been considered a factor in this collapse by local manufacturers who continued to produce wares that, in design terms, were little different from those produced during the nineteenth century. Likewise, the inability of local producers to develop and market wares of a quality comparable to the imported product—which had burgeoned in the years following World War I—lay in the undercapitalisation of the potteries, a deficiency of plant, a lack of product specialisation, a failure to undertake research and, not least, a reliance on traditional markets and practices. In effect, the industry had atrophied: the symptoms of decline were essentially the same as those it had exhibited the previous century. Pointedly, this decline arose during a period where there was little government intervention into the manufacturing industries, where the national economy depended primarily on revenue generated by the sale of primary produce to the United Kingdom. New Zealand's dependence on the former colonial power was absolute; any growth in the economy was both a reflection of the needs of British industrial capitalism and dependent on the surpluses that it generated. And as the country's economy was integrated into that of Britain, so too was its culture: its demands and tastes were determined largely by what occurred in the metropolitan centre.

A declining industry

Eight potteries appear to have been active throughout the country during the 1930s: McSkimming & Son Ltd at Benhar; New Zealand Potteries Ltd in Wellington (closed 1935); New Zealand Insulators Ltd at Temuka; Luke Adams Ltd in Christchurch; T N Horsley & Co in Christchurch; The South Canterbury Pottery & Mining Co Ltd at Timaru; H Fulford & Co at Te Mata in Havelock North; and Ambrico Ltd in Auckland (from 1938). Items produced by the local industry included sanitary ware, electrical insulators and fittings, the bodies for electric jugs, crematorium urns, kitchenware such as bread crocks, teapots, bowls and jugs, small ornaments—known locally as fancy goods—and a limited range of vases of traditional form, ambitiously described as 'art ware': tableware was not made.²

Production was almost exclusively in earthenware and, in most instances, was a sideline to the manufacture of bricks, drainpipes, flower and chimney pots and agricultural tiles. Most of these products were made for regional consumption although some, including art ware and specialty products, were distributed nationally. Bodies for electric jugs, for example, were manufactured at Temuka and distributed under the brand name of the company's owner, the National Electric and Engineering Company (NEECO).

Difficulties exist in assessing the quantities and values of New Zealand pottery production from the statistical records prior to 1951-52, as tallies from the pottery industry were merged with those relating to the manufacture of bricks, tiles and drains. However, an indication of the impact the depression had on local production can be construed from the drop in the total value of production of miscellaneous pottery items—including flower pots and sanitary ware—which plummeted from an all-time high of £68,368 in 1928 to £1,982 in 1933, a decline of 97 per cent. The following year the value of output fell further to £1,950. Whereas in 1928 the entire industry engaged 1,156 persons, this number had shrunk to 529 persons by 1933, a 45 per cent contraction. However, by 1938, production had recovered to £27,175, albeit half its pre-depression value and the number of persons engaged in the industry had recovered to 1,117 employees. To understand the lack of demand for local production on the consumer market the value of production should be compared to the value of imported wares. Despite the shattering effects of the economic depression, the country continued to import ceramics proportionate to pre-depression figures: £152,528 worth in 1933 and £181,802 in 1934, or 0.6 per cent of total manufactured imports in both years.³ And by 1938, imports of ceramics were valued at £310,374 or 0.7 per cent of the total; 87 per cent of these were of British origin.⁴ The greater proportion of this material was in the form of tableware: dishes, plates, single cups and saucers, tea services and ornamental wares including vases and figures, although the statistics may also have included some items of sanitary ware. Per capita, New Zealand imported more British ceramics than any other market, taking some eight per cent in value of the total production of the United Kingdom.

In a trade-driven economy the imposition of tariffs by government represents a critical intervention into the design process, allowing it to regulate what is available to the consumer in terms of both volume and price. As New Zealand manufacturers had long recognised, tariffs acted to protect and encourage the development of local

industry. And by controlling what was available to the consumer, tariffs helped define the market's knowledge and perception of particular consumer commodities; in a pre-multimedia age, tariffs—or the lack of them—proved to be one of the salient factors determining the nature of the ceramics market in New Zealand in that consumer choice tended to be based on an understanding of what was available in the market place. As Harry Trethowan, managing director of the British company Heal's Wholesale and Export Ltd, observed in 1943 'Out of long experience I am convinced that the public in the main only buys what it sees.'⁵ Furthermore, importers and buyers were less likely to select goods from a particular overseas market if comparable items could be obtained at lower prices from another source. Thanks not only to consumer sentiment but also to a long-standing tariff policy of imperial preference, the United Kingdom was the market's traditional source of supply.

In the 'Home-land'

The retail contraction experienced during the depression exacerbated the situation where the market relied predominantly on a single national source for its commodities; retailers were unlikely to stock goods that would remain unsold and consequently preferred to deal with familiar items that they knew from experience would sell. Under the terms of the pan-Empire Ottawa Agreement, agreed to in 1932 by the conservative United-Reform parties coalition government in an attempt to preserve a tariff-free market for New Zealand agricultural exports to the United Kingdom, British-manufactured tableware, which comprised the greater proportion of ceramics imported into New Zealand, entered free of duty as, in the opinion of the government, there was no economically viable local ceramic industry.⁶ Ornamental china—regarded as a 'luxury' item—remained subject to a 20 per cent duty. By contrast, all 'non-British' goods were charged full rates of duty: most favoured nations were charged 40 per cent for tableware and 45 per cent for ornamental wares. General duty was 45 per cent for both categories plus a surtax set at a rate of nine-fortieths the amount of duty. Notwithstanding attempts by other European and Asian manufacturers to break into the New Zealand market, British manufactures continued to define consumer choice. For economic reasons, what the New Zealand consumer was exposed to was British. Moreover, in a society where an Australian born and bred Labour prime minister could refer to the United Kingdom in a 1936 parliamentary debates as 'the Home-land' and newspapers throughout the country, typically espousing conservative interests, reprinted articles directly from the British provincial press, this deference to the erstwhile colonial

power was even more pronounced. And if the country identified itself culturally, socially, economically and politically with the United Kingdom, then its taste too was British.

Buyers—the import/export houses—based primarily in London controlled the selection and distribution of British ceramics intended for the New Zealand market. As a result of the general destruction of business records, it is now difficult either to identify the majority of those buyers responsible for supplying the New Zealand ceramic trade or to understand precisely how they fulfilled their positions as mediators between United Kingdom manufacturers and the New Zealand market;⁷ the 1956 issue of the *Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review Buyers' Reference Book*—produced by the eponymous manufacturers' trade paper—indicates that fifty-nine British-based buyers had links with New Zealand.⁸ Some of these firms, such as L D Nathan Ltd, are readily identifiable as being of a New Zealand origin; others can be traced through the pages of the *Pottery Gazette*, which, in 1953, reported that:

H C Hawley and Co, the well known Liverpool merchants and shippers have just celebrated their centenary [...] In recent years the business has been mainly confined to trade with New Zealand and Australia. At the same time the firm acts as a confirming house for some of the largest buyers in New Zealand, who send in indents on account of the majority of the manufacturers in the Potteries.⁹

While these 'buyers, confirmers and shippers' were retained by the New Zealand-based importers and the larger retail stores, their principal allegiances appear to have been to the manufacturers themselves.¹⁰ The buyer's role in defining the British export market was decisive, a fact recognised belatedly by the United Kingdom Council of Industrial Design (CoID) which, in the process of promoting its 'good design' agenda as being good for the export business, arranged meetings with representatives of the London buying-houses for Australia and New Zealand in 1954.¹¹ Likewise, it was only in 1963—and based on research undertaken by the United Kingdom Board of Trade—that the New Zealand government flagged its recognition of the pivotal position played by the British export houses in dominating its import trade. A report prepared by the New Zealand Department of Industries and Commerce observed that end-users, that is retailers and consumers, tended to have little direct contact with manufacturers and that both parties, in effect, were dependent on the export houses for information concerning any changes that might occur in trading conditions. Moreover, 'their intricate and widespread connections, their sensitivity, and their turnover place them in a position of real influence and effectiveness.'¹²

Complementing the influence of the British export houses were the New Zealand importers who, in most instances, also acted as local agents for British manufacturing interests: by 1950 approximately one hundred and fifty British ceramic manufacturers had agency agreements with New Zealand importers.¹³ In all, there appear to have been about thirty-five importers in the country with varying levels of interest in the ceramic trade. In some cases, these agents were general importers, dealing in a range of goods and, occasionally, representing only a single ceramics manufacturer. Others were more specialised and, in certain instances were New Zealand subsidiary companies of larger concerns, often of those based in Australia such as the long-established Sydney importers John Shorter Ltd. Specialist ceramics importers included: Robert Raine Ltd, John Raine Ltd, C Flockton & Co Ltd, Macduffs Ltd, Andrew Hawley Ltd and Hill & Teasdel in Wellington. Auckland-based specialists included: F E Jackson & Co, A L Byrne & Son, Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd, W G Douglas & Son Ltd and Moginie Cooke & Co Ltd (See: Appendix). They were sufficiently numerous to form a national organisation, the English Pottery and Glassware Agents Association. Both the John Raine and Jackson companies had been in business for some time: Raine from 1904¹⁴ and Jackson from 1890¹⁵ and both maintained connections with the manufacturers they represented, although their principal commercial links were to the British export houses.¹⁶ Nonetheless, British manufacturers relied largely on the experience and connections of the export houses to deal with and promote their interests in, what were at times confusing, overseas markets. Over the years, the New Zealand agents' association would become vociferous advocates of British manufacturing interests: both the Raine and Jackson companies supplied a constant stream of information about trading conditions in New Zealand to the *Pottery Gazette* and used the resulting articles as weapons in a sustained propaganda war with both government and the emerging local tableware industry. More often than not it would seem that the interests of the agents' local customers—wholesalers such as the general merchants Sargood, Son & Ewen Ltd and a wide selection of retailers ranging in size from large urban department stores to small rural general stores—were subordinate to those of the British manufacturers.

Buying the best lines from home

The final interface between producer and consumer occurred at the retail level and ranged from specialist china dealers such as Tanfield, Potter & Co Ltd in Auckland and John Bates & Co Ltd with branches in Christchurch and Auckland to mixed goods shops such as Woolworths (NZ) Ltd, McKenzies (NZ) Ltd, both with outlets

across the country, the Farmers' Trading Company Ltd based in central Auckland, Lambourne Ltd in suburban Ponsonby and Selfridges — 'no connection with Selfridges of London' — (NZ) Ltd in Karangahape Road.¹⁷ In 1931, Tanfield, Potter & Co — established in 1895, although with commercial links dating back to 1861 — was one of eight stores in Auckland specialising in 'china, glass and earthenware, fancy goods, cutlery, enamelled ware, etc'. As the shop's present owner observed in 1997 'most of the product sold over the [...] years has been of English manufacturers. The names you will recognise are: — Royal Doulton; Royal Albert; Royal Worcester; Wedgwood; Coalport; Moorcroft; Spode; Denby; Johnson Brothers; Alfred and J G Meakin.'¹⁸ Unabashedly conservative in what it stocked, Tanfield, Potter & Co conveyed an air of transposed 'English' gentility to its well-heeled customers; in constructing new premises in 1927 it specified a range of lead-light windows and oak-faced kauri furnishings. Discerning the Anglophilic prejudices of Tanfield, Potter's prosperous customer type, Keith Sinclair observed as late as 1963 that 'a pleasant dream of taking tea at Lyons Corner House — or Buckingham Palace — has shaped society in Remuera and St Heliers.'¹⁹ These specialist retailers appear to have supplemented agent-imported goods with those imported in their own right, particularly high unit cost 'art pottery', although this trade would have depended largely on individual contacts they maintained directly with manufacturers.

Aimed at 'the middle echelon of society' the large department stores that evolved in the major New Zealand cities during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as the Drapery and General Importing Co Ltd (DIC Ltd) in Dunedin, James Hay Ltd in Christchurch, James Smith Ltd in Wellington and George Court & Sons Ltd in Auckland, were better placed to control the type of wares they retailed as a result both of the scale of their operations and the connections they maintained in the United Kingdom. The DIC, with the largest crockery retail department in New Zealand and branches in Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, opened a buying office in London apparently as early as 1887.²⁰ An exception to the general rule that the department stores did not use local importers in determining their stock was the British-owned Wellington department store Kirkcaldie & Stains Ltd who used the importer Andrew Hawley Ltd. But as early as 1924 the directors of the Auckland department store Milne & Choyce Ltd were expressing concern as to the quality of the London buying by its agent Bickley & Bell.²¹ In 1925 it introduced a policy whereby New Zealand-based executives would visit:

The principal manufacturers of the United Kingdom, Continent and Europe, and America [...] this policy of keeping closely in touch with these direct sources of supply has done much to enhance the success of Milne & Choyce as an outstanding shopping centre in the Dominion.²²

With the onset of the depression the company terminated its contract with Bickley & Bell and came to an agreement with its larger, Sydney-based, counterpart David Jones Ltd to use its London buyer 'to try and secure goods at fair prices'.²³

In the middle of this retailing hierarchy stood the Farmers' Trading Co, New Zealand's 'universal provider', serving both urban and, as its name suggests, rural populations. Like the majority of major department stores, Farmers' had direct links with Britain and, unlike the others, with the United States: it maintained buying offices in New York between 1920 and 1922 and in London from 1920 until 1939 when it transferred its custom to the London export house J Tytherleigh & Co Ltd.²⁴ From 1901 until 1938 it published an annual catalogue modelled on those produced by Sears, Roebuck & Co in the United States and Anthony Hordern & Sons Ltd in Sydney.²⁵ Ceramics cover eight pages of the 1935 edition; from white mixing bowls to art pottery. The descriptions of these wares reveal the New Zealand retailers dependence on British manufacturers: the bowls are 'made of fine clay from the best English potteries'; the cheese dishes are 'all best English make'; 'Green-Edge Teaware, — This is a very popular line of English teaware, which combines quality and beauty at a very low price'; 'China cups and saucers — Willow pattern in English fine quality China'; 'Genuine English teasetts effective in design, attractively priced'; 'Royal Doulton dinnerware.—From the Royal Doulton potteries, which is a guarantee of the highest quality and workmanship obtainable [...] A really choice set for presentation purposes.'²⁶ Of the ninety-eight items listed, one is identified as being of New Zealand manufacture: 'Mixing bowls —White inside; yellow outside. Specially constructed to withstand rough usage.' At 2 shillings for an eight and a half inch bowl, it was 3d cheaper than its English 'Famous "Gripper" Brand' equivalent.

For the majority of consumers, prices charged by the specialist retail shops and the 'middle echelon' department stores were onerous: in 1935 median incomes ranged between £300 and £399. In terms of costs to consumers, the value of ceramic imports is somewhat deceptive: aside from tariffs, significant margins were added to the landed cost by both importers and retailers. At a 1952 New Zealand Board of Trade Tariff Inquiry it was suggested that the consumer paid more than 120 per cent on the value of landed goods which included: applicable duties, a 20 per cent sales

tax, a wholesale mark up of 30 per cent and a retail mark up of 40 per cent.²⁷ Companies such as Farmers' were able to amortise the cost of wholesale and retail mark ups and thus were able, in some instances, to retail goods at considerable discount although, particularly with 'name' wares, such as Wedgwood and Doulton, local agents policed prices to ensure exclusivity. Where Milne & Choyce advertised Paragon china which 'include[d] replicas of sets chosen by their Majesties [...] from as little as' 47s 6d for a nine piece 'Early Morning Set', approximately a quarter of the average weekly income, Farmers' offered 'specials' of an eighteen piece willow pattern earthenware tea set for 2s 11d or an English thirty-two piece plain white dinner set for 23s 9d (terms: 1s deposit and 1s for twenty four weeks).²⁸ By the end of the 1930s, there was a slight shift in the allegiance of the market for British ceramics: where in 1928 the country imported £5,658 worth of ceramics from Japan, by 1938 the figure had risen to £21,578, albeit less than ten per cent of total ceramic imports. Even Milne & Choyce was acquiring increasingly more stocks from Asian markets while others such as Farmers', Woolworth's and McKenzie's were able—in spite of the 45 per cent tariff and the surtax—to sell Japanese ceramics, the majority of which imitated the appearance of the British designs they displaced: Farmers' Thrift Department's 2s 11d willow pattern tea service was of Japanese manufacture, a subtle point, indicated by the absence of the description 'English' in the advertisement.²⁹ The decoration was sufficiently 'English' to pass muster in what was essentially an indiscriminating market. This trade can be seen as the glimmering of a dawning consciousness of the geographic reality of New Zealand as an Asian-Pacific nation—rather than a southern English 'home' county—a point not lost on the Labour party's secretary Walter Nash who, in a speech at the second conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations held in Honolulu in 1927 prophesied that 'with the rise of Asian industries, British exports would decline and therefore the buying power of the British would decline, so New Zealand would suffer too.'³⁰ No matter how limited, this growing trade prompted expressions of indignation from the New Zealand agents of the United Kingdom manufacturers who complained that Japanese manufacturers were pirating British designs, that the quality of production was significantly lower than that of United Kingdom and that buying Japanese wares was unpatriotic. As late as 1951, the



21-piece Tea Set, £7/13/-

CHOSEN BY THE QUEEN

**Latest arrivals in
PARAGON
CHINA**

INCLUDE REPLICAS OF SETS
CHOSEN BY THEIR MAJESTIES

M & C's cordially invite you to view their advance showing of famous Paragon China. Because they were selected in London by our buyer, we have received these new season's patterns six months ahead of normal schedule. Among M & C's collection of this fine quality Tea and Coffee ware you will find replicas of sets chosen by Their Majesties, The Queen and Queen Mary. Range includes Cup, Saucer and Plate Sets from as little as 6/11; Early Morning Sets for two people (9-piece), from 47/6; 6-person Coffee Sets (15-piece), from 63/-; also 6-person Tea Sets (21-piece) from 72/6. Choose your gifts now—if it is more convenient, make a lay-by.

**MILNE & CHOYCE
LIMITED**

Fig. 7 Milne & Choyce advertisement for Paragon china as 'CHOSEN BY THE QUEEN', *Auckland Star*, 18 October, 1938.

New Zealand press was, on the basis of information conveyed by the agents, accusing the 'Japs' of being 'back at their old game of copying the other fellow's wares and underselling him in his own (*sic*) market.'³¹ Victory over Japan had done nothing to ameliorate the antagonism of the importers to non-British imports.

By contrast with British imports, ceramics identified as of New Zealand manufacture were not advertised in the press, even during the late 1930s when the government was promoting actively the value of local industrial production. Until well after World War II the favoured sales and promotional technique employed by New Zealand pottery manufacturers was to exhibit at local agricultural and industrial fairs, such as the annual Auckland Easter Show. And while this method was literally mediaeval in origin, it did allow manufacturers to gauge consumer demand and it suited the scales of production. Even so, the primitive procedures used to promote New Zealand-made pottery contrasted markedly with those used to advertise other locally produced consumer commodities such as Kaiapoi woollen blankets or rimu furniture where a New Zealand origin was often stressed as a positive marketing attribute.

From the viewpoint of the consumer, New Zealand attitudes to the design of ceramics continued to be mediated in the United Kingdom by reason of both manufacture and distribution. Writing in 1949, E C Simpson, one of the few New Zealand protagonists of the 'good design' debate observed:

The manufacturer hides behind the excuse of giving the public what it wants and disclaims the role of reformer. His standard of design is dictated not by the public but by travellers, salesmen, buyers and shopkeepers. They consider a plate with cottage trees and cupids, or a perambulator with golden scrolls is a faster selling and therefore a more profitable article.³²

As will be seen from the 'good design' debate in the United Kingdom, manufacturers generally espoused a highly conservative approach as to what it was believed the consumer wanted. This attitude was clearly articulated by E G Cholerton the art director at W T Copeland & Sons Ltd, an advocate of 'traditional design', who declared that 'Women the world over like to be courted with flowers, and although they may admire a slick piece of modernism they invariably buy pottery decorated with posies.'³³ Notwithstanding its overtly patronising tenor, Cholerton's comment further suggests that manufacturers identified women as the end consumer of their product. Nonetheless, in New Zealand during the 1930s and 40s, retailer advertising of ceramics did not appear in women's journals such as the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* but rather in daily and weekly newspapers. Speculatively, it may have been that women selected what was purchased but that

decisions to acquire were undertaken by wage and salary earners who, in socially normative situations, would have been male. Likewise, male employees of the advertising retailers would, most probably, have made the decisions as to where advertisements should be placed.³⁴ And while Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes have asserted that ‘the advertisers’ aim was to court female desires, exploit their fears, erase all signs of domestic labour, and transport the (female) subject into a realm of pleasure-filled fantasy’ it seems that advertisements for ceramic tableware, with their largely factual recitations of shape, pattern, price and—significantly—place of origin, embraced an ungendered notion of the homemaker.³⁵

During periods of economic prosperity a primary determining factor in what ceramics were stocked by New Zealand retailers, large or small, would appear to have been place of origin, an allegiance clearly expressed by the owners of the Charm Crystal and China Co Ltd shop in Hamilton who declared that they were ‘great admirers of the products of the English craftsman’ and that it was their fixed policy ‘to buy the best lines from home’.³⁶ And in the views of the manufacturers, the export houses and the agents, craftsmanship was firmly equated with tradition. As J T Jones, art director of the Crown Staffordshire China Co Ltd—a company that exported between forty-five per cent and fifty per cent of its production—argued in the *Pottery Gazette*:

Traditional patterns continue to remain popular with all markets, and repeat orders are coming along in such quantities that most firms are not prepared to risk switching their attentions to modern designs. Experience shows beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt that both home and overseas traditional patterns continue to hold the interest of the buying public. The leading stores and retailers, who are really the best judge of market requirements because they are closest to the user, are fortunately fully aware of this, and place their orders accordingly.³⁷

In the view of the British manufacturers ‘traditional patterns’ were equated with a sense of ‘Englishness’ and, in turn, ‘Englishness’ with a perceived level of ‘quality’; the New Zealand consumer would not have disagreed with this verdict.

1 See general comments in: Henry, pp. 49; 117; 121.

2 New Zealand. Department of Industries and Commerce, *Made in New Zealand: directory of New Zealand manufacturers*, (Wellington: [New Zealand], Department of Industries and Commerce, 1939).

3 In 1933 the New Zealand pound was devalued by 25 per cent against sterling, NZ £100 = £125.

4 The total value of imports is based on New Zealand statistical information. British Board of Trade export figures suggest that the figure was £180,000 sterling (NZ£225,000). See: NA (PRO), BT 225/6, Great Britain. Board of Trade, Pottery Working Party, 1945-48: Interim Report to the President of the Board of Trade on the development of export markets.

5 Harry Trethowan, ‘Utility pottery’, *The Studio*, vol. 125, (February 1943), (pp. 48-50), 49.

6 Negotiated between July and August 1932, the Ottawa Agreement provided limited preference for British imperial goods. Signatories to the agreement were The United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia,

- South Africa and Rhodesia. The agreement remained substantially unaltered until 1972 when the United Kingdom joined the EEC although a tariff rate of 7.5% was imposed on British ceramics in 1960.
- 7 A search of ARCHON, the United Kingdom Historical Manuscripts archival portal has failed to identify any holding of papers from the exporter organisations identified as having dealings with the New Zealand trade. See: 'ARCHON Directory'. [United Kingdom] Historical Manuscripts Commission, 2002, Available: <http://www.hmc.gov.uk/archon>, 28 October 2003.
 - 8 The earliest *Pottery Gazette buyers' reference book*, to be located in New Zealand libraries is that for 1956. The directory does not appear to be held in either the British Library or the National Art Library.
 - 9 'A notable centenary', *PGGTR*, vol. 78, no. 908 (February 1953), p. 274.
 - 10 It is difficult to identify buyers with specific New Zealand connections but, from a review of the 'News' column in the 1947 to 1952 issues of *PGGTR*, the following companies can be identified as such: Briscoe & Co Ltd, L Mitchell & Co Ltd, Begbie Phillips & Hayley Ltd, Tozer, Kemsley & Milburn Ltd, C H Sippe & Sons Ltd in London and W H Jones & Co (London) Ltd in Barnet, Herts.
 - 11 [Great Britain] Council of Industrial Design, *10th annual report 1954-55*, (London: HMSO, 1955), p. 15.
 - 12 Alan R Sim, 'Import/export houses, background paper 16' in *Export Development Conference, report, June 1963*, ([New Zealand] Department of Industries and Commerce, 1963), pp. 1-4.
 - 13 United Kingdom Board of Trade records indicate there were 165 potteries in operation in the United Kingdom during 1952. See also: ANZ, IC/10, ACC W2537, New Zealand. Board of Trade, Public Tariff Inquiry. Tariff Items, 214 & 215 Chinaware, etc: Transcript of Proceedings, December 1952.
 - 14 'John Raine', *Merchant*, (March 1996), (pp. 21-22), 22.
 - 15 'Complaint unfounded', *PGGTR*, vol. 77, no. 903 (September 1952), p. 1403.
 - 16 For example on 29 June 1964 the British Pottery Manufacturers' Federation gave a dinner to John Raine of the eponymous import house at the BPMF Club in Stoke-on-Trent. Senior representatives of fifteen companies attended the dinner.
 - 17 *Wises's Auckland provincial trade directory* for 1932-33 lists thirteen 'china, glass and earthenware importers and dealers' of which two, F E Jackson & Co Ltd and Sargood, Son & Ewen Ltd are identified as wholesalers. Other merchants, such as Lambourne Ltd, are listed generically and it is difficult to ascertain the extent of their involvement as distributors and retailers of ceramics.
 - 18 Rowland Potter, 'Tanfield, Potter: a brief history of the well known Auckland business', *Auckland Waikato historical journal*, no. 70 (September 1997), (pp. 16-18), 17.
 - 19 Keith Sinclair, 'The historian as prophet: equality, inequality and civilization', in *The future of New Zealand: the University of Auckland winter lectures 1963*, ed. by M F Pritchard, (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs for the University of Auckland, 1964), pp. 124-142, (126).
 - 20 Gordon Parry, *Retailing century: the first 100 years of the D I C Ltd*, (Dunedin: DIC Ltd, 1984), p. 24.
 - 21 Bickley and Bell Ltd are recorded as 'export buying agents' with offices at 33-34 Broad Street, Avenue, London EC2. The company's joint managing director was chairman of the Australian and New Zealand section of the London Chamber of Commerce between 1949 and 1953. See: 'Export news: about people', *PGGTR*, vol. 78, no. 908 (February 1953), p. 266.
 - 22 Milne & Choyce, *Annual report*, 1928, cited in: K A Tucker, 'Milne & Choyce: an economic and financial analysis' (MCom thesis, Department of Economics and Accountancy, University of Auckland, 1967), p. 90.
 - 23 *Ibid.*, p. 82.
 - 24 Malcolm Kay, *The inside story of Farmers': first complete record of the marvellous growth of Laidlaw Leeds and The Farmers' Trading Co. Ltd. Auckland, New Zealand*, (Auckland: The Farmers' Trading Co. Ltd., 1954), pp. 148-150.
 - 25 Publication of the catalogue was suspended between 1933 and 1935. See: *Ibid.*, p. 221.
 - 26 *Farmers' Trading Co. Ltd. Catalogue no. 23*, (Auckland: Printed by New Zealand Newspapers, 1935), pp. 77-84.
 - 27 New Zealand. Board of Trade, T E Clark (Jnr) cross examined by Reginald Hardie Boys.
 - 28 'Latest arrivals in Paragon China', *AS*, 18 October 1938, p. 18; 'Amazing values in the Farmers' Thrift Dept.' *AS*, 29 October 1938, p. 22.
 - 29 Tucker, p. 95.
 - 30 Keith Sinclair, *Walter Nash*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press; Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 82.

- 31 J P Kennedy, 'Strange link between NZ and Japan', *Evening Post*, 15 January 1951, p. 3.
- 32 E C Simpson, 'A gleam on the horizon', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 2 (August-September 1949), p. 2.
- 33 E G Cholerton cited in: 'Modernism in pottery design', *PGGTR*, vol. 76, no. 891 (September 1951), (pp. 1382-1384), 1382.
- 34 A photograph of the Farmers' Trading Co management from 1930 suggests that all management positions were occupied by males. See: Kay, p. 161.
- 35 Shaw and Brookes, (209).
- 36 '... and New Zealand', *PGGTR*, vol. 72, no. 843 (September 1947), p 729.
- 37 'Design quiz: modernism in pottery design', *PGGTR*, vol. 76, no. 891 (September 1951), (pp. 1382-1384), 1383.

8.2 'Good design' and 'bad design'

For much of the westernised world in the 1930s and 40s 'good design' represented both an assertion of modernist identity and a positioning of the state as an agent within the chain of design. Potentially, this intervention could occur at any stage in the design process: pre-manufacturing; during the manufacturing process; in distribution and marketing; and by regulating consumer demand. In fact, over the fourteen years of New Zealand's first Labour administration, the state asserted its right to intervene at all these stages; this, however, was not the result of an acceptance of the formal 'good design' values of 'standardisation, simplicity and impersonality'.¹ Furthermore, as Stephen Hayward argues, 'From [a] Foucauldian perspective it is possible to regard good design in terms of the exercise of power, concomitant with a hegemonic idea of progress or modernity, and the antithesis to a contrary world of 'bad' or 'uncultivated' design.'² This contention cannot be sustained when applied to the situation in New Zealand: while the state sought to exercise power and asserted a progressive economic agenda, it both failed to recognise the significance of design as a locus of debate and its exercise of power was compromised by the United Kingdom's continuing economic and political hegemony over its former colony. This latter reason alone might be adduced as one reason for the retarded emergence of the modernist debate in New Zealand.

In New Zealand, the state's understanding of design as a concept was alienated from its perception of industry until—at the earliest—1936 when with the introduction of the Industrial Efficiency Act and the establishment of a Bureau of Industry it began tentative explorations into design as part of a larger industrial agenda. And while the New Zealand consumer was exposed fragmentedly to the British manufactured ceramics that resulted from the 'good design' debate, there appears to have been no awareness of the origins or significance of their appearance: at the 'low' end of the market they were conventionally marketed as 'economy' products; as one 1938 advertisement pronounced, 'This Plain White Dinnerware has a dignity of its own.'³ At the 'high' end, they were sold primarily through brand names: Keith Murray's modernist vases were retailed on the reputation of Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd as a long-standing manufacturer of high quality wares. But there was little public perception of design as a debateable issue and, indeed, no understanding of the concepts of 'good' and 'bad' design until the aftermath of World War II. Even then, the *New Zealand Design Review* could argue in 1950 that 'There is a snobbish fear that a plain thing may be mistaken for a

cheap thing, so *De Luxe Glory* in the form of [...] sticking on ornament not only adds selling points but helps to camouflage bad work.’⁴ Moreover, the ‘colonial’ consumer was occasionally held responsible by the mandarins of ‘good’ design as sustaining the conservatism of United Kingdom manufacturers: it was argued that without the ‘uncultivated’ ‘colonial’ demand for ‘traditional’ patterns and forms, the overwhelming logic of ‘good’ design would surely be compelling, even to the manufacturing trade.

Some origins

Unlike the situation that prevailed in New Zealand up to the 1960s, design has been a government issue in the United Kingdom since the mid 1830s when, in pursuit of a belief that Britain’s industrial competitiveness was being compromised by the want of a connection between design and manufacture, the House of Commons appointed a select committee to inquire into ‘the best means of extending a knowledge of the arts and of the principles of design among the people (especially the Manufacturing Population) of the country.’⁵ The committee—usually referred to by the name of its chairman, the liberal reformer William Ewart—observing that ‘the French have long been celebrated for their attention to design in Manufactures’ and that the Prussians were equally attentive to design issues, recommended the establishment of a school of art and design and that planning for the Great Exhibition of 1851 be set in train. Subsequent governments undertook similar enquiries during the nineteenth century in efforts to amplify Britain’s trade advantages. However, it can be argued that it was not until World War I that the United Kingdom government sought to influence actively, rather than by *laissez faire* suggestion, how manufacturers should produce and market their goods. In part this evolved from a recognition that British industry had fallen behind its competitors, most notably and obviously, Germany but also the United States of America. This initiative took the form of an exhibition of enemy goods in 1915 and, later that same year, ‘in connection with the first British Industries Fair [...] a small exhibition of British design of surface decoration.’⁶ Official recognition of this spasm of bureaucratic self-consciousness occurred in 1920 with the establishment of a permanent body concerned with design issues, the British Institute of Industrial Art (BIIA), jointly funded by the Department of Education and the Board of Trade.⁷ This largely ineffectual body was superseded in 1934 by the Council for Art in Industry (CAI) an organisation ‘representative of artists, designers, manufacturers, distributors, and interested government departments’, operating under the sole auspices of the Board of Trade and formed in the aftermath of the 1931 Gorrell Committee’s report.⁸

The zenith of state intervention into the United Kingdom manufacturing industry, and the most authoritarian of them all, arose in 1942 when the Board of Trade introduced its British Utility Design Scheme ‘to ensure the elimination of unnecessary waste of resources during a national emergency’. In Judy Attfield’s opinion the scheme was:

Just one among a number of other strategies that sought to adapt to modernisation and ensure well-designed goods in terms of a balance between degree of quality and the management of resources to achieve minimum price, and to promote the fair distribution to all sectors of the population.⁹

The proselytising functions inherent both with the CAI and in the application of the Utility Scheme was—in anticipation of post war conditions—delegated in 1944 to a new, autonomous, Council of Industrial Design (CoID). The establishment of the CoID was acknowledged in New Zealand in an article ‘The importance of design’ published in the manufacturers’ section of the *New Zealand National Review* on 15 July 1945 and based on reports in the British publications, *International Textiles* and the *Board of Trade Journal*. The article’s anonymous writer quoted Sir Thomas Barlow, chairman of the CoID, as stating that ‘during the next few years the shelves of the world would be bare, and Britain should be able to sell whatever she should chose to make.’ Barlow opined that ‘an increasing number of manufacturers were becoming conscious of the vital matter of design’ and that in order to ensure the long-term saleability of its manufactures it would have to satisfy the more demanding requirements of the market:

We are dealing with a new generation whose unprecedented experiences have given it a new outlook. Hundreds of thousands of the new young housewives who will be making the new young home are girls out of the precision engineering works, girls fresh from operating the predictors on gun sites, girls who have been making or using the very finest instruments that science and ingenuity can devise.¹⁰

Like the traditionally inclined ceramics manufacturers, the promoters of good design linked it both with the export trade and to a consumer preference made by women. ‘Good design’ was argued here as the embodiment of a commodity, rather than a process or even as an aesthetic.

The design councils were not the only strategies adopted by the United Kingdom government to ensure its involvement in the manufacturing process. Again in 1915 and both building on the work of a joint committee formed by the engineering professional bodies to standardise industrial production and complementing the art in industry emphasis of the BIIA, it launched a scheme for the Organisation and Development of Scientific and Industrial Research that, a year later, saw the establishment of both a Department and a Council of Scientific and Industrial

Research. The British dominions were encouraged to inaugurate similar bodies, but it was not until 1926 that a Scientific and Industrial Research Act established a comparable institution in New Zealand, one primarily supported by British funding emanating from the Empire Marketing Board. The focus of research undertaken by the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) was to be agricultural; an industrial development division would only be established within the DSIR as late as 1945 although, during World War II, the department had worked with industry on the government's import substitution programme; 1945 also saw the formation of the first research association with a non-agricultural focus, the New Zealand Pottery and Ceramics Research Association (PACRA) in a joint collaboration with the New Zealand Pottery and Ceramics Manufacturers' Association.¹¹ It was endowed with a brief that encompassed 'raw material investigation, finished product testing, new types and products of refractories, a general survey of the industry, processing methods, and liaison with kindred organisations overseas.'¹² The principal 'kindred organisation' was the British Ceramic Research Association to which, as the *Pottery Gazette* observed, the New Zealand Pottery and Ceramics Manufacturers' Association subscribed a not inconsiderable sum annually. No matter how removed it located itself from the site of production, this tentative step was the first active involvement by the New Zealand state in researching the manufacture of ceramics.

Developing the dialectic

In 1934 the Pottery Advisory Group of the United Kingdom CAI circulated two position papers on design in the pottery industry which linked the ceramic industry to the dialectic of 'good' and 'bad' design: one by F V Burridge on 'Design in the formative trades'; the other by the Council's chairman, Frank Pick advocating the establishment of a London-based design group to service the potteries.¹³ As C E Bullock, one of the manufacturers' representatives on the Group contended, both papers suggested that "'design" in the industry is "bad"'. Burridge's paper articulated the teleological modernist argument that the alienation of labour from production, combined with a remorseless quest for profit, was responsible for the loss of design integrity in mass-produced commodities:

The decline of artistic output in the formative trades can be ascribed to commercial control and to the modern craftsman having no sympathy and little contact with them [...] Firms do not require the workmen to have imagination [...] and are seldom concerned to maintain a reputation by marketing new designs unless assured of mass sales: they play for safety by reviving old patterns or ringing the changes on their own and other people's patterns which the public have already approved. This appraisal of shape and decoration by their immediate selling value restricts the designer's opportunity and narrows the range offered to the public.¹⁴

Rebutting this assertion, Bullock argued that the use of the emotive word ‘decline’ implied that there had been a higher standard in the past and suggested that ‘If with both “bad” and “good” before them the public choose the “bad” an enquiry for the reasons of this choice is indicated.’¹⁵ In a separate report recording a visit to the 1934 British Industries Fair circulated at the same time, members of the CAI commented, somewhat ingenuously, that:

Apparently a large export trade is done in pottery and the designs have to suit the tastes of foreign markets. So far as can be gathered, the colonial markets required floral decoration of rich character and even demanded picture plates. So far no attempt has been made to modernize the old picture plates, that is to say, to accept the picture plate and deal with it in a 20th century fashion.¹⁶

In the view of both the council and the manufacturers, public taste and particularly ‘colonial’ taste was responsible for the continuation of traditional lines. Pick—best known for his espousal of modernist design on the London Underground—rationalised that ceramics manufacturers would be better served by employing metropolitan designers as ‘it would seem impossible to maintain lively and effective designers for pottery in Stoke[-on-Trent] itself. There is not a sufficiently lively or artistic background to sustain creative effort.’ The debate between adherents of both camps was suppressed during the war; the manufacture of ‘traditional’ patterns was discontinued in favour of undecorated utility wares and the CAI was disbanded quietly. But with the emergence of its successor organisation, the better-funded and, arguably, better organised CoID, with its quasi-scientific promotional practices and its evangelical zeal to convert manufacturers to the credo of modernism, the gospel of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ design re-emerged. The organ of the ceramics manufacturers, the *Pottery Gazette* accused the CoID of acquiring notoriety by ‘looking at design as a matter of form rather than of colour’ and concentrating ‘too much on display instead of considering the self-beauty of the products themselves’ and furthermore ‘it should not be forgotten that “progressive” countries, when it comes to design, show a great yearning to acquire the traditional, particularly the British traditional.’¹⁷ Gordon Russell, the director of the CoID, countered that:

The English pottery tradition is so fine that it should be developed not superseded [it is] a product which relies so tremendously on quality and on form colour and pattern for its sale appeal and I cannot believe that maximum dollars can be earned in the long run, either by merely imitating old patterns or by using anything less than the very best talent available to evolve new ones.¹⁸

Such concerns were not moot to the New Zealand consumers of ceramics who, given their distance from the metropolitan centre were, unsurprisingly, largely unaware of the debate: the earliest published references to good design appeared—

sporadically—during the 1940s. This was not the case in Australia, a consumer market also mediated by British manufacturing interests.

On the periphery of the modern

In March 1941 the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) began broadcasting a series of talks ‘designed to provoke thought and discussion amongst listeners’ under the title ‘Design in Everyday Things’. And while it was a re-take on the eponymous 1937 BBC series, Australians generated the discussions and the ‘good design’ debate was developed within an Australian context.¹⁹ No such broadcast has been identified as occurring in New Zealand. Interestingly, particularly in light of the shift in Australia’s political allegiances from Britain to the United States announced in January 1941, the first broadcast ‘The importance of design’ by Alleyne Zander—identified as being Australian but employed as a press relations officer at the Royal Academy in London—and George Farwell—a Sydney poet—looked to America as the paradigm of ‘good design’ ‘in that her manufacturers of mass-produced objects have achieved a synthesis of industrial skill and individual craftsmanship.’²⁰ Tony Fry, ignoring this call to America, discerns in the broadcast what he describes as a ‘polemic against ugliness [...] and the insistence that Australia must learn the art-and-industry lesson [that] the voice of Herbert Read speaks in the local accent through his mediators and the ABC.’²¹

It is possible that this Australian allusion to American industrial methodologies mirrored the admiration expressed in a 1924 observation by Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith, a former permanent secretary to the British Board of Trade and, later, chairman of the pottery advisory group of the CAI, that while Britain had undertaken no study of industry from a design perspective, such a study had been undertaken recently in the United States.²² Smith’s reference was to a 1922 survey conducted by Charles R Richards under the auspices of the National Society for Vocational Education and the Department of Education of the State of New York that sought to ‘ascertain as accurately as possible the situation existing in American art industries as to standards of design and the conditions that at present operate to limit these standards.’²³ What impressed Smith was both the systematic nature of Richards’ enquiry and its thorough scope. Beyond that, as Woodham opines, ‘in the United States, notions of contemporaneity found material realization in popular expressions of the power of technology to create exciting new products for mass consumption.’²⁴ Richards, as director of the American Association of Museums, had been appointed to head an American commission into the state of European

design in 1925; his subsequent report and a touring exhibition of largely French contemporary art and design catalysed the development of a particularly American form of decorative modernism which, in diluted form, would percolate to the Antipodes.²⁵

Zander and Farwell's references to America were more likely to have been inspired by neither the genie of American industrial efficiency nor the siren call of Read (or, more accurately, Anthony Bertram) but rather the glamour of Hollywood and the consumerist lure exemplified by the New York World's Fair of 1939-40 with its 'design for tomorrow' theme at which Australia exhibited. For Australians and New Zealanders generally, modernity was defined by progress and if, in the popular imagination, any single country defined progress then it was the United States, represented in the pre World War II period through radio serials, the cinema, refrigerators and cars: 'Ed and Zeb', Hollywood, HMV and Packard.²⁶ By the late 1930s, New Zealand had one of the highest cinema attendance rates in the world; Bruce Hayward recounts that 'one sixth of the population of Auckland went to the movies each Saturday night' and that, by the early 1950s, 'there was a grand total of sixty five suburban and city cinemas with regular daily or weekly screenings'.²⁷ By 1951 New Zealand recorded an annual cinema attendance rate of 18.1 admissions per head of population, which after Britain, was the second-highest attendance rate in the world. America and specifically Hollywood became the vector through which many New Zealanders perceived modernity; the sets and trappings of films were not the only, but probably the most absorbing, way through which the consuming public could see what modernity implied. Jock Phillips notes that when American troops were deployed in New Zealand, 'Hollywood culture was so pervasive in 1942 that milk bars already existed.'²⁸ As viewed from New Zealand, Hollywood modernity was effectively about styling and, to a less tangible extent, efficiency. But in ceramic terms, 'American' decorative modernism reached New Zealand through imports of British 'jazz moderne' decorated and modelled wares with their vocabulary of brightly-coloured painted and transfer-printed geometric patterns and angular forms: in 1935 the Farmers' Trading Company catalogue listed a 'Thor dinner set-The very modern design of this set may be seen in the illustration [...] A product of Johnson Bros' famous pottery.'²⁹ Unlike its cars and refrigerators, American ceramics were not imported as they attracted high tariffs as non-Empire productions: it might be speculated that, in the eyes of the New Zealand consumer, cars and refrigerators represented progress while tableware exemplified tradition, no matter its appearance.

By contrast, exposure to the various strands of European modernism, conventionally perceived as key catalysts in modernist debates, was limited: for instance, there appears to have been no local reporting in either the popular or architectural press of the 1924-25 Paris *Exposition des Arts décoratifs et Industriels modernes*, the luxury progenitor of decorative modernism; New Zealand interest in exhibitions was restricted to the contemporaneous British Empire Exhibition.³⁰ With the exception of Lalique glass, the opulent goods characteristic of the Paris exhibition seem not to have been seen in New Zealand although many of their formal characteristics are identifiable—through American translations—in New Zealand commercial architecture of the 1930s and 40s, most notably that used in the reconstruction of Napier after the 1931 earthquake.³¹ And while the functionalist credo of European modernism—exemplified by experimental design developments in Germany and Austria during the 1920s—had an influence on the British ‘good design’ debate, it had little or no impact in New Zealand, until the arrival of refugees from central Europe in the mid 1930s.³² It is telling that the first published references to the Bauhaus school in the New Zealand architectural press occurred some thirty years after its establishment at Weimar in 1919.³³ The literary modernist Eric McCormick, while not the only New Zealand commentator to lament this condition of provinciality, questioned: ‘How are we, on the outer perimeter to keep in touch with what is vital in the world beyond? [...] Have we then reached an impasse? Are we doomed forever to live with the second hand and the third rate?’³⁴ It seems that New Zealand’s physical and intellectual isolation would ensure its non-participation in the ‘good design’ debate, notwithstanding the presence in the country of European-trained architectural modernists. Even with the State Housing Scheme—a large-scale government intervention in the housing market launched by the newly-elected Labour party in 1936—official attitudes to architectural design were resolutely traditional, albeit moderated by the influence of the modernist-leaning government architect’s office: complementing its few New Zealand-trained modernists, it employed a handful of the architectural refugees, including Ernst Plischke, Ernst Gerson, Fritz Farrar, Richard Fuchs and Fred Newman, but only as draughtsmen. The prototype for the state house design, produced under the auspices of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, was the stand-alone British cottage, complete with pitched roof and garden-suburb surroundings.³⁵ And while New Zealand-made products, including sanitaryware, were specified for the construction of these houses, there were problems: testifying at a 1952 tariff enquiry, E S Harper, chairman of the New Zealand Plumbers Merchants’ Guild, bemoaned the quality of locally-produced sanitaryware, alleging

that ‘the Government allowed the plumbers to put in the English [W C pans] and pay[s] them extra on it [...] We cannot see that this industry is of any good to the people of New Zealand.’³⁶ In her observations on the architectural genealogy of New Zealand’s archetypal modernist apartment block, the Dixon Street Flats (1942-44)—which may possibly have been designed by Plischke—Julia Gatley critically assesses the assertion that the authorship of the building may have been deliberately obfuscated by government in order to ensure that it was regarded by the public as being of New Zealand origin, rather than the work of ‘a German refugee who was a potential spy and an ‘enemy alien’.’³⁷

While the manufacturing environment in New Zealand was backward technologically and—in areas such as the manufacture of ceramics—miniscule in scale by contrast with that prevailing in the metropolis, conditions existed that might have allowed for the evolution of a state-sponsored ‘good design’ debate in the country. But a certain hesitancy can be discerned on the part of government³⁸: it might be contended that not only could such a dialogue be perceived as ‘un-British’ but also, in light of its highly publicised intervention into a traditional preserve of the private sector—the State Housing Scheme—it was unwilling to open itself up to further criticism. In its absence from New Zealand, design had become politicised.

1 This definition of ‘good design’ is taken from Nigel Whitely’s discussion of the architectural critic J M Richards’ 1935 illustrated article on modern design. See: Nigel Whitely, ‘Utility, design principles and the ethical tradition’, in *Utility reassessed: the role of ethics in the practice of design*, ed. by Judy Attfield, (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 190-202, (194) and J M Richards, ‘Towards a rational aesthetic: an examination of the characteristics of modern design with particular reference to the influence of the machine’, *Architectural Review*, vol. 78, (December 1935), (pp. 211-218), 211. Richards’ article was probably one of the earliest publications addressing the issue of ‘good design’ to be available in New Zealand (qv).

2 Stephen Hayward, “‘Good design is largely a matter of common sense’: questioning the meaning and ownership of a twentieth-century orthodoxy”, *Journal of Design History*, vol. 11, no. 3 (1998), (pp. 217 - 233), 222.

3 ‘32-piece English dinner set’, *AS*, 29 October 1938, p. 13.

4 E C Simpson, ‘Know your enemies’, *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 6 (May-June 1950), p. 119.

5 Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, ‘Report from the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the means of extending a Knowledge of the Arts and of the Principles of Design among the people (especially the manufacturing Population) of the Country; also to inquire into the Constitution, Management and effects of Institutions connected with the Arts. 1836’, in *British sessional papers*, (New York: Readex Microprint, 1966), vol. 9, 375.

6 ‘Art and industry - AD 1919’, *Design for today*, vol. 4, no. 35 (March 1936), (pp. 110-112), 112.

7 For an account of the rise and fall of the BIIA see: Yasuko Suga, “‘Purgatory of taste’ or Projector of Industrial Britain? The British Institute of Industrial Art’, *Journal of Design History*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2003), (pp. 167-185), 167-177.

- 8 See: Herbert Read, *Art and industry: the principles of industrial design*, 2nd edn. (London: Faber & Faber, 1944), pp. 171-174, Appendix A.
- 9 Judy Attfield, 'Utility reassessed: introduction', in *Utility reassessed: the role of ethics in the practice of design*, ed. by Judy Attfield, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 1-10, (2).
- 10 'Importance of design', *New Zealand National Review*, vol. 28, no. 7 (July 1945), (pp. 41-43), 41.
- 11 R A Galbreath, *DSIR: making science work for New Zealand: themes from the history of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, 1926-1992*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998), p. 265. The Association was wound up in 1984.
- 12 'Research and science for ceramics: pottery manufacturers make forward move', *New Zealand National Review*, vol. 28, no. 7 (15 July 1945), p. 45.
- 13 NA (PRO), BT 57/3, Great Britain. Board of Trade, Council for Art and Industry, c.1934-1940: Minutes and Papers, c.1934-1940: F V Burrige, 'Design in the formative trades', Pottery Paper no. 7, dated July 1934; [Frank Pick], 'Suggested design group for the potteries. With headquarters in London', Pottery Paper no. 6, dated 11th May, 1934.
- 14 Ibid.: Burrige.
- 15 Ibid.: Letter from C E Bullock to Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith, dated 12 September 1934.
- 16 Ibid.: British Industries Fair: Report on visit by members of the Council for Art and Industry', [nd], Paper No. 2, BIF.
- 17 "'Traditional design: some thoughts on the 1951 exhibition', *PGGTR*, vol. 74, no. 861 (March 1949), p. 243
- 18 'Modernism in pottery design', (1382).
- 19 Anthony Bertram, *Design in everyday things*, (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1937).
- 20 Alleyne Zander and George Farwell, 'The importance of design', in *Design in everyday things*, (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 1941), pp. 15-16, (15).
- 21 Fry, *Design history Australia*, p. 48. The bibliography in the ABC booklet lists two books by Herbert Read: *The meaning of art* (London: Faber & Faber, 1936) and *Art and industry* (London: Faber & Faber, 1934).
- 22 Hubert Llewellyn Smith, *The relations between designer and producer in modern industry*, (London: British Institute of Industrial Art, 1924), pp. [6-7]. Smith's pre-war admiration for America contrasts with post war British anxieties about competition from United States manufacturers. See: Patrick J Maguire, 'Patriotism, politics and production', in *Design and cultural politics in postwar Britain: the Britain can make it Exhibition of 1946*, ed. by Jonathan M Woodham Patrick J Maguire, (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 29-44, (34-35) and Jonathan M Woodham, 'Putting the industrial into design: early problems facing the Council of Industrial Design', in Ibid., pp. 123-134, (126-127).
- 23 Charles R Richards, *Art in industry: being the report of an industrial art survey conducted under the auspices of the National Society for Vocational Education and the Department of Education of the State of New York*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1922), pp. i-ii.
- 24 Jonathan M. Woodham, *Twentieth century design*, Oxford history of art, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 65.
- 25 Ibid., p. 79.
- 26 American radio programmes were introduced in February 1931. See: Patrick Day, *A history of broadcasting in New Zealand*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with the Broadcasting History Trust, 1994), vol. 1, 126.
- 27 Bruce W Hayward and Selwyn P Hayward, *Cinemas of Auckland 1896 - 1979*, (Auckland: Lodestar Press, 1979), p.12; [34].
- 28 Jock Phillips and Ellen Ellis, *Brief encounter: American forces and the New Zealand people, 1942-1945: an illustrated essay*, 1992 edn. (Wellington: Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1992), p. 47.
- 29 Farmers' Trading Co. Ltd. *Catalogue no. 23*, p. 82.
- 30 Since 1969, 'decorative modernism' has been called popularly 'art deco' based on a term coined in the translation of the 1966 catalogue for the 'Le Style 1925' exhibition held at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. See: Yvonne Brunhammer, *The nineteen twenties style*, (London; New York: Hamlyn, 1969).
- 31 The New Zealand born architect Basil Ward, a prominent modernist in the United Kingdom during the 1930s, was not exposed to modernist architectural theory until he went to Britain in the 1920s although serving his articles with the progressive Napier architect J A Louis Hay whom he recalled was 'greatly

- influenced by the Art Nouveau movement, the Austrian Secessionists, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan and Charles Rennie Mackintosh'. See: Peter Shaw, *A history of New Zealand architecture*, 3rd edn. (Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2003), p. 95.
- 32 The New Zealand government grudgingly accepted a total of 1100 refugees prior to the outbreak of World War II. See: Ann Beaglehole, *A small price to pay: refugees from Hitler in New Zealand, 1936-46*, (Wellington: Allen & Unwin; Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1988), p. 15.
- 33 'What was the Bauhaus?' *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), p. 2.
- 34 E H McCormick, 'Grounds for mild assurance', *Arts Year Book*, no. 2 (1946), (pp. 9-18), 10-12.
- 35 Julia Gatley, 'Privacy & Propaganda: the politics of the Dixon Street Flats', *Interstices: a journal of architecture and related arts*, no. 4 (1996), [np].
- 36 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 3C3: E S Harper cross-examined by Sir David Smith.
- 37 Gatley, ([np]).
- 38 Graham McLaren in a discussion of the relationship between Staffordshire ceramics manufacturers and the CoID observed that post World War II Stoke industry saw the CoID as a conduit for 'dangerous foreign ideas'. See: Graham M McLaren, 'Moving forwards but looking backwards: the dynamics of design change in the early post-war pottery industry', in *Design and cultural politics in postwar Britain: the Britain can make it Exhibition of 1946*, ed. by Patrick J Maguire Jonathan M Woodham, (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 85-98, (92).

8.3 Industrial production / industrial art

The New Zealand general election of December 1935 returned a Labour administration; for the first time in the country's history, government was no longer dominated by farming interests. Controlling fifty-five out of the eighty seats in the House of Representatives the new government was in a seemingly unassailable position to introduce a raft of radical reforms in terms both of New Zealand's political identity and its economic and social wellbeing. The economist W B Sutch, then an adviser to Walter Nash, the minister of finance and customs, observed later that Labour 'could have nationalized the Bank of New Zealand (and probably even the other banks, set up an industrial development bank, promoted entirely new industries, initiated exchange controls to safeguard its overseas reserves and allocate equipment for industries required to deliver consumer goods [...] But [it] did none of these things.'¹ Sutch ascribed the reluctance of the new government to implement radical industrial reform to the strained relationships between the Labour caucus, the cabinet, the Labour Party machine and the trade unions. Moreover, as he noted, the cabinet comprised six Australians (including Michael Joseph Savage, the prime minister), an Englishman (Nash), a Scotsman (Peter Fraser, the deputy prime minister) and a mere five New Zealanders; in Sutch's view, this failure to shed the country's colonial economic status was as much to do with 'a desire for approval by the motherland' as it was to do with local institutional problems.²

Planning a manufacturing industry

Notwithstanding Sutch's sceptical reflections, Labour did take tentative legislative and regulatory measures to develop and safeguard the country's secondary industries, particularly where they related to agriculture. In 1936 it introduced an Industrial Efficiency Act 'to promote the economic welfare of New Zealand by providing for the promotion of new industries in the most economic form and by so regulating the general organisation, development and operation of industries that a greater measure of industrial efficiency will be secured.' The act established a Bureau of Industry to advise the minister, administer the act and license 'key' industries. By 1939 the Bureau had absorbed the hitherto independent Standards Association of New Zealand which was re-designated the New Zealand Standards Institute. The act was a first attempt at state intervention in New Zealand industry, a step that led one opposition backbencher to declare during its second reading—despite support for the bill from the New Zealand Federation of Manufacturers—

that ‘this Bill is the first step towards bringing the Soviet system into operation in this country [...] But the Minister seems to have forgotten that New Zealand is a free and enlightened country and part of the British Empire.’³ In fact, it was intended primarily as a supervisory mechanism: the Bill’s sponsor Dan Sullivan, the minister for commerce and industry, opined that ‘if it is right that the State should assist industry by means of tariffs and subsidies, it is equally right and proper that the State should exercise supervision over the development of such industry’. Regardless of the fact that the raw materials for ceramic production are one of the few mineral resources to be found in plentiful supply in New Zealand, no mention was made of pottery manufacturing during the debate in the House of Representatives. Nonetheless, government assistance to the ceramics industry came gradually in the form of maintenance of the devalued rate of the currency, tariff and licensing controls and later, during World War II, from the designation of certain pottery manufacturers as ‘essential industries’. During World War II, subsidies were provided through the DSIR and in 1945 this arrangement was formalised with the establishment of PACRA, which, as mentioned previously, received government funding through grants made to the DSIR: as Ross Galbreath records:

Under the scheme adopted from the British DSIR model, most assistance to industry was by way of the research association system under which industries jointly contributed toward the cost of research which benefited them, and the government matched their contribution pound for pound through DSIR, which also organised and oversaw the research.⁴

Most importantly, the state became the nascent pottery industry’s most important customer when it began to specify locally made ceramics for use by government departments, most visibly the military and the railways, notwithstanding either non-existent design standards or the low quality of production inherent in wares emanating from local manufacturers.

More radical reforms could be and were soon implemented by the Labour administration in the fields of employment and social welfare but, as a result of sustained financial and trading pressure by the United Kingdom government, not in areas that might be perceived as affecting adversely New Zealand’s economic subservience to Britain. Indeed Sutch believed that Nash ‘seemed to envisage Britain and New Zealand as one economic entity, with each country concentrating on its specialties’.⁵ Between 1936 and 1937—for some ten months—Nash travelled to the United Kingdom primarily to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement: in an effort to shore up support from its own agricultural interests Britain was threatening, under the terms of the Ottawa Agreement, to impose import duties on meat, dairy and cheese imports, New Zealand’s major export income earners.

Nash's efforts to persuade the British of the rationality of his proposal that by taking more New Zealand primary products it would effectively increase the New Zealand market for British manufactured goods were to no avail. In his biography of Nash, Sinclair asserts that, contrary to Labour policy and mindful of the interests of British manufacturers, he was even willing to contemplate prohibiting the development of certain industries in New Zealand in order to facilitate such an agreement; he even went so far as to propose that British manufacturers should be encouraged to establish factories in New Zealand in exchange for a monopoly of the local market.⁶ Ultimately he failed: New Zealand was too small a player on the imperial economic stage and the British, who subscribed to a patronising view that Nash's ideas had been 'formed in a small, isolated and self satisfied territory', were not prepared to 'recast [their] general trade policy to suit New Zealand's convenience.'⁷

Introducing import controls

Labour's decision to impose sweeping import and exchange controls on 7 December 1938 came about primarily as a crisis measure to salvage the London funds: between 1935 and 1938 New Zealand's overseas assets—the London funds—of the internal banking system had slumped from £36 million to £7 million and the country's London-based sovereign debt had risen to £66 million; New Zealand was importing some £3.5 million worth of goods per month. As Nash's 'secretary-economist' and thus arguably in a position to influence his thinking if not his actions⁸, Sutch believed that no matter the short-term rationale, import controls were 'a means of selecting imports ultimately serving the purpose of protecting and expanding New Zealand's industrial employment base'.⁹ In the longer term he believed that controls were the only way in which New Zealand would break out of its colonial dependency on 'monoculture', that is its reliance on one product—grass—if it were to become a truly 'independent' nation. Savage, in an article in the *Standard*—the Labour party newspaper—declared that the country had 'been taking more goods from Great Britain in the last 12 months [...] We want to buy from Britain, but we cannot buy in excess of Britain's purchases from us.' Glossing over the crisis, he argued that 'it was necessary to devise a plan for producing in New Zealand more of the things that were being imported. Main manufacturing industries were already well established, but it was a question of how they could be expanded and of what new industries could be launched.'¹⁰ This assertion failed to address the reality that at this stage, the government had no developed industrial policy. For some, the imposition of controls was too late: in an emotional debate

John A Lee—one the more outspoken members of the party—suggested that the government had acted tardily, the crisis was more one of currency speculation and that Nash was ‘not accurate in saying that the Ottawa Agreements (*sic*) prevented exchange controls being imposed earlier [...] The Ottawa Agreements did restrict matters relating to trade but the Government had allowed 14 million pounds sterling to escape for which this country received no goods whatsoever.’¹¹

Nash returned to the United Kingdom in 1939 in an attempt to resolve the crisis. In the face of sustained hostility from a British Conservative government—smarting as much from New Zealand’s attempts to take control of its own economy as it was from the imposition of import controls—he argued both that the high level of imports in 1938 had made controls an economic necessity and proposed that the sovereign debt should be converted, as had been done previously. In response, the British government declared that it was unsympathetic to Nash’s pleadings and not willing to support what it perceived as the New Zealand government’s attempts to use a temporary economic crisis to establish secondary industries in contravention of the Ottawa Agreement using, moreover, British funding. There were even suggestions by both the United Kingdom government and the Bank of England that the New Zealand government had so mismanaged its economy that the country was on the verge of bankruptcy and that direct intervention by the United Kingdom authorities might be necessary. In the face of such antagonism, Nash was in no position either to promote new indigenous industry or to develop existing secondary industry.

The decision to impose controls was—understandably—welcomed neither by British manufacturers nor their local agents, the importers. A comment in the 1938 annual report of New Zealand Importers’ Federation, editorialised in the trenchantly conservative *Auckland Weekly News*, argued speciously that ‘excessive imports are being unduly blamed for the fall in the London funds’, that it was a result of incomplete statistics and

Probably export of capital to Australia, perhaps some repayment of overseas debt out of London resources [...] In any case, to talk about “excessive” imports simply begs the question. If imports come into the Dominion, that is because there is a demand for them and because the community feels that it is better off with these imports, and that its standard of living is higher than if the imports did not come in.

The government, it declared, was manipulating the facts and was embarked on a course ‘to raise the cost of living by further tariff increases or import control’ to the prejudice of ‘our only dependable customer for exports, the United Kingdom.xii’

Not content with mere invective, the prominent Auckland-based ceramics importers F E Jackson & Co Ltd initiated an action in the Supreme Court contesting the validity of the import control regulations.¹³ In his judgement Mr Justice Callan upheld the plaintiff's actions, declaring that the regulations were legally invalid. The government indicated its intention to appeal and, cautioned Savage, 'If it so happened that the final decision supported that of the Supreme Court, the Government would forthwith introduce legislation giving effect to the policy which the regulations had been intended to carry out.'¹⁴

The response of the United Kingdom government to Nash's suggested solution to the crisis was all the more aggressive and in seeking to preserve its hegemony over the New Zealand economy it pressured Nash into signing the humiliating 1939 Nash/Stanley Agreement¹⁵ wherein, in the words of an advice drafted for the President of the United Kingdom Board of Trade, Nash declared 'it was not the intention of the New Zealand Government to employ import licensing in order to give protection to New Zealand industry against imports of U K goods on a scale which prevented full opportunity of reasonable competition'.¹⁶ Furthermore, in the signed agreement, the New Zealand Government undertook to do its best to meet representations from individual British industries to relax import restrictions when conditions permitted and—most demeaningly—to consult with 'the appropriate United Kingdom trade association whenever a proposal is under consideration for establishment or extension of New Zealand manufacturing.' Not only should New Zealand be a captive market for British manufactures but also its sovereign right to determine its economic priorities should be subjected to the will of British manufacturers. Having extracted such conspicuously harsh terms and following extensive and convoluted negotiations, the United Kingdom government partially relented, eventually, and limited although equally humiliating loan facilities were made available to New Zealand. Bizarrely, during the course of these negotiations, Nash travelled throughout Britain, spending time, in Sinclair's slightly condescending view, 'mainly talking to disgruntled crockery and other manufacturers.'¹⁷

In fact, notwithstanding the attitude of the United Kingdom government and the stridency of the importers, due to a lack of preparedness and administrative inexperience, the imposition of import controls did little to check the flow of British ceramics into the country: there was a slight drop in the value of imported 'china' in 1939, a trend that corrected itself the following year. But if the effects of

the depression and the apparent reluctance of government to develop any substantial form of assistance to industry—other than to impose a freeze on the total value of imports—seemed to spell the demise of the local ceramic production, the impact of World War II heralded a renaissance in production.

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- 1 W B Sutch, *The quest for security in New Zealand 1840 to 1966*, (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 176.
 - 2 Ibid., p. 177.
 - 3 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *NZPD: First session, Twenty-fifth Parliament*, vol. 247, (4 September-31 October 1936), p. 604.
 - 4 Galbreath, p. 179.
 - 5 Sutch, p. 212.
 - 6 Sinclair, *Walter Nash*, , p. 139.
 - 7 Ibid., p. 137.
 - 8 The degree of Sutch's influence on Nash is moot: G R Hawke has argued that Sutch was 'a young economist who joined the government service in mid 1933 [and wrote] a great deal subsequently, but he was too junior in the 1930s for his personal knowledge to provide a balanced assessment of government policy [...] and his accounts owe much more to hindsight than to direct experience.' Sutch, as one of two Treasury officials who accompanied Nash to London, was designated his economic secretary. See: G R Hawke, *The making of New Zealand: an economic history*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 145.
 - 9 A M Endres, *The political economy of W B Sutch: toward a critical appreciation*, working papers in economics no. 21, (Auckland: Department of Economics, University of Auckland, 1986), p. 4.
 - 10 M J Savage, *Standard*, November 1938.
 - 11 John A Lee quoted in *Standard*, 20 April 1939, p. 4.
 - 12 'Fall in London funds: "imports unduly blamed"', *Auckland Weekly News*, 23 November 1938, p. 10.
 - 13 'Ban illegal; import case; regulations void; unauthorised powers; scope of legislation', *NZH*, 23 May 1939, p. 10. The case centred on the import of kerosene pumps from Sydney valued at £14 4s. Jackson's use of pumps rather than ceramics was probably due to the fact that they could be ordered and delivered rapidly.
 - 14 'Not relaxed; import control; Mr Savage's plans; an appeal possible; new law if needed', *NZH*, 23 May 1939, p. 13.
 - 15 Published as: Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, 'Trade discussions between United Kingdom Ministers and the Hon Walter Nash, the New Zealand Minister of Finance and Customs. Memorandum signed in London, July 12, 1939' in *Command Papers, Session 1938-39: 6059 New Zealand* (London: HMSO, 1939).
 - 16 NA (PRO), BT 11/3717, Great Britain. Board of Trade, New Zealand, 1946: Letter to the President of the Board of Trade enclosing list of New Zealand requirements from the UK, 1946.
 - 17 Sinclair, *Walter Nash*, p.182.

8.4 Not a gamble, but a certainty: Ambrico and austerity

Administratively, New Zealand was well prepared to deal with the impact of war on its economy; many of the measures that had been enacted to develop a controlled economy were extended to deal with the shortages anticipated as a result of the partial breakdown of communication routes with the country's principal trading partner, the United Kingdom. The role of the Bureau of Industry was widened and its impact on both producers and consumers was more readily apparent: the New Zealand Standards Institute, for example, developed a set of specifications for public purchasing that not only saw a reduction in costs brought about by greater economies of scale but also, as it had anticipated, a rise in the 'equality, utility and efficiency of goods.'¹ Labour's tentative programme of fostering secondary industry gained new impetus as local producers switched from a situation where their products competed with imported goods to one where they substituted them.² The onset of war also brought about a shift in the country's relationship with the United Kingdom that would have long-term strategic and economic consequences. The days of 'compulsory loyalism' to Britain effectively collapsed in 1942 when, in preparation for the war in the Pacific, American forces were stationed in New Zealand; Britain could no longer be relied upon to provide protection against external threats to the nation's security. And while the United Kingdom would continue to be the country's principal market for its primary produce and New Zealand would continue to rely on Britain for the majority of its manufactured goods for another two decades, there was a nascent sense that this relationship could no longer be viewed as a given fact.

In a largely successful move to stabilise costs, prices and wages, and to channel the national income to war related activities the government established a Ministry of Supply which, as Sutch observed, 'controlled reserve stocks; allocated raw materials; imported essential supplies using trade associations to assist; pooled the prices of imported basic goods and charged the War Expenses Account with the amounts by which it reduced pool prices.'³ Moreover, the government maintained a strong social policy, which sought to ensure that no section of society suffered unduly as a consequence of the general reduction in living standards. This background of full-blooded state control ushered in the revival of the tableware manufacturing industry in New Zealand. But, more than that, it was as a consequence of a specific request by government that prompted a private sector company, Ambrico Ltd, to turn from the production of industrial ceramics to tableware.

Diversification

In 1939 the directors of the Auckland-based Amalgamated Brick and Pipe Company Ltd—known from about 1946 as Ambrico—a company that had been formed in 1929 by the merger of six Auckland brick and pipe works, sought to diversify their product range by establishing a small experimental line managed by T E Clark, a then 23 year old member of the principal shareholding family.⁴ The company had been hit badly by the depression as building work came to a halt and demand for its construction-related products fell. Combined with the government's avowed intention to develop local industry, the timing of the move suggests that the directors may have held hopes that the imposition of import controls at the end of 1938 would lead to the opening of the industrial ceramic market to domestic manufacturers. Interestingly, the prospect of war, with an anticipated reduction in imported tableware, does not appear to have been a factor in this decision. Organisationally, Ambrico, in contrast to the government, was seemingly unprepared for the effects of wartime trade on its new production line. Clark recalled only that he:

Could see our company desperately needed to diversify [...] as well, we had an unsympathetic Labour government talking about monopolies and our brick prices. Yet prices were crazily low and the company was desperately trying to stay alive. Our trouble was rotten public relations.⁵

Paradoxically, the Labour government's state house construction programme—initiated in 1936—was to prove a mainstay for the company's brick and pipe making concern and the imposition of licensing controls was, over the long term, the only protection the company would have from competition with imported goods.⁶ The initial focus of the company's diversification programme was on the manufacture of acid-resistant floor tiles for use in abattoirs and milk processing plants. This development was followed by a range of dry-pressed porcelain electrical components produced in competition with New Zealand Insulators Ltd for the electrical distributors Turnbull & Jones and the radio manufacturers Radio (1936) Ltd; the ball clay used for the latter range of products was imported. These basic items were manufactured through a process of experimentation, by adapting redundant machinery to new purposes and by constructing a number of do-it-yourself kilns. In terms of the overseas paradigm, the resulting product was crude but relatively cost-effective particularly since wages as well as prices were controlled. Moreover, the simple technology employed in the factory meant that the level of skill required for production was low. Simultaneously with its industrial production the company also produced a series of traditional vase shapes in earthenware. In terms of their plain forms and glazes (dark and 'trickled'), this

output was not far removed from standard nineteenth century colonial wares; production technologies and skills were unchanged and moreover, object design was not a consideration.

Wartime expansion

While the declaration of war prompted only a small reduction in the total amount of ceramics imported into the country—in 1938 ceramic imports were valued at £292,394, or 0.53 per cent of the total manufactured commodities imported into the country and by 1941, £250,718, or 0.52 percent of the total—a noticeable reduction can be observed in the value of imported ornamental ‘china’. In 1938 this amounted to £79,374 while in 1941 it had dropped to a mere £11,864 (or £8,898 sterling), the lowest import value since 1895. An Auckland typist recalled that in 1940 the window of the Auckland retailer Tanfield, Potter & Co ‘once elegant, [was] now [a] sad display of only utility tea sets.’⁷ The resulting scarcity of wares impacted most noticeably on institutional users requiring large quantities of utilitarian tableware, generally known by their trade description of hotel wares. In what appears to have been a panicked realisation that ceramics were required for military purposes both the New Zealand Supply Council—established under the aegis of the Ministry of Supply and in control of ‘the organisations necessary to ensure the most efficient, economic, and expeditious production of all supplies’—and the United States Joint Purchasing Board—responsible for supplying United States troops stationed in New Zealand—jointly stripped the country of its stock of imported supplies: ‘They bought out all the supplies and took them by order from all the wholesale houses in New Zealand. They sent Purchasing Officers throughout the country to little places like Putaruru and Waipukakauri buying up crockery and other supplies from retail stores’.⁸ Notwithstanding these shortages, Ambrico was still not producing tableware: as a 1961 article in the *New Zealand Manufacturer* recounted ‘Previously engaged in making electrical porcelain, the firm entered the domestic crockery field, at the New Zealand Government’s request, during World War II when there was a big demand for these products by American troops serving in the Pacific.’⁹ State intervention thus translated a small industrial ceramics manufacturer into the country’s sole producer of tableware although, from the company’s perspective, the significance of the move would always be underplayed. The government on the other hand was fulsome in its praise of Clark. Speaking to the government’s 1943 financial statement, the Labour member for Eden, Bill Anderton, observed that:

The earthenware utensils made in the Auckland factory are a credit to that concern, and the factory is only in its initial stages. When the history of that industry is written, it will record the courage of one young man, who was game enough to put a pack on his back and tramp from the extreme south to the extreme north and from east to west in a search for the necessary clays to produce earthenware [...] and the Department [of Industries and Commerce] has assisted him to produce a really good article. He is able to place that article on the tables of the people at only 2d more than the imported article. He is supplying the United States Army with earthenware articles that are better in quality than similar utensils brought from the United States of America. Had not it been for the assistance given by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the foresight of the Minister and the Department of Industries and Commerce, this new and successful industry would not have been established. I wonder what would have happened if the Labour Government had not been able to assist secondary industries in 1935-36?¹⁰

Clark, by now designated general manager of the company's Fine Earthenware Division, argued later that:

It is a matter of opinion as to what help we were to the economy of the country during the war-time period as regards normal consumer supplies because there was the question of import controls at the time, so I will leave that out and only deal with the Government Departments—the Army, Navy, Air Force and the United States Navy. I cannot tell you how many pieces were supplied to the Armed Forces and what to Government Departments, but it ran into many millions of pieces of ware.¹¹

Besides the military, the largest single consumer of this product type was the catering service of the New Zealand Railways. In an attempt to locate a substitute for the now unobtainable British vitrified earthenware product, the Railways—through the Supply Council—approached Ambrico. After some experimentation, they produced a thick-walled, straw-bodied earthenware, handle-less, tumbler as unlike the British prototype as it was possible to make. Over a period of time the notoriously crude 'railway mug' became increasingly refined: a handle was added, the body was vitrified rather than low-fired earthenware. In March 1942, the various Ambrico concerns—ten in all—along with seven other potteries and brickworks became eligible for a further level of state protection when they were declared Essential Industrial Undertakings under the terms of the National Service Emergency Regulations 1940: it was the fifty-ninth declaration under the regulation that included a wide range of primary and secondary industries—and a mental hospital.¹² This classification enabled the company to obtain necessary labour and raw materials at a time of acute shortages; notwithstanding later assertions by Clark that the company's products were 'nearly' of 100 per cent New Zealand origin, its production at this stage relied extensively on the importation of not only over 20 per cent of raw materials but also much of the machinery, most originating in the United Kingdom. But, most significantly in terms of its productivity, the company's designation enabled it to embark on the construction of a new factory

with an estimated per annum capacity of 20,000 hundredweight produced on 'completely automatic single line machines'; even so, these were declared redundant in 1947.¹³

During the same year the government introduced a Wartime Prices Index under the umbrella of its Economic Stabilization Emergency Regulations, which sought to stabilize the domestic economy by freezing the prices of a wide range of commodities at current levels. This measure, a keystone of the government's programme to establish a controlled economy for the duration of the war, aimed at deflating the domestic

economy by combating both the effects of an oversupply of income available for spending and the limited supplies of goods and services. Following an investigation by the government statistician, six crockery items were designated stabilized commodities as part of a 'wide range of sundry items commonly entering into the expenditure of an average household, and for which reliable and comparative price quotations can be secured.'¹⁴ They were: six each large and small white earthenware plates; six each tea and breakfast size cups and saucers; and one each large and small mixing bowls. Plates were estimated as having a life span of two years, cups one and bowls five. With a captive and almost competition-free market, Ambrico was able to produce all the standardised items commencing in 1943 with a limited range of flat and hollow ware (plates, cups, jugs and saucers) including a 36-piece earthenware dinner service, imitating the form, if not the quality, of British 'utility' wares.¹⁵ Unlike the situation prevailing in the United Kingdom where manufacturers were constrained by the Utility Design Scheme, the New Zealand government had no need to impose controls over the



Fig. 8 Gordon Minhinnick, 'Cups and mugs': the Labour cabinet (from left to right: Dan Sullivan, minister of industries and commerce; Paddy Webb, minister of labour; Bob Semple, minister of works and railways; Peter Fraser, prime minister; and Walter Nash, minister of finance and customs) expresses a supposed preference for English bone china teaware while other travellers are required to make use of the handle-less Ambrico 'Railways mug'.
New Zealand Herald, 15 April 1943.

design of the company's productions: technically Ambrico was *only* able to produce utility wares.¹⁶ Although sold undecorated, this basic range was intended as a temporary substitute for imported wares and it was only after the war that, decorated with coloured glazes and transfer prints sourced from the United Kingdom, it was produced in any sizeable quantity. It was, as Clark later admitted, a gamble, but 'with the 25% exchange it did not look like a gamble but looked like a certainty.'¹⁷

However technically remarkable these developments were in terms of existing local conditions, in terms of developing a product acceptable to either the local or export markets, they were perceived as an emergency measure. Ambrico, as the sole manufacturer of tableware in New Zealand, failed to convince its wartime consumers that its product could replace imported wares. Once the war in Europe was over and trading routes re-opened, the majority of New Zealand domestic and institutional users reverted to specifying the imported product wherever licensing and tariff restrictions made this possible. Gaynor Jackson, chairman of the Auckland Wholesale Merchants Association acknowledged that while his company had been buying up to £800 per month from Ambrico 'the ware had proved so unsatisfactory to handle, that by common consent of all the firm, the Directors and the travellers, we all preferred to do without it.'¹⁸ Not only were imported wares regarded as being of a better technical quality and of greater variety in material, shape and pattern, but many New Zealanders felt that by 'buying British' the country was playing a role in the reconstruction of British industry, an opinion encouraged by not only the importers but also by politicians: domestic consumers were more than willing to respond to these exhortations.

1 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'New Zealand Standards Institute: Annual report for the Year 1937-38. Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly By Leave', *AJHR*, vol. 3, no. H-34A (1938), (pp. 1-16), 15.

2 For an unsympathetic account of the government's utility scheme and the role and conduct of the Standards Institute in respect of the manufacture of clothing see: Bassett, pp. 227-228.

3 Sutch, p. 298.

4 Thomas Edwin Clark (1916-) was employed from 1931 in the family company Amalgamated Brick and Pipe Company Ltd. In 1939 he was made general manager of its Porcelain Specials Department that formed the basis of a specialist tableware company, Crown Lynn Ltd, established in 1948. He retired from the by then-named Ceramco Ltd in 1984, five years before it closed its manufacturing capacity. He was appointed knight bachelor by the third Labour government in 1985.

5 Michael Brett, 'New challenge for the battler', *AS*, 14 April 1969, p. 6.

6 Ben Schrader, 'We call it home: a history of state housing in New Zealand'. [New Zealand] Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2002, Available: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/Gallery/housing/1st-house.html>, 29 July 2003.

- 7 Belle Robertson Avery, 'Meet me at lunchtime, 1940', *Auckland Waikato Historical Journal*, no. 67 (April 1996), (pp. 16-18), 16.
- 8 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 2E3: T E Clark cross-examined by Gaynor Jackson.
- 9 'Progress in pottery: booming production precedes export drive in Australia', *New Zealand manufacturer*, (September 1961), (pp. 64-67), 64.
- 10 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *NZPD: Fifth Session, Twenty-sixth Parliament*, vol. 262, (16 June 1943), (pp. 833-836), 833-834.
- 11 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 2A7: T E Clark cross-examined by Leonard Stevens.
- 12 *New Zealand Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 33 (26 March 1942), 910.
- 13 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 2C4: T E Clark cross-examined by Reginald Hardie Boys.
- 14 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report on the New Zealand Wartime Prices Index', *AJHR*, vol. 2, no. H-43 (1944), (pp. 1-14), 13.
- 15 Henry, p. 191.
- 16 Graham McLaren, 'Utility forgot: shaping the future of the British pottery industry 1941-45', in *Utility reassessed: the role of ethics in the practice of design*, ed. by Judy Attfield, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 157-170, (162).
- 17 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 2C5: T E Clark cross-examined by Reginald Hardie Boys.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 2S6: Gaynor Jackson cross-examined by Leonard Stevens.

8.5 A first class muddle: post-war imports

World War II resolved New Zealand's exchange control crisis; by 1945 it had accumulated some £114 million in overseas reserves. Combined with stabilized prices the country received for its agricultural exports, the war had reduced significantly consumer demand for overseas commodities. In a fit of largesse the government gifted £10 million to the United Kingdom and maintained the price of agricultural products such as butter at levels below the current market cost. However this economic strength created difficulties in that, by 1948, too great a proportion of the national income was being earned by the agricultural sector, thus creating imbalances between the pastoral and manufacturing industries. As well, the prices of imports were rising, leading to inflationary pressures. In a socially equalizing measure the government re-valued the pound, returning it to its pre-1934 parity with sterling. It counted on the continuation of its licensing system to maintain control over the quantity of imports and to provide a level of protection for local industry. In the post-war climate, the fostering of local industry was of signal importance in that it enabled the government to maintain its prime objective of full employment. The government seems to have underestimated the impact of its controlling measures: consumers were increasingly dissatisfied with the planned lack of choice and the revaluation of the pound impacted adversely on the embryonic manufacturing sector in that it lowered the price of imports and abruptly terminated any hopes of developing an export market for manufactured goods.

Shifting the import base

The country's strong fiscal position provided Nash with a degree of bargaining power in discussing matters of trade with Britain when in early 1946 he returned to Europe as New Zealand's representative at the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) negotiations. With a view to the forthcoming general election, he also sought to undo the undertakings set out in the 1938 Nash/Stansley agreement indicating to the United Kingdom government his resentment at having been forced to sign it. Clement Attlee's Labour government was, unlike its Conservative pre-war predecessor, largely sympathetic to Nash's request. A United Kingdom Board of Trade draft minute recorded Nash's comment that 'because of a variety of circumstances, many of which arose out of the war, the undertakings had never been implemented and were frankly in many cases now being broken'. The British officials argued that while the agreement 'had never been of much value to us' and that 'a simple abrogation of the agreement would not be understood by United Kingdom exporters, coming as it would in the middle of an export drive [...] The

New Zealanders have had their own way during the war, but there is now no reason why they should be allowed to get away with this selfish attitude.’¹ Pragmatically and notwithstanding the patronising tenor of the observations made by its civil servants, the British government backed down from a confrontation and a face-saving compromise was reached allowing the expanded entry of a token selection of British manufactured commodities into New Zealand; the Dominion’s import controls remained intact and the nonsensical situation that permitted British trade associations the right of intervention in the New Zealand government’s industrial policy was abandoned.

In January 1947, the government gazetted a reduction in the value of import licenses for ceramics adding that licenses would not be made available for the importation of undecorated cups and saucers. The move had two purposes: it would assist British post-war recovery while simultaneously offering a further level of protection to the nascent Ambrico concern. The *Pottery Gazette* announced that this move resulted from ‘a reported official request,

arising out of the dollar crisis’, that New Zealand should reduce her import of British goods to enable them to be exported to ‘hard’ dollar economies such as the United States.² But H S Hart, whose agency F O & H S Hart Ltd acted as representatives for fourteen British manufacturers, explained that ‘owing to the great advances in prices at the works since 1938, together with sea freights which have more than doubled, the licenses for 1948 will not permit the importation of more than 15-20 per cent of the units imported in 1938.’³ New Zealand, as a member of the sterling area, importing in 1946 ceramics to a value of £533,000—or 0.74 per cent of total manufactured imports—was in effect acting as a drain on Britain’s potential hard currency income. Britain’s attempt to trade itself out of the financial crisis was brought about by the pressing need to repay its dollar denominated war loans, rebuild its shattered infrastructure and feed its dispirited population. And with the United Kingdom Board of Trade prohibiting the

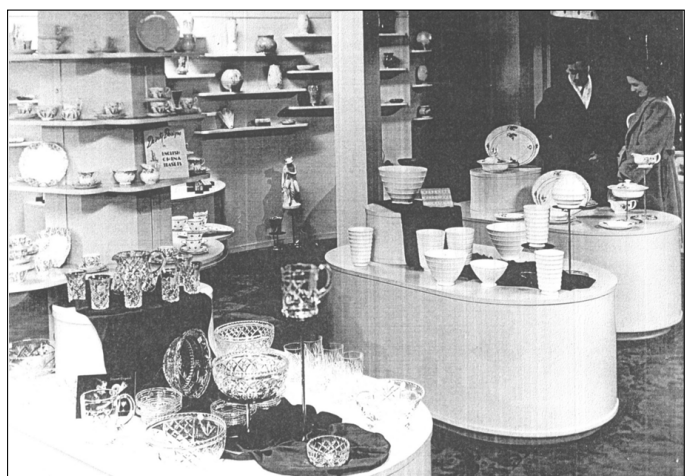


Fig. 9 National Publicity Studios, ‘English china and glassware on display at Kirkcaldie and Stains Ltd, Wellington’, 1948. Alexander Turnbull Library, PA Coll-3063.

manufacture of non-utility wares for domestic consumption, manufacturers argued that necessary export income was generated by the production of decorated wares: 'If Canadians desire reproductions of Georgian or Victorian highly-ornamented silver-plate or outmoded styles in pottery [...] we cannot afford to disregard their wishes.'⁴

Reacting to the New Zealand government's gesture of imperial solidarity in seeking to ban the importation of 'utility' cups and saucers, the opposition National party attempted to cast itself in the guise of the 'patriotic' consumers' friend; but its declared 'patriotic' allegiances were to Britain, not New Zealand, and the implication that the British government was refusing to allow 'patriotic' New Zealanders to buy British was because it, like the New Zealand government, was socialist. Its party organ *Freedom* headlined the impending restrictions with 'NEW IMPORT EMBARGO: Dictatorship by Customs Excludes British Cups and Saucers' and quoting an un-named Wellington importer added:

The ban excludes what you might term everyday cups and saucers [...] and the popular tinted lines in pastel shades will be banished along with the rest. Obviously the move is to protect a local industry [...] The public [...] had exhibited a definite prejudice against New Zealand-made earthenware crockery for everyday domestic use. "Our customers will buy it only as a last resort."⁵

The proposed 'ban' which prohibited the 'importation of undecorated cups and saucers, unless part of a complete dinner—or tea-set' became literally a storm in a teacup and in the face of well-orchestrated 'public' outrage was lifted shortly after its imposition.⁶ But the furore was indicative of consumer frustration with the shortages of war and of the poor production quality of many of the available commodities, as the house journal of the British manufacturer Doulton & Co Ltd, *Ceramics in Art and Industry*, explained in 1947:

During the war years, the manufacture of fine china and earthenware was inevitably restricted [...] Because of the enormous pent-up demand, decorated tableware is still in short supply and it is not always easy for the "woman of the house" to gratify her house proud instincts as quickly as she would wish. Slowly but surely none the less, British-made china and earthenware are reappearing in china shops and stores all over the world.⁷

Pent-up consumer demand in New Zealand was equal to that anywhere although government was reluctant to recognise this: Nash received a delegation from the United Kingdom Manufacturers' and New Zealand Representatives' Association expressing their concern at the reduction in import licenses for 1948 for goods from the United Kingdom. Nash's response was equivocal: 'if essentiality and availability could be proven [...] licenses would be granted, so long as funds were available' adding that "If we lifted the lid off [...] there would not be any money

left in the United Kingdom next year”.⁸ In an attempt to remedy the import deficiency, without recourse to the local product, the Farmers’ department store despatched the manager of its Thrift Department to Japan in 1947 ‘to investigate supplies from that country. His first call was on the New Zealand Trade Representative in Tokyo and then he visited potteries and factories in Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto and elsewhere.’⁹ Likewise in 1951 the DIC board agreed that ‘more use should be made of senior and experienced buyers. Mrs Murphy travelled to Europe to buy china, spending about £20,000 in Britain and £10,000 on the continent.’¹⁰ Mrs Murphy’s audacious decision to spend a third of her budget on non-British ceramics was not only pragmatic in that it both reflected the direction of government policy and sourced goods from ‘soft currency’ countries but also symptomatic both of the diminishing impact of British manufacturers in the world market and the emergence of changing domestic taste.

Shifting the retail base

Retailing too was changing: in 1948 a returned serviceman, Dan Pierce opened a shop specialising in ceramics, the Art of the Potter, in the north shore Auckland suburb of Takapuna; he opened another shop subsequently, Patrick Pierce, in Victoria Street West in Auckland city. As the *New Zealand Herald* later reported, this was ‘an era when silver and crystal were admired and pottery was regarded by many as crude ware.’¹¹ It was the first of a number of specialist stores such as Brenner Associates and John Crichton in Auckland and Stockton’s—‘modern design at its very best’—in Wellington that sprang up in the larger cities and which, unlike long-established china shops such as John Bates and Tanfield, Potter & Co, relied on appearance, rather than place of origin, for commercial advantage.¹² Typically, the rationale behind the establishment of these shops was exposure to architectural modernism, whether first hand or through publications, Pierce however claimed to have been inspired by visits to London museums during and after World War II. Pierce was fortunate in being relatively well off and, as a returned serviceman, in a position to secure new import licenses. The shop’s stock was catholic and included both industrially-produced wares as well as the work of studio potters; from Swedish factories such as Rörstrand and Gustavsberg to the work of the Austrian-born, British-domiciled potter Lucie Rie. Later it also stocked work by the New Zealand studio potters Len Castle and Peter Stitchbury. British manufactures were also sold—Pierce held an agency for the small Dorset pottery Branksome Ltd—as were mass-manufactured vernacular Chinese wares.¹³ Its customers were predominantly young and middle class, often travelled, and less inclined to subscribe automatically to the dictum that buying British was a

guarantee of quality; the shop was described in *Home & Building* as ‘one of the well-known haunts of those who appreciate lovely things, whether for the kitchen, the dining table or just to look at.’¹⁴ The *Design Review*’s columnist ‘Sharawag’ suggested that this change in retailing might be attributed to ‘the influence of new store design in the States, which has been so amply illustrated in American architectural magazines.’¹⁵

By the time of the November 1949 election, the electorate was increasingly viewing the government’s economic stabilisation measures as irksome. Sidney Holland, the National party leader, declared that ‘Labour is the SHORTAGE government’. Opposition to import restrictions formed a key plank in National policy:

We will allow the people, not the State, to decide what they shall buy, and how they will spend their money. We will abolish restrictions on the importation of goods from Britain that cannot be economically produced in our own factories. To help Britain we will reinstate the system of Empire preferences.¹⁶

Holland’s evocation of a mythical cornucopia of imperial goods flowing into New Zealand, in contrast to the austerities of socialism, was not only manna to the British manufacturers but also a vote winner. The National party was elected with a twelve-seat majority, remaining in power until 1957. In pursuit of its election promise ‘to help Britain we will reinstate the system of Empire preferences. We will establish a non-political Board of Trade, as approved by farmers and manufacturers alike’ the National party government re-established a New Zealand Board of Trade in 1950.¹⁷ But while advocating a reduction in government involvement in what it regarded as the exclusive preserves of the private sector it was also committed to maintaining the former administration’s regime of full employment. Thus, in implementing a 1950 decision to lift license requirements for three hundred items, including certain categories of table china and earthenware, it also moved to ensure a level of protection for local industry, including Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd (formerly Ambrico) and, notwithstanding the protestations of the importers, retaining restrictions on the importation of cheaper wares. In reporting this decision, the *Pottery Gazette* noted that the United Kingdom secretary of state for overseas trade, A G Bottomley, was pronouncing that ‘exports of pottery to Commonwealth countries are much less important than exports to dollar areas’ and that ‘the recent



Fig. 10 Patrick Pierce advertisement for Rörstrand ceramics, published in the October to December 1953 issues of *Home & Building*.

news from New Zealand has the makings of a first class muddle, and the sooner the position is clarified, the better for all concerned.’¹⁸ In terms of the export of British ceramics though, Holland’s rallying cry for the maintenance of ‘our traditional ties with Great Britain’ and his assertion that ‘we stand for the British Empire and its way of life’ was falling on deaf ears, in Britain at least.

Notwithstanding the protestations of the importers and the imperial nostalgia of the new government, the ‘muddle’ can best be seen as evidence of a changing shift in local perceptions that—maybe—British ceramics were no longer ‘best’. Beatrice Ashton commenting on a display of Swedish ceramics for the modernist periodical the *New Zealand Design Review*, observed unsurprisingly ‘I thought of the rows and rows of atrocious and expensive vases and figurines and china dogs that have survived the import regulations and found this restriction on these simple and very inexpensive things quite baffling.’¹⁹ But more trenchant criticism came from an unexpected quarter: in the July 1952 House of Representatives address in reply debate a National party government backbencher, T P Shand, declared:

It is only after long thought that I criticize in this House our people in the Old Country [...] we cannot allow our loyalty to blind ourselves to the weaknesses which are weaknesses in the fabric. I say again that the one thing the English people must do is to have a look at their manufacturing industries—every branch of them—and see that they make the term “Made in England” the honourable sign that it still is in some lines and used to be in all.

More specifically, he observed:

I say to the English manufacturer and his agent in New Zealand that they are doing a very bad turn when they put rubbish on the market [...] The really standard brands of English crockery are good, but we have had some shocking rubbish by way of English crockery in the last three or four years, though I do not think it is coming in so much now. Concerning that crockery I think it is fair to say that the New Zealand manufacturers of crockery got blamed for some of it.²⁰

The changing attitudes of consumers towards British manufactured ceramics was informed both by a perception of deteriorating quality and by increasing coverage of the ‘good’ design debate, largely but not exclusively, in architectural journals: one of the earliest references in New Zealand to ‘the importance of good design’ appeared in an article written in 1948 by Norma K Metson, a rural sociologist with the Department of Agriculture for the *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*; it was written in reaction to a touring exhibition of British rural handcrafts organised by the British Council.²¹

¹ NA (PRO), BT11/3717, Great Britain. Board of Trade, New Zealand, Letter from W Nash to Stafford Cripps, enclosing a list of New Zealand requirements from the UK, dated 23 January 1947.

- 2 'Exporting to New Zealand: is a reduction necessary?' *PGGTR*, vol. 72, no. 845 (November 1947), p. 901.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 John W Waterer, 'Design for overseas trade in consumer goods', *Design*, vol. 1, no. 11 (November 1949), (pp. 9-13), 9.
- 5 'New import embargo: dictatorship by Customs excludes British cups and saucers', *Freedom*, 12 February 1947, p. 1.
- 6 NA (PRO), BT 11/4046, Great Britain. Board of Trade, New Zealand: Development of secondary industries, 1945-47: Telegram from New Zealand (H C) to D O, dated 18 February 1947. The telegram notes that the 'wholesale cost of plain English cups and saucers is 14/1d a dozen; wholesale price of New Zealand-made cups and saucers will be approximately 21/- a dozen.'
- 7 'Tableware for the modern home', *Ceramics in art and industry*, no. 5 (1947), (pp. 6-20), 6-7.
- 8 'Imports of British ware into New Zealand', *PGGTR*, vol. 73, no. 854 (August 1948), 726.
- 9 Kay, p. 274.
- 10 Parry, p. 48.
- 11 'Pottery shop to close', *NZH*, 19 December 1972, p. 1:2.
- 12 A former customer of Crichton's recalled that he was 'A funny little fat man with good ideas, who knew how to make things happen.' FMW Thompson, pers. com. 5 December 2003.
- 13 Marjorie Lowe, pers. com, 13 July 2003.
- 14 Rosemary Ennor, 'You saw this on our cover', *H&B*, vol. 18, no. 7 (December 1955), (pp. 7-8), 8.
- 15 Sharawag, 'Brighter shops', *NZDR*, vol. 4, no. 3 (June-July 1952), p. 52.
- 16 *Real prosperity the National way* [1949] pamphlet reproduced in: S E Fraser, 'The 1949 general election' (MA thesis, University of Otago, 1967), p. 186, Appendix 5.
- 17 Ibid., p. 186.
- 18 'The New Zealand muddle', *PGGTR*, vol. 75, no. 882 (December 1950), p. 1813.
- 19 Beatrice Ashton, 'Craftsman from Sweden in Havelock North', *NZDR*, vol. 5, no. 5 (October-November 1952), (pp. 116-117), 116.
- 20 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *NZPD: Second session, thirtieth Parliament*, vol. 297, (25 June-15 August 1952), (pp. 84-87), 86-87. The *PGGTR* reporting Shand's comments commented in admonishing terms: 'The New Zealand MP, Mr Shane (*sic*), who apparently wished to stir up trouble between British pottery manufacturers and the trade in his own country [...] would seem to have acted impetuously, to say the least.' It also published a letter from Gaynor Jackson of the Auckland import house, F E Jackson & Co Ltd: 'As one of the largest importers in New Zealand of English domestic crockery over the last 62 years, I say unhesitatingly that I cannot support the comments made in the House by Mr Shand. The quality of English china and earthenware has continued to be satisfactory. During the war years there was perhaps a falling off in the inspection and selection before shipment, but over recent years there has been no cause for complaint, except in a few isolated instances [...] However, there can be no general complaint on the question of quality, which continues to be good.' See: 'Complaint unfounded', , p. 1403.
- 21 Norma K Metson, 'Importance of good design', *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, no. 77 (November 1948), (pp.535-536), 535.

8.6 Mediating the modern

It is no generalisation to suggest that, until at least the mid 1930s, there was little—if any—discussion of the design of manufactured commodities in the New Zealand media; any consciousness of design as a theoretical issue was necessarily derived from overseas sources and thus—like the designed commodities themselves—was imported. Likewise, it is difficult to identify either what printed material was imported or its readership base: certain British publications—such as the *Studio* and the *Architectural Review*—were subscribed to by art schools, the solitary school of architecture, in Auckland, and established professionals, but their distribution was limited and their influence circumscribed in a provincial society with conservative tastes. However, it is most probable that the earliest references to ‘good design’ found in New Zealand emerged through the pages of these British journals, most notably the *Architectural Review*.¹ Justine Clark and Paul Walker record architects as subscribing to imported journals as early as 1900 but observe that ‘New Zealand architects knew more about what was happening architecturally in Europe than in other New Zealand provinces or in Australia.’² But—at least until 1936—the wider public was generally excluded from access to both visual and textual information that might influence either their choice of the commodities they bought, or what they might wish to buy.

Debating the absent

In April 1948 the Architecture Centre Inc, a Wellington-based organisation established in 1946 to promote architectural modernism, launched its polemical organ, the *New Zealand Design Review*. From the outset it was unequivocal about its allegiances: it was published by ‘people who share the belief that the purpose of things made and planned presupposes good design as necessary for fulfilment (sic) of living.’³ And its stated purpose was ‘to interest the lay public in the elements of good design’⁴ by endeavouring ‘to bring to the notice of New Zealanders not only things of good design but also to point out to New Zealanders those things which are considered bad design.’⁵ Its editorial board pronounced ‘we offer no apologies for adding to the current literature upon design. Too little of it finds its way into this country and much of that which does is couched in terms familiar to its own European or American audience.’⁶ The first issue comprised six pages and had a print run of four hundred and fifty copies: one hundred and fifty were circulated to the members of the centre and three hundred were distributed, gratis, to ‘all known architects and town planners in New Zealand’; the second issue invited

subscriptions and, additionally, was retailed through 'selected Wellington book shops'; the third issue, produced in September 1948, was again forwarded gratis, this time to 'Art Societies and manufacturers etc.' From extant evidence it cannot be determined who these manufacturers (of things) were let alone how they reacted to a journal that had a primary focus on architectural modernism although it might be reasonable to deduce that they included those companies listed in the 1939 directory published by the Department of Industries and Commerce and thus would have included Ambrico. Contacts were made with industry: the eighth issue carried an interview with R H Stewart, managing director of Plastics and Diecasting Ltd a Christchurch manufacturer 'who supplied us with his views on design for the manufacture of goods in New Zealand, an account of his factory and, most important, samples of his wares.'⁷ The bulk of the company's production lay in plastic electrical hardware, designed by Stewart as 'manufacturing here being in its infancy there do not appear to be first class industrial designers with adequate knowledge.' Furthermore, the article observed that 'the workshops where these articles are made are themselves the subject of care and planning.' Stewart was to be the only manufacturer interviewed in the *Design Review* although the previous issue had contained an article on radio cabinets made by Philips Electrical Industries that were 'mostly models exclusive to New Zealand and are designed here by a[n anonymous] qualified architect'. In his editorial for the same issue, E C Simpson declared that while industrial design in the United Kingdom had been reawakened by the post-war export drive, 'the New Zealand manufacturer [...] is not likely to re-design his wares while he cannot produce enough to satisfy the market and is short of staff. He is going to need much persuasion even then.'⁸

In a sense, the manufacturers (of things) had already flagged an awareness of the 'good design' debate: articles on the importance of design were published in the manufacturers' section of the *New Zealand National Review* in 1945 and 1946 and in *Commerce* in 1947. And in 1949 a progressively titled journal, *Modern Manufacturing* was launched in Auckland: its second issue carried a provocatively argued article on industrial design under the corporate authorship of Brenner



Fig. 11 Mervyn Taylor; cover for the 'Industrial Design Number' of the *New Zealand Design Review*, vol. 2, no. 1, June-July 1949. The University of Auckland Library, Architecture Library.

Associates, an Auckland-based firm of architects, designers and, eventually, retailers. The article asserted that the failure of local manufacturers to recognise design as a factor in production resulted from the intervention of the state in the market place:

The average New Zealand manufacturer is well aware of the invisible but powerful label his goods too often carry, “Made in New Zealand”. Though he may claim—in the majority of cases rightly so—that the implied slur is unjust, it nevertheless remains an intangible barrier to the consumer’s acceptance to his products in a free market. All too frequently the manufacturer and his executives are vaguely aware of the fact that their products are not all that they could be, but they are lulled into silence by the comforting assurance that foreign products are excluded from this market by a benevolent government hell-bent on mothering the country out of existence.⁹

While the point being made might be regarded as an eerie foretaste of an argument that would become all too common some thirty years later it was, in fact, a variation on the contemporary complaints of more traditional importers: Brenner Associates were not only architects and interior designers but also retailers and much of their stock was imported. Extrapolated from the rhetoric was an underlying conviction that ‘good design’ could be perceived only in overseas commodities and that, without access to these ‘prototypes’, local manufacturers would fail to produce well-designed products.

Reflecting, obliquely, the impact that European refugees from the political turmoil in Europe during the 1930s and 40s had on design in New Zealand, the *New Zealand Listener* published in 1946 an interview by Howard Wadman—sometime editor of the *New Zealand Year Book of the Arts*—with the London-based Czech textile printers Zika and Lida Ascher.¹⁰ The Aschers had no connection with New Zealand other than the unexplained detail that ‘some of the results [of their work] were on show recently in Wellington.’¹¹ To this was added the comment that ‘The renaissance in the arts in Britain has overflowed into the sphere of industry and commerce and some of the results will, in time, be seen in New Zealand.’ The Anglo-centric tone of Wadman’s commentary reflected the manner in which what was perceived of as ‘foreign’ in the barely recognised modernist debate was marginalised: as Wadman observed, the Aschers were ‘fortunate’ that that their refugee status coincided with ‘a decided renaissance in the arts of Britain.’ It was, presumably, through the vector of Britain that this ‘renaissance’ might, one day, occur in New Zealand. But if the *Listener’s* audience represented mainstream New Zealand culture, it was only in the limited circulation *Design Review* that European modernism found anything resembling an authentic voice in New Zealand.

The *Design Review* was prompt to declare its interest in the design of ceramics. In its 'Industrial design number' published in the wake of a tour of New Zealand by the British industrial designer Milner Gray in 1949¹² it published an anonymously written article 'Cups, saucers and teapots' espousing the 'good design' dogma that plain is good and contending that local retailers were more than inclined to promote a traditional aesthetic: "'Oh?" said the shop assistant in a superior fashion, "that plain one is only fit for kitchen-ware. Now here is a really nice one, inlaid gold on it too, quite exclusive."'"¹³ Illustrated with photographs provided by the CoID, the article concluded with the assertion that:

Well-designed cups and saucers and teapots are being made but New Zealanders see them generally as illustrations in overseas magazines, seldom in our shop windows. Buyers for the large firms may be blamed, though it seems likely that they buy only what they know will sell. As with so many other examples of bad taste in this country "the fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves, that we are underlings."

This self-consciousness of what design might be elsewhere, as mediated through the pages of 'overseas magazines', framed the 'good design' debate in the *Design Review*. Unlike other fields in which a modernist aesthetic could be employed in New Zealand—such as architecture or even the crafts—industrial design, as it applied to the manufacture of ceramics, was perceived as an unrealisable chimera: through the commercialism and 'bad taste' of the 'buyers' these items were almost impossible to see, let alone purchase. No mention was made in the article of local manufactures, presumably due to the presence of those same factors in the infant industry. It might be contended that the 'good design' debate in New Zealand was predicated on the ubiquity of 'bad design' whose presence made the absence of the former all the more desirable. In what appears to have been an attempt to provoke a reaction amongst his readers, Simpson identified the enemies of 'good design' in an editorial for the same issue, 'Know your enemies'. The enemy was, he argued, to be found everywhere: 'Men and women who are fully conscious of literature, music or painting are totally indifferent to sign writing, the type on a printed sheet, or to modern furniture design.' They were susceptible to: 'cheapness first', 'unnecessary novelty', and 'De Luxe Glory'. Moreover:

The cult of Arty-Crafty is responsible for the horrors of "Ye Olde Worlde". They are (*sic*) almost as objectionable as "Ultra-Modernism", armoured in chromium plate and faintly suggestive of Cubism, particularly popular with those whose homes are likely to be photographed for social publicity.¹⁴

Two other design-related periodicals espoused the modernist cause in New Zealand: the Auckland-based *Home & Building*, launched in 1936 as *Building Today*, and the aforementioned *Year Book of the Arts*, published from Wellington between 1945 and 1951. Like the *Design Review*, *Home & Building* had an architectural focus

and, in default of an alternative, was the principal organ for disseminating locally the work of members of the New Zealand Institute of Architects.¹⁵ Notwithstanding this apparent veneer of professional rectitude, it was aimed primarily at a domestic audience—although, on the basis of its correspondence column, it also appears to have had an extensive Australian readership—and its staple fodder comprised of ‘modern’ suburban residences and gardens interspersed with hints for the home handy person. This somewhat lean diet was leavened by the occasional article on ‘industrial’ design, lifted largely from overseas publications: conventionally British but, on one occasion, North American. It was ‘a magazine devoted to all who are interested in homes and gardens, architecture, decoration, furnishing and building’ and it was ‘edited and produced under the auspices of the New Zealand Institute of Architects’. *Home & Building* too suffered from the agony of displacement from the metropolitan centre. In its March 1950 issue it publicised the ‘Design at work’ exhibition on the work of ‘Royal Designers for Industry’ held at the Royal Academy in London, apologising that ‘although now some twelve months old [the exhibition] offers many points of interest for readers throughout Australia and New Zealand [...] in accordance with [the magazine’s] policy of not only illustrating the best examples of design but also giving due honour to the designers.’¹⁶

No matter their apparently different approaches, the significance of both *Design Review* and *Home & Building* lies in their self-perceived roles as arbiters of design issues, as indigenous vehicles for the dissemination of design practice in New Zealand and, most significantly, in their espousal of the dialectic of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ design, the very indicators of their adherence to the modernist canon.¹⁷ It is noteworthy that in its earliest statement of purpose *Home & Building* avoided the use of the term ‘design’ in favour of an almost nineteenth century description of the design process, ‘decoration’; given the magazine’s later misunderstandings of the concept of design it might be considered an accurate slip. Its ‘architectural editors’ stressed their ‘home’ connections and qualifications: H R D McGowan proudly advertised his standing as an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, while his co-editor, Clifford Sanderson, a graduate of the Auckland architecture school, trumped him with a diploma in town planning from the University of London and an associate membership of the Town Planners Institute (London).

Reinforcing the modernist message proclaimed by the magazines, a range of slim architectural monographs were produced under the aegis of the Government Architect’s office from 1936, culminating in 1947 with E A Plischke’s *Design and*

living, a didactic text declaring itself as ‘an attempt to show that we of the twentieth century can live our ordinary everyday lives in an environment properly designed for the purpose.’¹⁸ Notwithstanding this body of local publications — which Justine Clark and Paul Walker, amongst others, have described as being uniquely influential in the history of New Zealand architecture — the profession remained in thrall to Richardson’s *Architectural Review*; for the greater number of architectural practitioners the United Kingdom was still the principal locus of design thinking and tradition held sway: Clark and Walker comment that the *Architectural Review* was regarded as ‘the bible’ of the New Zealand architectural profession. The Anglocentric tone of both the *New Zealand Design Review* and *Home & Building* was hardly surprising: like the contemporaneous manufacturers’ journals, much of their copy, particularly as it related to ‘design issues’ was derived uncritically from both the publications of the CoID and, later, its photographic bureau.¹⁹ The very name of the *Design Review* was derived from the eponymous section of the *Architectural Review* — it also echoed the title of another local publication, the *New Zealand Science Review*. Possibly less influenced by its publisher’s taste for ‘baroque modernism’, the ‘Design Review’ section of the *Architectural Review* was moderated by a committee of the great and good of contemporary British design matters including the cartoonist Osbert Lancaster, the architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner and the then ubiquitous Milner Gray. The latter two were to make tours of New Zealand under the aegis of the British Council: Gray in March–April 1949 and Pevsner in August 1958. British journals espousing design-related issues also available in New Zealand included the *Studio* and its related title *Art & Industry* (formerly *Commercial Art*); both these publications were distributed by the booksellers and printers Whitcombe & Tombs. But probably the most influential of British design related publications in post-war New Zealand was the *Studio* annual *Decorative Arts*. Its compilation issue *Decorative Arts 1943-1948* was welcomed enthusiastically by *Home & Building*, which re-published a selection of photographs, along with extracts from the introduction ‘by Robert W Symonds LRIBA’ in March 1949.²⁰ The *Decorative Arts 1949* annual was reviewed in the same journal’s August–September issue where its contents ‘with examples gathered from countries as far afield as Great Britain, Canada, USA, Northern Ireland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Holland, Germany, Hungary, Mexico and Java’ were described as ‘an unalloyed delight’. As well, from its first publication in 1949, a number of New Zealand libraries appear to have subscribed to the CoID’s *Design* magazine. The exposure these publications provided to a non-British world, albeit moderated through British publications, was one of the factors liberating consumers from an hitherto uncritical acceptance of British, or British-inspired, manufactured commodities.²¹

Notwithstanding the tenor of the debate as published in the New Zealand press or as reflected in those imported British publications, it would be erroneous to conclude that the United Kingdom was the sole primary source of what amounted to the design debate in New Zealand. Students and European refugees debated modernist issues and non-British literature, including American interior design magazines such as *House Beautiful* and *Better Homes and Gardens*, became available in restricted quantities soon after the end of the World War II. And from 1952, the Auckland School of Architecture library began expanding its subscription base to include European periodicals such as Gio Ponti's *Domus* and the influential French journal *l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. The Czech refugee Kurt Leser opened a bookshop in Newmarket with a focus on architectural and design titles; Marjorie Lowe, who would later open a 'design' shop in Auckland, recalls ordering Talbot Hamlin's 1952 modernist history *Forms and functions of twentieth century architecture* soon after its publication; however, disconcerted by its north American focus, she subsequently gave it to the School of Architecture library.²²

The *Design Review* ceased publication in 1954 with the completion of its fifth volume. In a notice to members, the Architectural Centre's committee attributed this decision to 'the continued losses in the cost of publication and the fact that the Government Grant will cease.' In fact, the Centre had delegated responsibility for production and financing of the periodical to the Wellington graphic designer E Mervyn Taylor in 1950, to his 'extreme financial disadvantage'. With a final circulation base of 662 subscriptions it was obvious that it would never break even without some form of assistance; an approach to the minister for Internal Affairs for a grant of £250 was rejected as not being in keeping with government policy. Graham Dawson, one of the financial backers of the *Design Review*, in a letter to the secretary of the Centre, mourned its passing:

It seems a great pity that the magazine had to cease but it was only because of hard & unselfish work by various people at various times that it survived as long as it did. During the time it was produced I am satisfied that its influence was considerable & that the effort that went into it was well worth while.²³

But the magazine's modernist agenda found little favour with a government that rejected resolutely both its explicit championing of 'the arts' and its implied support of state control. For the National government, the connections between art and industry were at best tenuous and while it had adopted the Labour policy of full employment, with its concomitant support for manufacturing industry, such matters were best dealt with by the private sector: its policy, as the prime minister Sidney Holland affirmed, was for 'private ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.'²⁴

- 1 See footnote 1, p. 102.
- 2 Justine Clark and Paul Walker, *Looking for the local: architecture and the New Zealand modern*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2000), p. 16.
- 3 'What is the Architectural Centre?' *NZDR*, vol. 1, no. 6 (April-May 1949), p. 17.
- 4 ATL, MS-Papers-2278-31, Architectural Centre (Wellington), Design Review, 1950-1956: 'Notes upon the history of "New Zealand Design Review"'.
- 5 Ibid. : Draft letter to Department of Internal Affairs, [1952].
- 6 'Editorial', *NZDR*, vol. 1, no. 1 (April 1948), p. 1.
- 7 'A New Zealand manufacturer has sound progressive views', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 2 (August-September 1949), (pp. 35-36), 35.
- 8 E C Simpson, 'A gleam on the horizon', Ibid., p. 2.
- 9 Brenner Associates, 'Industrial design', *Modern Manufacturing*, vol. 1, no. 2 (August 1949), (pp. 11-13), 12.
- 10 The Aschers were the subject of an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1987. See: Valerie Mendes, Frances Hinchcliffe and Patrick Yapp, *Ascher: Zika and Lida Ascher; fabric, art, fashion*, (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1987).
- 11 Howard Wadman, 'Art comes under the yard-stick', *New Zealand Listener*, vol. 15, no. 373 (16 August 1946), (pp. 6-7), 6.
- 12 See p. 142.
- 13 'Cups, saucers and teapots', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp. 4-5), 4.
- 14 E C Simpson, 'Know your enemies', Ibid., no. 6 (May-June 1950), p. 119.
- 15 A brief publishing history of *Home & Building* is given in: Shaw and Brookes, 'Constructing homes: gender and advertising in *Home and Building*, 1936-1970', (201-206).
- 16 "Design at work" exhibition; the work of the Royal Designers for Industry', *H&B*, vol. 12, no. 4 (Feb-March 1950), (pp. 33-61), 33.
- 17 See Ernst Plischke's comment that 'Sometimes I read articles or listen to people discussing the growth of an "indigenous" New Zealand style for houses [...] But I never know quite what to think-I feel uneasy and wonder what is really meant by it. In the back of my mind I cannot forget how this word "indigenous" has been misused by reactionaries all over the world.' E A Plischke, 'Two houses', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 5 (February-March 1950), (pp. 93-94), 93.
- 18 Ernst Plischke, *Design and living*, (Wellington: [New Zealand] Department of Internal Affairs, 1947).
- 19 Catherine Moriarty, 'A backroom service?: the photographic library of the Council of Industrial Design', *Journal of Design History*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2000), (pp. 39-57), 43.
- 20 Robert W Symonds, 'Design in industry and the home', *H&B*, vol. 11, no. 4 (March 1949), (pp. 57-59), 57-59.
- 21 An article by Richard Sharell published in the journal *Education* in 1949 provides a bibliography that reflects what was available in New Zealand at that date: with one exception all references were British. It comprised three texts by Anthony Bertram (*Design, Design in Daily Life* and *The House: a Machine for Living*) and Herbert Read (*Education through Art, Art and Industry* and *To Hell with Culture*) respectively and single volumes by John Gloag (*Design in Modern Life*), Noel Carrington (*Design*), John Betjeman (*Ghastly Good Taste*), Clough William Ellis (*The Pleasure of Architecture*), Percy A Wells (*Design in Woodwork*) and a sole United States reference by J Edgar Kaufmann (*What is Modern Design?*). Two journals are cited: *Design for Industry* and the CoID publication *Design*. See: Richard Sharell, 'Perpetuation of ugliness', *Education*, vol. 2, no. 3 (July 1949), pp. 306-309.
- 22 Marjorie Lowe, pers. com., 13 July 2003. Lowe recalls that it cost the, then phenomenal, sum of £200; it was given to the school in February 1955.
- 23 Architectural Centre (Wellington), Letter from Graham Dawson to Denis Bastings, dated 06 December 1954.
- 24 A D Robinson, 'The rise of the New Zealand National Party, 1936-1949' (MA thesis, Political Science, Victoria University of Wellington, 1957), p. 194.

8.7 A revolution in aesthetics: Milner Gray's Antipodean tour

The deference shown by the New Zealand media to British concepts of design is exemplified by its response to a lecture tour of Australia and New Zealand undertaken by Milner Gray in 1949.¹ Recruited by the British Council, Gray was described as 'a designer for silver, lettering, etc [...], is associated with the Society of Industrial Artists, Design Research Unit, the Council of Industrial Design and is a Royal Designer for Industry.'² He had also been a participant in the 1934 Pottery Board of the British Council for Art in Industry initiative to involve artists in the design of tableware. This resulted in a collaboration between the 'progressive' ceramic manufacturers A J Wilkinson Ltd and E Brain & Co Ltd and a number of British artists such as Laura Knight and Graham Sutherland to develop a range of decorated tableware that was exhibited at Harrods department store. Gray had already developed connections with both manufacturers: A J Wilkinson produced his 'Whoopee' pattern under its popular 'Clarice Cliff' label and E Brain his 'Convolvulus' pattern under its, equally popular, 'Foley China' brand.³

Notwithstanding the fact that the idea for a tour with a focus on industrial design originated with the British Council, rather than the CoID who were consulted later, Gray's lecture programme was driven by the rhetoric of 'good design' in what amounted to a British effort to counter United States propaganda in Australia and New Zealand. By being identified with the 'progressive' field of industrial design, Gray was projected by the British cultural authorities as being 'modern'; there was no requirement to emphasise the traditional links between the United Kingdom and her former colony. And while his carefully scripted speeches and comments on design exploited a legacy of deference to Britain, neither he nor his controllers were unaware of the increasing influence of American interests in the South Pacific. Indeed, the British Council's decision to open an office in Wellington had been catalysed by the alarm expressed by the British High Commissioner at a decision by United States government to use the US\$5 million it received in settlement of lend lease arrangements from the New Zealand government to acquire real estate and to further cultural relations between the two Pacific nations.⁴ Gray's presence in New Zealand can be viewed as part of a concerted effort by British cultural and trade authorities to reassert their presence in the aftermath of Empire.



Fig. 12 Sparrow Pictures, 'Milner Gray', *New Zealand Listener*, 22 April 1949.

Importing the debate

The tour was organised at the request of the British Council's representatives in Australia and New Zealand for a 'lecturer in industrial design'. Consulted as to whom they might recommend for the assignment the CoID enquired of the Council 'Is a talker and propagandist wanted? Would, for example, Bill Newman, editor of "Store" do? Or do you think it should be a practicing designer?'⁵ Gray was recruited eventually — at no fee — not only in recognition of his current presidency of the Society of Industrial Artists but also, possibly, due to his professional association with Herbert Read, one of the better-known publicists of modernism and a partner with Gray and Misha Black in Design Research Unit, the first British interdisciplinary design consultancy. The Council reported that 'the most important part of his work was to be informal discussions with Industrial Artists, Manufacturers and the government officials concerned about the greater recognition of Industrial Artists.' But earlier and more pertinently, Cyclic Tomrley the design advice officer of the industrial division of the CoID, in an internal memorandum to Mark Hartland Thomas, had observed that the Council was:

Very anxious to get a practical speaker with a knowledge of the distributive and selling side of consumer goods as well as of the design side, so that he is equipped to inform and enlighten any sort of audience even the specialist trade audiences and students of design, rather than discuss the social and theoretical aspect of industrial design. Miss Merriman [of the British Council] emphasised this as it is rather the opposite of what one would expect of the British Council with their cultural bias.⁶

Arriving in March 1949, Gray delivered a series of lectures in Auckland and Wellington that were reported not only in the local press and on the radio but also reprinted in abridged form in *Design Review*⁷ and in the *New Zealand Manufacturer*.⁸ The nationalist critic, lecturer, poet and textile printer A R D Fairburn interviewed Gray for the *New Zealand Listener* in terms verging on adulation: 'He has done more, perhaps, than any other man to raise the profession of industrial designing to its present high status.'⁹

One of Gray's principal aims in undertaking the tour was to promote the role and function of the recently established CoID. He noted that its establishment had been driven by recognition that 'design was a vital factor in our post-war trade' and that 'the urgent need to increase our exports has focused on design as a sales factor of equal importance to the technical efficiency and sound workmanship of our manufactures'.¹⁰ In his public comments, Gray would represent the CoID as being not only a promotional tool for trade but, more by implication than assertion, a mechanism for asserting a form of quality control over manufacture. But Council

hopes that Gray's visit might prompt a discussion of the role of design with government officials came to nothing. There is no indication that any contact of substance occurred in New Zealand: the British Council representative, John Bostock, noted apologetically that 'owing to pressure of other business, it was impossible for the Minister of Education and for the Minister of Industries and Commerce to meet Mr Gray'. Instead he lunched with the governor general, Sir Bernard Freyberg, and attended 'a small cocktail party given by Mr Vernon Brown, architect and lecturer at the University, and attended by representatives of the University [...] and the Auckland Manufacturers' Association.' It is perhaps an indication of the weakness of its recently established industrial division that Gray received merely 'a request from the DSIR [...] that the British Council should provide a small travelling Exhibition to illustrate good design.' This request was followed up by the CoID who despatched a panel illustrating the functions of the Council to New Zealand where it was exhibited in the New Zealand government court at the 1949 New Zealand Industries Fair in Hamilton and later displayed at an unidentified venue in Auckland.¹¹ Tellingly, no further action seems to have been taken by either party, possibly due to the change of government in New Zealand that occurred later that year. By way of contrast, in Australia, Gray noted in his post-visit report that:

Particular interest was shown by officers of the Division of Industrial Development of the Federal Department of Post-War Reconstruction on the work of the Council of Industrial Design (CoID) and the means adopted in Great Britain to organise our design resources and to improve the design standard of manufactured articles [...] I saw and discussed this matter with the Minister, Mr J J Dedman in Canberra. ¹²

The ministry pursued the matter in a letter to the Council stating that it was Australian government's policy 'to do everything possible to encourage the appreciation of improved design in industry and also to encourage the application of the best principles of design in industry.' As well, Gray was requested to provide the Federal government with a report 'on his general impressions in Australia and in particular his recommendations as to the action which might be taken to stimulate an interest in this subject.' After prolonged consultations the Australian government eventually established the Industrial Design Council of Australia in 1958 under the chairmanship of Essington Lewis, then deputy chairman of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd—then Australia's largest industrial concern—with a remit to promote innovative industrial design as essential to the development of a healthy manufacturing industry.¹³ It would be another ten years before a similar organisation would be established in New Zealand, although with a more circumscribed function.

In New Zealand for twelve days, Gray's sojourn was fleeting although the four lectures he delivered were well attended attracting audiences of 'between 150 and 220' persons in Auckland and 100 in Wellington. Moreover, Bostock reported that:

The interest shown and the collaboration afforded by the Manufacturers' Association has introduced the British Council's work into a new field [and] it seems likely that steps will be taken in New Zealand to found a Society of Industrial Artists, whose members would initially be drawn from the fields of Architecture and Art, there being no recognised Industrial Design Specialists as yet in this country. Such a Society if approved and helped by the similar body in Britain, could do much to raise the standard of industrial design in New Zealand, to give New Zealand designers a recognised status and to reduce the "piracy" of designs which is at present widespread here.¹⁴

The formation of a New Zealand Society of Industrial Artists was not forthcoming until 1966 with the establishment of a professional body, the New Zealand Industrial Design Institute, although the June-July 1949 issue of *Home & Building* published extracts from a speech given to a 'luncheon meeting' of the Auckland Design Guild by Professor C R Knight, dean of the Faculty of Architecture at Auckland University College.¹⁵ Described as 'an organisation formed to bring together designers in various fields and to publicise good design' the Guild seems to have disappeared as rapidly as it was formed.

Gray's lectures espoused the standard 'good design' rhetoric. The *Auckland Star* published a short interview with Gray under the headline 'Housewives helped by good design' in which he declared that 'design is what makes a thing easy to make, easy to use and easy to look at [...] On the manufacturing side, good design should mean quantity of production, efficiency and cheapness [...] If only people would make a point of buying the best design, and of telling the shopkeeper why they buy it, the demand would automatically force producers to use better design.'¹⁶

Unsurprisingly, Gray's assertion that production necessarily responded to consumer demand went unchallenged by the reporter. Likewise, his focii on the significance of the appearance of objects and on the fetishistic significance of the 'everyday' was barely scrutinised by Fairburn, the only commentator in New Zealand who sought to place Gray's lectures into a wider, critical context. Fairburn headed his article by repeating the modernist teleology that 'The divorce between Beauty and Utility is a scandal that is two centuries old [...] The Industrial Revolution brought about a fictitious separation between the "fine arts" and the "useful arts", as they came to be called.'¹⁷ As reported in the *New Zealand Design Review*, Gray argued that:

Industry may be served by designers in two ways: in the making of its products; in the selling of them. The first is concerned with problems of production; the second with those of

distribution; the one with industry, the other with commerce. “Industrial design” is now accepted as a description of design for manufacture [it] is an essential part of a standard of quality enabling the best use to be made of available techniques and suitable material. Good design can only come through full and equal co-operation. The designer’s responsibility rests on his ability to help to produce goods which satisfy the people’s needs at a price they can afford.¹⁸

The standard of design he observed in New Zealand—or Australia—did not impress Gray¹⁹: he returned to Britain to comment that:

No Australasian style of design in mass-produced goods has yet evolved, and in most cases it is evident that little or no thought has been given to the subject. There are few competent designers practicing in either Australia or New Zealand, and the present tendency is for those of outstanding ability to emigrate to the UK or USA, where greater opportunities are offered.²⁰

In assessing the quality of production he noted in his report to Council that the general standard was not high and—pertinently to the underlying rationale for his visit—observing that: ‘Articles in the domestic field, especially household electrical equipment, very largely follows the American trend and in many cases represents goods made under license from abroad.’²¹ Gray’s visit to New Zealand seems to have resulted in few concrete measures: as requested, the CoID forwarded a propaganda panel for display at an industrial fair; an Auckland Design Guild emerged and disappeared rapidly; and his lectures were duly published in the *Design Review*, the *New Zealand Manufacturer* and *Modern Manufacturing*. The significance of the visit lay in that it prompted briefly recognition of the absence of design in New Zealand, both in the nascent design community and—ostensibly—in the equally juvenile manufacturing sector. In the aftermath of the tour the New Zealand Manufacturers’ Federation contacted the CoID requesting information and assistance and the *Design Review* could bask in the assurance that its ‘good design’ stance had metropolitan parallels and its tacit approval.²² But in practical terms, it was an ill-timed exercise: in an election year the government apparently could see no purpose in adopting Gray’s—perhaps too subtle—message that government sponsored industrial design had a role to play in industry; importers were evidently unenthusiastic about specifying for import the very ‘utility’ designs their principals in Britain were fighting; and the manufacturers seemingly could see no relevance in adding to their costs of production by employing someone to do something they could either do themselves or pirate from overseas, at no cost. And notwithstanding the publicity the tour generated, New Zealand consumers remained largely indifferent to the perceived benefits of ‘good design’: their perception of ‘good design’ was still too closely associated with deprivation and war.

- 1 Milner Connorton Gray (1899-1997) was an early and influential practitioner of industrial design in the United Kingdom and with Misha Black and Herbert Read a founder in 1943 of Design Research Unit. See: Avril Blake, *Milner Gray*, (London: [Great Britain] Design Council, 1986). Blake's short monograph does not discuss Gray's Antipodean tour.
- 2 NA (PRO), BW 83/9, British Council, Registered Files, Tours by Specialists (London Sponsored Tours), 1949, E-K, 1948-50: Request for Approval for a proposed lecture tour, dated 10th January 1949.
- 3 Rowena Pelik, 'The Harrods experiment', *Ceramics*, no. 5 (August 1987), (pp. 33-41), 36.
- 4 NA (PRO), BW 87/6, British Council, Registered Files, New Zealand, Events, tours, festivals, etc., 1946-1962: Letter from Sir Patrick Duff to P N S Mansergh, dated 17 July 1946.
- 5 Design History Research Centre Archives, Design Council Archive, 85/12, Great Britain. Council of Industrial Design, The British Council, 1948-1966: Memo from Mrs C G Tomrley to Hartland Thomas, dated 20 March 1948.
- 6 Ibid., Memo from Mrs Tomrley to Hartland Thomas, dated 06 April 1948.
- 7 Milner Gray, 'Design in everyday life'. *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp.10-12); Milner Gray, 'The industrial design profession in Great Britain', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp. 8-9); Milner Gray, 'Package design in Great Britain', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 2 (August-September 1949), (pp. 26-30); 'Milner Gray', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp. 6-7).
- 8 Milner Gray, 'Industrial design: the prelude to production', *New Zealand Manufacturer*, vol. 2, no. 5 (November 1950), (pp. 44-49), 49.
- 9 A R D Fairburn, 'Art and industry', *New Zealand Listener*, vol. 20, no. 513 (22 April 1949), (pp. 8-10), 8.
- 10 'Milner Gray', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp. 6-7), 6-7).
- 11 Great Britain. Council of Industrial Design, Letter from Muriel Rose to Gordon Russell, dated 11 November 1949.
- 12 British Council, Registered Files, Tours by Specialists (London Sponsored Tours), 1949, E-K, Letter from H P Breen, Director Division of Industrial Development, Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction to The Representative, British Council, Melbourne, dated 28 April 1949,
- 13 The Industrial Design Council of Australia was renamed the Australian Design Council in 1987 and ceased to operate in 1990.
- 14 British Council, Registered Files, Tours by Specialists (London Sponsored Tours), 1949, E-K, Letter from John Bostock to Lectures department, dated 12 April 1949.
- 15 C R Knight, 'Is good design not worth anything?' *H&B*, vol. 11, no. 6 (June-July 1949), p. 8.
- 16 'Housewives helped by good design', *AS*, 29 March 1949, p. 3.
- 17 Fairburn, (8).
- 18 Milner Gray, 'The industrial design profession in Great Britain', *NZDR*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June-July 1949), (pp. 8-9), 8-9), p. 9.
- 19 On a personal level Gray found New Zealand society backward: he cautioned a nephew migrating to New Zealand in 1952 not to expect too much in the way of a social life; the place was 'closed' during the weekends and pubs shut at 6:00 pm. P H Thompson, pers. com., 25 July 2003.
- 20 'Design in Australia', *Design*, vol. 1, no. 12 (December 1949), (pp. 13-15), 13. Gray may have been referring either to Gifford Jackson who migrated at the age of 27 to the United States in 1949 or to the architect Keith Murray although the latter rarely, if ever, identified himself as a New Zealander nor was he trained in the country. Another possibility could be Joseph Sinel (1889-1975) an Auckland-born, Elam-trained designer, reputedly the first 'industrial designer' in the USA. See: Gifford Jackson, 'Jo Sinel', *Designscape*, no. 88 (February 1977), (pp. 9-16), 9.
- 21 British Council, Registered Files, Tours by Specialists (London Sponsored Tours), 1949, E-K, Memorandum to the British Council from Milner Gray, dated 21 April 1949.
- 22 The Design Council Archive contains a CoID Index of Files that indicates a file, 214/2P New Zealand Manufacturers Federation, Information Section-Requests for information and assistance for overseas NZ, was raised. It is now missing, presumably destroyed.

8.8 Fancy fayre: Crown Lynn in the fifties

In the aftermath of World War II and with the resumption of sizeable tableware imports from the United Kingdom, it is possible that Ambrico's management might have questioned the viability of the company's continued production of poor quality, low cost tableware. But a series of decisions by a Labour government seeking to retain aspects of the wartime controlled economy in order to control inflation, maintain high levels of employment and to prevent a recurrence of the post World War I recession, included the provision of continued support for industrial manufacturing through regulatory mechanisms such as protective tariffs. These moves ensured the continued economic viability of the Ambrico concern. In 1946, anticipating a stable domestic market and hoping to build on a small export market that had been developed in Australia during the last years of World War II, the company sought to upgrade its heavily criticised production standards. Clark and another director of the company—Leonard Stevens—were despatched overseas to acquire more advanced machinery and to inspect and assess potential competition in the United Kingdom as well as in the United States.¹ Clark also sought to open up export connections in the United Kingdom where the sale of British-made decorated earthenware continued to be banned under lingering wartime emergency regulations; he argued later that it would 'fill up the gap in our production and [...] make a point [about British dominance of the New Zealand tableware market]. Unfortunately I was unable to make the point.'² It was a futile gesture, driven more by hubris than opportunity: the revaluation of the New Zealand pound in 1948 brought about both the collapse of both nascent export sectors and prompted an increase in domestic consumption of higher-priced imported goods. Ambrico's domestic position was further compromised with the advent of the Holland National government in December 1949 and a subsequent relaxation of import controls. In order to re-position the company's production within this changed market, Ambrico took on a new identity, re-designing not only its output but also its corporate profile. Even so, Clark would later describe the period between 1950 and 1960 as the company's nadir: 'we weren't getting any support and imports were rolling in [...] we had a continual cash flow crisis and had to shorten (*sic*) staff and liquidate stock by order of the bank.'³ But notwithstanding the easing of import restrictions and the high price of imported wares, locally produced tableware did retain a level of protection. The problems the company faced were of a different order: a non-recognition of design as a factor in its production, a dependence on a protected market, the use of redundant technology, indifferent marketing strategies and, as Clark later recognised, a low level of capitalisation.

Pirating design

In 1948 the board of directors of Ambrico Ltd made a decision to separate the pottery division from the company's brick, pipe and tile production, forming it into a nominally separate company with a new identity, Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd, a change of image that sought consciously to imitate the well-known names of English potteries: Crown Clarence; Crown Devon; Crown Dresden; Crown Ducal; Crown Manor; and Crown Staffordshire. Its earliest productions were branded with English-sounding names—unabashedly in contravention of proprietorial rights—and it embarked on the production of imitations of British shapes and patterns: its 'Fancy Fayre' brand comprised rudimentary copies of the popular 'Carlton Ware'—produced by Wiltshaw & Robinson Ltd—and 'Crown Devon'—produced by S Fielding & Co Ltd—brands; the name itself echoed the 'Fancies Fayre' of P E Bairstow & Co. Backstamps on these wares deliberately concealed their New Zealand origin: rather in the manner of post-war Hong Kong manufactures, they were marked as 'British' or 'Empire' products. From the first, Crown Lynn fought to ensure a local market by maximising protection of its production by imitating what it sought protection from and through the adversarial maintenance of import controls. The re-valuation of the New Zealand pound in 1948 stripped the company of what amounted to a twenty-five per cent subsidy on production, leaving it overstocked with un-saleable product: prior to re-valuation the company had exported £100,000 worth of goods to Australia.⁴ Its reaction to the oversupply was to export its surplus at heavily discounted rates and to seek aggressively the abolition of British preferential tariffs. The surplus was not distributed locally as, by doing so, it would have affected adversely the prices already established for its products and, as noted previously, there was a high level of consumer resistance to the product. Crown Lynn was adamant that its wares, although aimed at the lower level of the consumer spectrum, should be comparatively priced with imported items.

In 1945 the company appointed its first modeller, David Jenkin, who was recruited from the Elam School of Art probably on the recommendation of A J C Fisher, the school's director and, according to Douglas Lloyd Jenkins, the originator of Ambrico's first 'designed' object, a jug.⁵ Jenkin's lack of industrial experience suggests that the company placed little value on the position and that he may have been retained simply for his technical skills such as being able to make casts of pre-existing British shapes.⁶ Despite Clark's reputed interest in experimentation and claims of patriotic endeavour, the factory's pre-eminent focus was, naturally

enough, in maximising returns to shareholders by supplanting imported wares with locally manufactured products. In effect, and notwithstanding an increasing focus on technical research both through the work of PACRA and eventual establishment of an in-house materials research section, the design culture within the factory was as conservative as that of the British paradigm. This impediment was reinforced by the company's reluctance to modernise its production lines: for the greater part of its existence output continued to be hindered by a reliance on inadequate machinery. As late as 1959, Jenkin who by then had been promoted to 'art director', could—like his British counterparts—opine that the local market was disposed to the traditional:

New Zealand women are much more conservative in their choice of pottery than they are with clothes—or even curtains or wallpaper [...] floral patterns are still the most popular with gold lines or patterns second. All—over colours are gaining popularity—"not inside the cups though because it changes the colour of tea"—but patterned contemporary ware is a bad last.⁷



Fig. 13 Attaching handles to a New Zealand Railways mug, 1948.
Alexander Turnbull Library, New Zealand Free Lance collection, PA Coll-5936-12.

Despite of holding the view that New Zealand was an innately conservative market, the company also sought to capitalise on its perception of a growing demand for less-decorated 'modern' art wares. The resolution to initiate this 'modern' range may well have been prompted by issues of design raised in journals such as the *Design Review* and *Home & Building* but, if it was intended to quench criticism of the design quality of the company's productions, then it was misguided: the decision made no reference to the methodologies of modernism in terms either of production, function or appearance; it was—to adapt Plischke's contemptuous architectural term to the field under study—'pseudo-modern'. It was a largely adventitious option: as part of a 1948 restructuring and probably as a consequence of Clark and Stevens' overseas tour, the company had recruited an English thrower, Ernest Shufflebottom, from Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd, one of the leading United Kingdom manufacturers. Shufflebottom had been involved in the production of a range of wares designed by the architect Keith Murray who, ironically, was New Zealand-born. Applying Shufflebottom's production experience, the company embarked on the production of a range of art wares mimicking those designed by Murray but without the precision and quality of the originals; in part this was due to a lack of suitable technology and materials but, more significantly, it appears to reflect a sense of corporate unease with the concept of design. No matter how much it imitated the forms of British productions, Crown Lynn at this stage was disinclined to espouse the thrust of Milner Gray's 1949 Auckland lecture 'Industrial design the prelude to production', reprinted in the *New Zealand Manufacturer* in 1950:

The difference between designing for production by hand and by machine is that the one is primarily a process of **making** and the other primarily a process of **planning**. The designer does not simply make a product which is then reproduced in quantity; he must concern himself with every aspect of production, distribution and final use of the product, scrutinising cost at every angle. The second function of the designer is to plan for the economical production of the product by giving the minutest attention to every detail of its manufacture.⁸

Crown Lynn embarked on the manufacture of a line of wares using an, albeit skilled, craftsman and manual production methods. At the consumption end of the design process, Murray's designs for Wedgwood would have been retailed at the upper end of the market; Crown Lynn's imitations provided the consumer with a cheaper alternative although, given the apparent lack of advertising for the line, it is difficult to assess either their market or their comparative price. This awkwardness with the design process was exposed by *Design Review* in one of the few references it made to the New Zealand ceramic industry. For the British Empire Games held in Auckland in 1950 Shufflebottom modelled a commemorative mug decorated with a transfer-printed ersatz coat of arms designed by Jenkin. While praising the simplicity of the mug's form, the commentary went on to lambast the decoration: 'If more care had been given to the design on the mug, which is rather tight and timid—in other words if a first rate artist had been employed to decorate it—we might have had something to be proud of.'⁹

Production dilemmas

Many of the concerns faced by Crown Lynn in establishing a domestic market for its output were related to issues of design. By overseas standards the company's production line was notably inefficient and notwithstanding the fact that, proportionally to United Kingdom manufacturers, the gender balance of its workforce favoured lower-paid women workers, it claimed during a 1952 hearing of the New Zealand Board of Trade Tariff Inquiry into china and earthenware that its production costs were sixty-seven per cent higher than those in the United Kingdom, due primarily to the high standard of living in New Zealand. A E Hewitt, managing director of the British manufacturer W T Copeland & Sons Ltd—who had travelled to New Zealand specifically to appear before the Inquiry—disagreed, asserting that, per unit of production, New Zealand labour costs were half those in England and that the high labour costs resulted from inefficiencies of production. Elaborating on this, R S Bloore, joint managing director of another British manufacturer Swinnertons Ltd observed in respect of a New Zealand National Film Unit documentary showing the plant and machinery installed at Crown Lynn that he was

Staggered by some of the most basic principles employed, which I cannot for the life of me imagine were put-in in 1947. If they had been put-in in 1897, I should have thought it would have been more reasonable [...] I mean some of those things there-take the casting: tub and bucket. Well it is going back to the days of bows and arrows.¹⁰

In the same enquiry Wilfred Vose, ‘advisor’ to the New Zealand Pottery & Ceramics Manufacturers’ Association, argued that while overseas manufacturers ‘study their markets and they produce designs for each market’, it would satisfy local requirements if the manufacturer was to make a limited number of shapes which could then be decorated in a variety of ways.¹¹ He added that ‘he never suggested that even if [Ambrico] developed a small number of patterns they would meet exclusively the demands in New Zealand because if the [British preferential tariff was abolished] there will always be the competition and always be the supply from the English manufacturers.’¹²

Crown Lynn’s design anxieties became increasingly evident in its subsequent move into the art ware market when—in 1953—it recruited the recently migrated, Dutch-trained Frank Carpay as a designer for a range of manually-decorated wares. The company’s decision seems to have been prompted as much by the increasing profile of ‘industrial art’ in consumer magazines, as it was by the appearance in Auckland of vernacular and ‘modern’ ceramics in department stores such as George Court & Sons Ltd and specialist retailers’ such as ‘The Art of the Potter’ shops and Brenner Associates; even the general store Lambourne Ltd, catering to the lower end of the market, was advertising ‘Italian china ornaments’ alongside its stock of Crown Lynn slip-cast ‘Matt White’ swan vases, ‘a very popular shape’.¹³ Carpay had worked as a design director in two Dutch craft potteries, the collapse of the latter concern in which he was financially involved being cited as one of the reasons behind his decision to move to New Zealand.¹⁴ He had no experience of working in a large industrial concern, let alone one in New Zealand modelled, no matter how haphazardly, on British prototypes. His output at Crown Lynn comprised of coloured, semi-abstract patterns that were deftly painted on manually-potted wares made by Jenkin and other throwers. The resulting wares were marketed under the self-consciously ‘foreign’ ‘Handwerk’ brand. Clark declared he was using Carpay’s ‘fine china’ (*sic*) as part of ‘a campaign to educate the public away from imported china [of the] “pretty pretty rosebud” variety.’¹⁵ The campaign involved new marketing strategies: journalists were invited to the works, exhibitions were arranged at the Auckland Society of Arts and in department stores such as Milne & Choyce and James Smith in Wellington, sites that hitherto had been loath to display the company’s products. Clark envisaged this promotional campaign would last

over a two-year period and ‘Those pieces which drew the most favourable reaction would be put into mass production’. The Auckland architect Vernon Brown opening the Auckland Society of Arts exhibition targeted Clark’s long running battle with imported ware: ‘Some of our imports today are selected in the same attitude of mind as were the trade goods which early voyagers brought to the South Seas-except that fish hooks and beads and bits of mirror had value.’¹⁶ Either the public chose to ignore Clark’s didactic objective of weaning it off its passion for imported bone china or, more probably, the marketing strategy was confused: potential buyers of this type of ware would not have been those enamoured of the ‘pretty pretty rosebud’ variety of ceramics and the company does not appear to have convinced specialist ‘design’ retailers to stock its ‘avant garde’ product. Despite some critical acclaim, sales were disappointing and Carpay was dismissed in 1956. In retrospect, Clark would argue not only that he had been directed by the company’s bankers—the British-owned National Bank of New Zealand Ltd—to reduce his staff numbers but also that ‘the product was [...] way ahead of its time and way ahead for a population of three million (*sic*) to support that genius. Frank could not believe that he couldn’t change the taste of New Zealanders.’¹⁷

Appropriating the local

In the aftermath of its Carpay fiasco the company resorted to more conventional design strategies; its next attempt to endow itself with a reputation as a manufacturer of high quality art wares was calculated to appeal to a section of the market that would display no innate prejudice against local production, to the contrary, and, ideally, no interest in issues of design: tourists. As well, there was an increasing popular interest in wares decorated with designs derived from indigenous sources. In May 1955 the Wellington importers John Raine Ltd contacted the Martin Boyd Pottery in Sydney, a commercially operated concern specialising in luridly-coloured small-run earthenware plates, dishes, bowls, vases, ramekins and the like, enquiring if it had any connection with the studio potters David and Hermia Boyd who had recently visited New Zealand.¹⁸ While Ron Flegg, one of the pottery’s proprietors, replied that there was now no connection between the pottery and the Boyd family, this was no deterrence to commercial opportunity; in April 1956, as part of an Australian government sponsored promotion coinciding with the Melbourne Olympics, both Milne & Choyce in Auckland and James Smith in Wellington were displaying large groups of ‘fascinating and unusual’ earthenware misleadingly credited to ‘Australia’s foremost pottery designer’, the mythical Martin Boyd¹⁹. The offered range

included: a 'biscuit barrel [with] Aboriginal design (64/3)'; 'Boomerang dishes (16/6)'; 'coffee cups and saucers (after dinner) [in] black and tan contemporary checks (21/6)'; and tankards painted with caricatures of Aborigines in various poses.²⁰

Coincidentally, about 1956, Crown Lynn launched its 'Wharetana' brand, a range designed by Jenkin and a slip-caster, Harry Hargreaves, comprising brown glazed slip-cast ashtrays, trinket boxes, book-ends, 'picture' plates and a model of a waka. As its name suggests, the decoration was based on patterns garnered by Hargreaves, from his observation of Māori taonga displayed in the Auckland War Memorial Museum and from Gilbert Archey's 1955 publication *Sculpture and design: an outline of Māori art*.²¹ Ignoring for the moment issues of cultural misappropriation, this range too failed to sell in sufficient quantities. Jenkin later ascribed this let down to the articles being 'a little too heavy and bulky for tourists'. But there were other considerations: the newly-arrived Tom Esplin, an Edinburgh-trained industrial designer, explained in a 1962 article on the standard of New Zealand industrial design that:

To criticise the standard of design in goods manufactured specially for the tourist in New Zealand is rather like sniping at a sitting duck. There are many New Zealand gifts which are so deplorable that one could conceive of no juster penalty than that their makers and sellers should be forced to take them into their own home [...] There is no doubt that to the foreigner the most interesting feature of New Zealand is its Māori culture. There are, admittedly, in our shops articles which are derived from Māori inspiration, but to-day's sophisticated taste demands that even if the inspiration of a design comes from past centuries, its application should suit the mode and spirit of the present day. In the use of aboriginal designs applied to pottery [...] the Australians lead us in the right direction.²²

In effect, what Esplin suggested was that Māori design should be integrated into a modernist idiom, in effect positing the idea that Māori design was merely another exploitable aesthetic. His comments about (white) Australian use of Aboriginal designs in pottery—an opinion possibly based on the imported Martin Boyd examples—suggest a general failure by the dominant European cultures in both countries to recognise the inappropriateness of using indigenous design in a way that trivialized its original intent or meaning. Certainly Crown Lynn was far from unique in its use of Māori design for the purpose of decorating ceramic ashtrays and trinket boxes. Francis Pound has remarked on A R D Fairburn's equally insensitive use of Māori designs in his block-printed textiles, but argues that the 'translation' of these 'primitivist' designs should be viewed as part of a nationalist discourse, the "'primitive" start of a new tradition—a tradition particular to this country.'²³ And in an afterword to his original critique he ameliorates his self-

perceived severity of Fairburn's actions, commenting that 'In any case, he radically decontextualises the 'originals' [by using them on place-mats, firescreens, curtains] and rearranges them in a new and modernist field.'²⁴

But neither Fairburn's 'translations' nor Crown Lynn's ashtrays should be decontextualised through the mandate of 'art'. And while Fairburn may not have cared to be aware of the *tāngāta whenua*, Crown Lynn was. Although unrecognised in the company's publicity and, evidently, denied any authoritative role in the design process, Māori formed a numerically significant component of the Crown Lynn workforce. When Nash as prime minister visited the factory in 1959 to receive a 'loving cup'—it was, in fact, an imitation Wedgwood neo-classical vase—commemorating the company's '100 millionth article' he encountered one of the workers, Hine Paikea, widow of Paraire Karaka Paikea a former minister for Māori affairs without portfolio and mother of Tapihana Paraire Paikea, successive Ratana Labour members of parliament for Northern Māori.²⁵ Casting Mrs Paikea in the light of a supplicant, the reporter recounted that:

Mrs Paikea was at her bench, her fingers busy moulding clay, when the Prime Minister approached. Mrs Paikea looked up, searching for a glint of recognition in his eyes. Then Mr Nash saw her and hurried forward to press noses. They chatted for almost five minutes before the Prime Minister moved on to inspect other sections of the factory.²⁶

The social and cultural predicaments this incident represents, where a woman of considerable personal mana was revealed as a mechanical worker, could only be acceptable to the dominant culture by trivialising the encounter; the fact that a widow of a cabinet minister was required to work in a low status, poorly remunerated occupation could only be acceptable to dominant culture as a consequence of her being Māori. Again, during a 1963 tour of inspection by the British monarch Elizabeth II, newspapers reported her speaking to Ringi Ngākuru, a great granddaughter of Ngā Puhi rangatira Te Ruki Kawiti who was employed as a supervisor in the cup-making department, and 'stood for some time watching Miss Polly Hemara hand painting dinner plates.'²⁷ As in much of New Zealand society at the time, Māori were marginalised and their rights to and ownership of their cultural inheritance denied: as Phillips observes in a discussion of the 1953-54 royal visit:

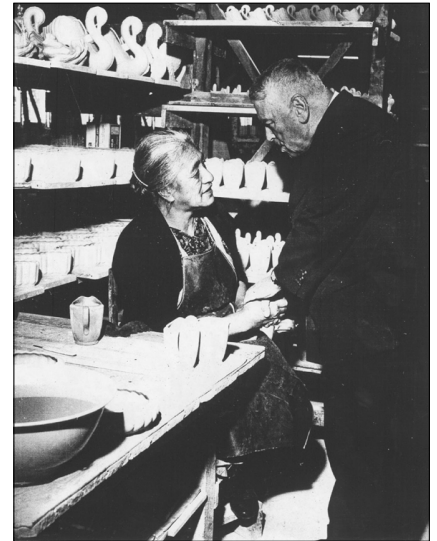


Fig. 14 Hine Paikea with Walter Nash during the latter's visit to Crown Lynn Potteries to commemorate the company's '100 millionth article', July, 1959. Auckland War Memorial Museum Library, Crown Lynn Potteries Records, 98/34.

The National government [of 1949 to 1957] wished to present Māori as a minor, slightly exotic element of New Zealand life, who were rapidly becoming assimilated into one united people, 'the New Zealanders'. They were blind to the tradition, sense of mana and tribal differences which remained central to Māori identity.²⁸

In Crown Lynn's case it might be argued that the company provided employment at a time when there were few jobs available to rapidly urbanising Māori, but the employment was in the form of 'cheap' manual labour. Likewise, while the inept appropriation of Māori iconography might be perceived as a gesture of cultural reference, its principal purport was commercial; its execution, a caricature; and — possibly unconsciously — its intention, hegemonistic. Hemara's reported and filmed silence in the face of the British monarch, the embodiment of British and, *ipso facto*, Pākehā New Zealand culture, was more than poignant.²⁹

Until 1959, the mainstays of the company's production continued to be pirated designs and the quality of output remained plagued by production deficiencies. At a time when New Zealand retailers were able to provide consumers with an enormous range of imported ceramics, thanks to the governments *laissez-faire* attitude to importing, Crown Lynn's output was seemingly destined to remain directed at the lower, protected, end of the market. However, the return of a Labour administration intent on fostering local manufacturing in 1957 coupled with another exchange control crisis triggering the reintroduction of import licensing would change this situation.

1 The role played by the corporate lawyer and businessman Leonard James Stevens in the rise of the Ambrico concern warrants further investigation. Stevens was a close associate of the powerful Auckland businessman James Fletcher and was chairman of Fletcher Holdings Ltd, the Dominion Breweries Ltd and the Dominion Fertiliser Co Ltd and a member of the board of a number of leading New Zealand companies. Stevens represented Ambrico at the 1952 New Zealand Board of Trade Tariff Inquiry. See: 'Leading City Businessman Dies Aged 81', *NZH*, 01 April 1972, p. 2.

2 New Zealand. Board of Trade, (2D5): T E Clark cross-examined by Reginald Hardie Boys.

3 T E Clark in a speech at the opening of the Hawkes Bay Museum's exhibition 'Frank Carpay' at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, 16 October 2003.

4 Crown Lynn ceramics exported to Australia were: in 1947 £58,652; in 1948 £102,842, and 1949 £18,751. By 1952 the value of the Australian market had slumped to £5,277.

5 Douglas Lloyd Jenkins, 'Modernism and the Auckland design community', in *New Zealand Home and Building souvenir edition: the News Talk IZB 1950s show*, ed. by Debra Daley, (Auckland: Associated Group Media Ltd; Auckland City Art Gallery, 1992), pp. 56-65, (63).

6 Jenkin was born in 1919 and was employed at Crown Lynn from 1945 until 1978.

7 Jenkin quoted in: 'Loving cup to be given to Mr Nash', *Evening Post*, 1959, p. 6.

8 Gray, 'Industrial design: the prelude to production', (49). The emphases are as printed.

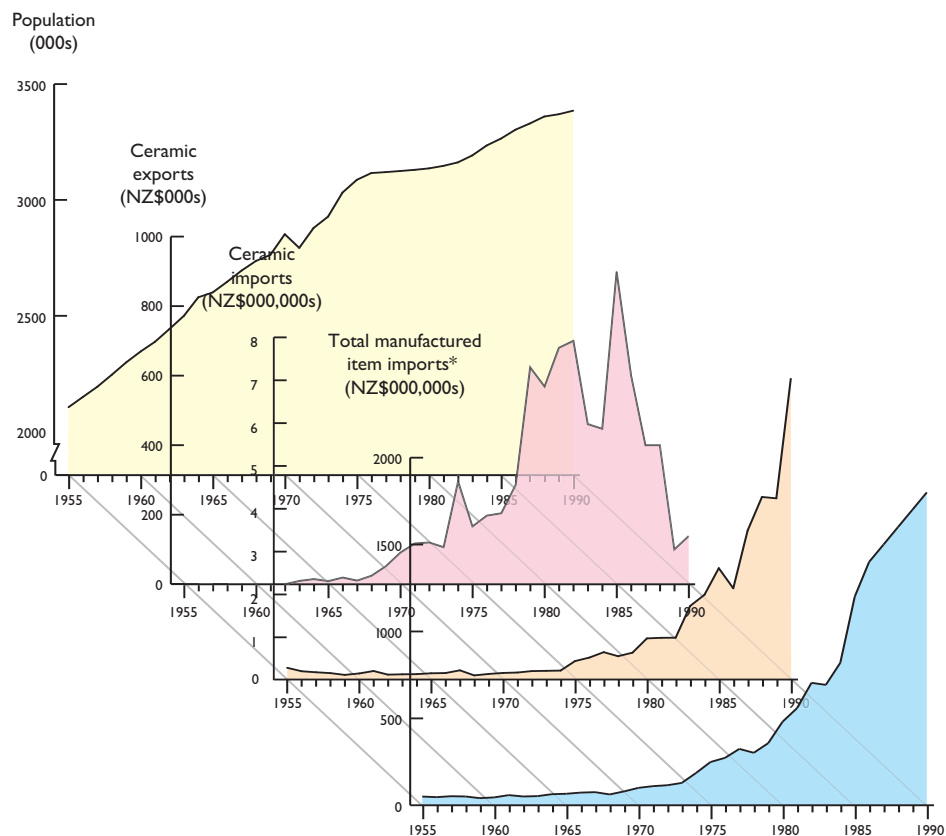
9 '[Crown Lynn Empire Games mug]', *NZDR*, vol. 3, no. 1 (July-August 1950), p. 5.

10 New Zealand. Board of Trade, (2Q3): T E Clark cross-examined by Reginald Hardie Boys. Confusingly, Clark argued that the film had been made in 1948 prior to the installation of machinery ordered in 1947.

- The film in question was made in 1949 following the installation of the disputed machinery. It is evident that Clark was embarrassed by Bloore's observations on the age of the machinery in question. See: New Zealand Film Archives, 413,826, [New Zealand] National Film Unit, *From potter's wheel to mass production*, film, Wellington, 1949.
- 11 Wilfred Vose, a British ceramic technologist, was employed as director of PACRA. He appears to have resigned from that position prior to the New Zealand Board of Trade inquiry to be employed as director of the New Zealand Pottery Manufacturers' Association. See: 'New Zealand pottery-irrelevant issues', *PGGTR*, vol. 76, no. 885 (March 1951), p. 409 New Zealand. Board of Trade, Q3: Wilfred Vose cross-examined by Reginald Hardie-Boys.
 - 12 New Zealand. Board of Trade, 2P4: Wilfrid Vose cross-examined by Leonard Stevens.
 - 13 Lambourne Ltd, 'Gifts for a Royal Xmas', *NZH*, 24 November 1953, p. 11.
 - 14 Jenkins, Frank Carpay, pp. 10-11.
 - 15 'No "museum pieces": new venture in the manufacture of china', *New Zealand Manufacturer*, (15 December 1953), (pp. 35-37), 35.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, 37
 - 17 T E Clark speech, 16 October 2003. In 1956 the New Zealand population stood at 2,174,062 persons.
 - 18 Based in Sydney, the Martin Boyd Pottery was established by the painter Guy Boyd in 1946. It was named after his uncle, the eponymous Italian-domiciled novelist. Guy Boyd sold the pottery to a former nurse, Norma Flegg, and her husband Leonard in 1950. It closed in 1964. See: Christopher Thompson, '[The Martin Boyd Pottery]', in *Decorative arts and design from the Powerhouse Museum*, (Sydney: Powerhouse Publishing, 1991), p. 123.
 - 19 Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, 94/77/1, Martin Boyd Pottery papers: Letter dated 16 May 1955.
 - 20 James Smith's Ltd, Advertisement, 'the potter's art ... original designs', *Evening Post*, 23 April 1956, p. 7.
 - 21 Gilbert Archey, *Sculpture and design: an outline of Maori art*, (Auckland: Auckland War Memorial Museum, 1955). Hargreaves' sketch book, together with his copy of Archey's book is now held by the Auckland Museum. Louis Le Vaillant, pers com, 11 July 2003.
 - 22 T Esplin, 'Design or decline', *Canterbury Economic Bulletin*, no. 445 (January 1962), (pp. [1-3]), [1].
 - 23 Francis Pound, *The space between: Pākehā use of Māori motifs in modernist New Zealand art*, 2nd edn. (Auckland: Workshop Press, 1994), p. 56.
 - 24 *Ibid.*, p. 224.
 - 25 J McLeod Henderson, *Ratana: the origins and the story of the movement*, Polynesian Society memoir, (Wellington: The Polynesian Society (Incorporated), 1963), pp. 93-94.
 - 26 '[With a pressing of noses ...]', *AS*, 18 July 1959, p. 1.
 - 27 'Duke watches workers at their benches', *NZH*, 09 February 1963, p. 1:2.
 - 28 Jock Phillips, *Royal summer: the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip to New Zealand, 1953-54*, (Wellington: Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs; Daphne Brasell Associates Press, 1993), p. 38.
 - 29 New Zealand Film Archive, 26232, Robert Steel Productions, *The visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to Crown Lynn, February 8th, 1963*, film, 1963.

9 Exporting New Zealand (1957-1989)

The return of the Labour party to government in November 1957 describes a threshold moment in the general history of the design of ceramics in New Zealand. It occurred concomitantly with a number of identifiable changes occurring in the country's attitude to the production and consumption of ceramics. These shifts included the brief coincidence of the modernist rhetoric of good design with government strategy; the effective end to the domination by British manufacturers of the local ceramics market; and the emergence of the United States as an influence on both the country's overall economy and the management and promotion of industry.



Tab. 3 Value of New Zealand ceramic imports and exports, 1955-1990, measured against total manufactured item imports (*excluding machinery, etc) and population.
Statistical reports of New Zealand.

From 1938 until the early 1960s, the state's involvement in design production had been limited to its legislative and regulatory interventions in manufacturing and—through both the DSIR and the Standards Institute—to the research and establishment of production standards. But while the DSIR had exhibited a degree of interest in the activities of the British CoID in 1949, Labour industrial and trade

policies failed to recognise the existence of design as a factor in either the manufacturing process or developing trade strategies. The National party's wariness of state intervention in private sector activities seems to have precluded any further investigation of the matter, at least at government level. However, changes in global trading conditions anticipated from the late 1950s prompted a reassessment of the role of secondary industry in the New Zealand economy; from being a source of commodity substitution it was now viewed as a potential source of overseas income. In instituting this shift both Labour and National governments recognised the need to improve local design standards: in 1966, after an extended consultation period, a National government introduced an Industrial Design Bill establishing the New Zealand Industrial Design Council. Notwithstanding the intentions that had prompted the Act, the institutionalisation of design would have little impact on production standards of the goods produced for either domestic or export markets. There would appear to be a number of reasons behind the impotence of the NZIDC but the primary one appeared structural: the barrier that existed between a state controlled institution modelled on a British organisation of the 1940s and the business structures of industry that, increasingly, were modelled on American corporate prototypes was, apparently, insurmountable. Yet from the late 1950s and thus pre-empting the formation of the NZIDC, design was increasingly used as a marketing tool by the manufacturing sector, most notably by Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd.

The collapse of overseas commodity prices in 1957 and the reintroduction of import licensing along with other corrective measures aimed at reducing overseas expenditure proved to be a boon to Crown Lynn, the sole ceramics manufacturer capable of producing sufficient quantities of tableware to meet domestic demand. By 1960, under this new fiscal regime total domestic production of 'Crockery, artware and novelties' amounted to £501,786 while imports for similar categories amounted to £823,276; the proportion of goods of British origin had fallen to 66 per cent of total manufactured imports. Additionally, prior to 1960, statistics imply that the value of imported ceramics had mirrored growth in the value total manufactured imports, the figure for post 1960 is less certain; while erratic leaps and drops in the comparative percentage of ceramic imports may reflect differing exchange rates it also suggests that ceramic goods were evolving a different functional role: the overall decreasing trend in imports might signal a level of success for the import substitution scheme but it also hints at a decrease in consumer demand for tableware. In 1954/55 10.5 per cent of household income was expended on

household durables of which 20.6 per cent comprised domestic hardware, china and glassware. By 1964/65 the percentage expended on durables had dropped to 9.1 per cent with 14.8 per cent spent on domestic hardware, china and glassware. Two other reasons behind this reduction were a greater proportion of income expended on motor vehicles and on electric household durables that, from 1960, included television sets although a fall-off in sales was recorded from mid 1964.¹ Equally, although the export trade for ceramics grew in terms of value, if shifts in consumer price index are taken into account, the adjusted value suggests that this growth was not as spectacular as was claimed and that the real value of ceramic exports remained relatively constant. Viewed from the perspective of ceramics, the state-sponsored export diversification scheme was an expedient earner of overseas funds at a time when the realisation of such an income was vital to the national economy and a useful employer of semi-skilled labour at a time of growing unemployment. But New Zealand ceramic exports were aimed at the lower end of the overseas market and as ceramic technologies were transferred from high cost labour metropolitan locations to low cost labour frontier locations such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia, so New Zealand producers lost their competitive edge and this expensively nurtured export market evaporated.

Unlike British cultural hegemony over New Zealand during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the involvement of the United States in the country's political and economic life has been insidious rather than overt. In the Cold War aftermath of World War II New Zealand entered into a series of political alliances with the United States: the 1952 ANZUS and the 1954 SEATO Treaties. While these marked a significant realignment of the country's strategic positioning and, ultimately, sanctioned the commitment of New Zealand troops to the American war in Vietnam, they also reflected an increasing involvement of American companies in the economic affairs of the country: in virtual terms New Zealand moved itself from being an island in the English Channel to being one in an American lake, the Pacific. Concurrent with its geo-political alliances, the state was also involved in negotiations with a series of international bodies, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), formed principally under the aegis of the United States to deal with issues of trade and predicated on 'the doctrine of a laissez faire international market economy fed by the free flow of capital and goods.'² While involvement with these organisations implied acceptance of these doctrines, until the 1960s New Zealand argued with some merit that its chronic

balance of payment difficulties forestalled its ability to implement a more liberal import regime. This changed in 1961 when the National government entered into negotiations to join the IMF, the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation, which in 1965 resulted in a loan from the IMF ‘to provide support for the New Zealand Government’s policy of import liberalization.’³ But the influence of the United States corporate model on the structure and practices of the New Zealand industrial and business sectors has arguably been more pervasive and ultimately of more long term import than the sovereign actions of the state in that it has acted as a template for the administrative structure of most major New Zealand companies, has promoted the globalisation of corporate interests and, most significantly, has proselytised its neo liberal economic strategy beyond the realm of business and into the state. And where New Zealand dependence on the United Kingdom was demonstrated by docile acceptance of its role as a market for British manufactures, the country’s relationship with the United States was-and is-dependent on its position as part of a global resource, as one of many seed beds for surplus capital, as an exporter not of products but of profits and an importer of ideologies.

Between 1957 and 1989, Crown Lynn moved from being a small manufacturer of tableware, part of a family-dominated brick and pottery manufacturing company, with its output largely directed at the state protected domestic market to a small component of a large, highly diversified corporation. From being a part of a Keynesian economic regime it was translated into a flagship of the free market economy; from being organised on a British industrial model to one based on American prototypes. Crown Lynn shifted from being a company that viewed design as product enhancement into a division of a corporation that encompassed hospitality, a number of manufacturing industries, the importing and assembly of forklift trucks, whiteware and consumer electronics and the manufacture of apparel. The design focus lay—as a 1987 article in the business magazine *Management* described it—in ‘re-designing Ceramco Corporation’s management structure.’⁴ Thus it might be argued that the decision to terminate production at Crown Lynn in 1989 and the ultimate collapse of the company in the early 1990s was an exercise in design; that design is as capable of eradicating production as it is of enhancing it.

1 B H Easton, *Consumption in New Zealand 1954-5 to 1964-5*, NZIER (Inc) Research Paper no: 10, (Wellington: New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 1967), p. 35.

2 W B Sutch, *Takeover New Zealand*, (Wellington: A H & A W Reed, 1972), p. 54.

3 *IMF Annual Report 1966*, cited in: *Ibid.*, p. 55.

4 David Pardon, ‘Good managers are born, not made’, *Management*, vol. 34, no. 11 (December 1987), (pp. 10-12), 10.

9.1 Sutch and design

If until the late 1940s, the decisions that formed New Zealand tastes and determined consumer demand were mediated elsewhere, then so too, the makers of those decisions were located externally. The failure of both the state and corporate producers to recognise design as a factor in policy decisions and strategies was revealed in the generally low standards of production achieved in the country's few manufactured commodities: New Zealand manufactured goods were regarded commonly as cheap substitutes for imported commodities. Manufacturing was viewed primarily as an economic mechanism that both ameliorated external debt—through import substitution—and allowed the maintenance of a full employment regime—the cornerstone of New Zealand's welfare state—which post World War II enjoyed the support of both the National and Labour parties. Yet while the idea of a local manufacturing industry found support from both sides of the political spectrum, as well as from the private sector, there was little advocacy of how the quality of production might be improved or even a depth of planning concerning what commodities might best be manufactured. The majority of early post-war industrial ventures—such as the massive public-private sector financed Tasman Pulp and Paper scheme of 1951-55—focussed on issues of quantity. In 1957, in an attempt to focus thinking on the consumers' systemic reliance on imported commodities, W B Sutch, Walter Nash's former 'secretary-economist' and now assistant secretary of the Department of Industries and Commerce, delivered a paper, 'The next two decades of manufacturing' to a Dunedin conference of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS). In it, Sutch sought to delineate a future for the New Zealand manufacturing industry, 'to deduce very broadly, the likely results if existing trends as we know them continue.'¹ In addressing what he perceived as the country's over-reliance on imports, Sutch—not a little presciently—warned that:

At the rate New Zealand's exports are expanding, there will not be sufficient foreign exchange earned to pay for the necessary imports [...] There is a distinct possibility, therefore, that material living standards cannot be increased unless New Zealand's export income rises more rapidly.²

It was an argument that would become increasingly acceptable in political and economic circles; moreover, promotion soon placed Sutch in a position that would enable him to recommend ways in which that export deficit might be remedied.



Fig. 15 Cover, W B Sutch, *The quest for security in New Zealand*, Penguin Books, 1942.

The economy of design

Having spent four years as secretary general of the New Zealand mission to the United Nations in New York, Sutch returned to New Zealand in 1951. He was initially re-employed as an economist in the Department of Industries and Commerce where finally and controversially, in 1958, he was appointed permanent secretary. Enigmatic, persuasive, polemical and contentious Sutch was mistrusted deeply, even loathed, by many of his political masters on both the left and the right, by a majority of the agricultural industry and sections of New Zealand's manufacturing and business elite both for his Fabian-inspired advocacy of state intervention and for his attempts to implement policies that would diversify the country's industrial base. Moreover, and pertinently in a country suspicious of the kind, Sutch was an intellectual and a prime force behind a number of the country's cultural initiatives: on his return to the country he became associated with the Architectural Centre Inc—the publisher of the short-lived New Zealand Design Review—serving as its chairman for seven years; he consorted with the likes of Plischke and—with his wife, the lawyer Shirley Smith—commissioned him to build their house in suburban Brooklyn. He published extensively on economic and cultural matters: in 1941 and 1942 he published two volumes of what amounted to a manifesto of his economic and political beliefs, *Poverty and Progress in New Zealand* and *The Quest for Security in New Zealand*. The latter, first published by Penguin Books in 1942 after having been rejected summarily for inclusion in the ultimately unpublished New Zealand centennial history, sold over 100,000 copies. In both books, Sutch argued for full employment, the tangible economic benefits of a welfare state and, ultimately, the creation of a diverse and 'mature' economy, one dependent on neither a monoculture—grass—nor the trading hegemonies of the former colonial power, Britain or the new powers, identified by him as the United States and Japan.

Sutch's appointment to the Department of Industries and Commerce corresponded with the return in November 1957 of a protectionist Labour government, under Nash as prime minister, and coincided with another foreign exchange crisis: again, export receipts were low and the incremental scrapping of license controls by the ousted National government had led to a deluge of imports; in the constantly reiterated words of the Labour party 'the country was living beyond its means'. Shortly after, in January 1958, licensing was re-imposed and in July 1960 tariff protection was imposed on a number of commodities including those produced by what were described as 'one-unit industries', which included Crown Lynn. The

New Zealand Herald reported that: 'The rates imposed here are designed to protect Crown Lynn Potteries, which employs almost entirely New Zealand materials and which the government believes capable of sustained development. It formerly received no protection at all.'³ The former National minister of Industries and Commerce, D J Eyre, led objections to the application of this measure, questioning in the House of Representatives:

Whether it was realistic to afford to the New Zealand crockery industry, whose turnover was £500,000 a year, protection that cost the user £750,000 a year [...] The industry says that it is going to export [...] it is difficult to see how it is going to export when it needs such a high rate of duty on imports.⁴

And in what was probably the last blast of the English Pottery and Glassware Agents' Associations' efforts to preserve New Zealand as a client market for British manufactured ceramics, its chairman John Raine fulminated that the consumer would suffer and that the price of imported utility wares would increase as a result of the tariffs. Clark, on behalf of Crown Lynn rebutted the accusation arguing that the Ottawa Agreement had skewed the market, shielded the English manufacturers from real competition and had cost New Zealand nearly five million pounds in overseas exchange over the past four years. He noted that most 'utility' ware consumed was in any case of New Zealand origin, that New Zealand did not manufacture bone china or porcelain tableware and, finally, accused the twenty-seven members of

the Association of making excessive profits. Where the 1952 Board of Trade enquiry had failed to respond to Crown Lynn's energetic demands for protection, the Labour government had delivered, in pursuit of its full employment programme, its support for secondary industries and its fiscal caution.⁵

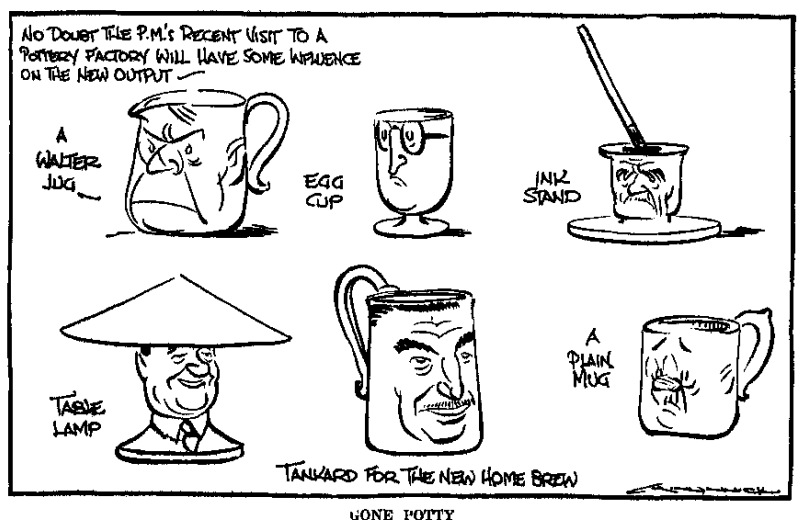


Fig. 16 Gordon Minhinnick, 'Gone potty': the second Labour government as a possible design inspiration: (from left to right: Walter Nash, prime minister; Arnold Nordmeyer, minister of finance; Philip Skoglund, minister of education; Hugh Watt, minister of state electricity; Ray Boord, minister of customs; Minhinnick's 'John Citizen'), *New Zealand Herald*, 21 July 1959.

Scandinavian paradigms

In his 1957 ANZAAS conference paper Sutch had argued that given the country's post-war population growth and in view of diminishing returns from agriculture, it was now even more necessary to develop the country's industrial capacity. Noting that 'Important sections of public opinion do not even accept protective tariff as a legitimate instrument in building manufacturing industry' he concluded that:

As the country grows, New Zealand's main assets can only be the skill, experience and intelligence of her people. Small countries like Finland, Denmark or Switzerland have even fewer natural resources than we have. Yet because of the skill of their people they are important manufacturing countries [...] should we not be more concerned with producing goods which have as their main ingredient not raw materials but brains and skills?⁶

In pursuit of this agenda, the Department of Industries and Commerce organised a national Industrial Development Conference held in June 1960. In the course of his opening speech to the conference Nash outlined a 'Sutchian' history of New Zealand industry and government attempts to nurture a New Zealand manufacturing industry in the face of imported commodities.⁷ Moreover, in a section headed 'Developing our resources' he raised, for the first time at government level, the issue of design. Contextualising his comments within an observation on the 'welcome improvement in the arts' Nash declared: 'We are becoming conscious that the design of products is an essential element in their quality, and I hope that the Conference will find time to discuss ways in which better industrial design can be fostered.'⁸ Sutch would later, reinforce Nash's comments and further argue that the country's manufacturing future lay not merely in producing commodities for import substitution but for export:

Manufacturing development should be in a short time export development. That is why New Zealand should set its face against its manufactures being allotted only the New Zealand market by associates abroad. This means scrupulous and insistent attention in fine detail, to costs, efficiency and management, design, quality and research. Though good quality is being attained by existing industries, these things are not exactly those for which New Zealand is famous. We do not have the Danish and Swiss advantage of being in Europe, with its traditions, literature, science, research, technology, philosophy, art, scholarship and attitude to work.⁹

Framing Sutch's proposals was his ideological stance that, within the constraints of a capitalist economy, the most effective means of ensuring the welfare of New Zealand society as a whole was to ensure full-employment, that the preferred way of enabling that was the creation of an industrial base, one protected by governmental intervention from the fluctuations of the global economy. And given the small size of the local market, it was essential that the country produce sufficient commodities to allow it to export. As it had done with the country's agricultural commodities, government had a role to play in the marketing of these

products. Thus design could be seen as a factor both improving the efficiencies of production and, by improving the appearance of manufactured commodities, enabling them to be sold overseas. The salient innovation in the development of Sutch's thinking about the role of design in New Zealand manufacturing was the recognition of what could be described as a consciousness of a 'cultural deficit': a realisation that, if design was to function effectively as a factor in the country's manufacturing agenda, then it must be viewed as part of a wider cultural renaissance. Such a 'deficit' had long been recognised, at least in Labour circles. Peter Fraser's achievements in setting up the Literary Fund and establishing a national symphony orchestra in 1947 can be regarded as preliminary attempts on the part of government to intervene in the cultural field, to plug the 'deficit'. And in 1960 Labour established an Arts Advisory Council—later loyally re-dubbed the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council by National—with a mission to 'encourage, foster, and promote the practice and appreciation of the arts in New Zealand.' Appropriately, Sutch was appointed chair of the council by the third Labour government in 1973. But, as Lynn de Silva modestly opined in 1978, 'up to the sixties, this country did not cater for the professional needs of either artists or scholars and the result was a high rate of emigration of artists, writers, musicians, scholars and scientists.'¹⁰ As Gray had observed in 1949, the same conditions prevailed for New Zealand designers.

Changing tack

The proceedings of the Industrial Development Conference were reported widely in the press and the decision to hold it was praised by the leader of the opposition, Keith Holyoake as 'an excellent idea [...] as the time had come to hammer out a line of public thinking.'¹¹; the importers though were far from happy and expressed concern that their interests might not be adequately represented, arguing perceptively that 'the part distribution must play in an expanded industrial economy should not be overlooked' while the president of the United Kingdom Manufacturers' and Representatives' Association 'said that from its rather specialised knowledge of overseas conditions it might have a contribution to make. But it had not been invited.'¹² The *New Zealand Herald*, far from keen to be seen to supporting an unpopular Labour administration but recognising the irony of the situation editorialised that 'New Zealand industry betrays one glaring weakness: it preaches free enterprise but beseeches State protection'¹³ adding a report that the cost of the talks was high despite the fact that 'no definite costs were available'; design issues were, tellingly, not reported in the press. But Nash's challenge to

discuss them was taken up by the conference participants. Each of the three committees recommended ‘that a Council of Industrial Design should be established, along the lines of that already established in the United Kingdom.’¹⁴ The most comprehensive recommendation came in the report of the second committee which:

Saw great value in the development of design in industry. Improved design could bring economy in production and it could lead to economy in use, as well as developing the artistic appreciation of our people. Our people were perhaps becoming too material minded, with too much thought to financial returns and too little thought to the development of a cultural and artistic background. Good design, based on true New Zealand art forms, could lay the foundation for an extension by New Zealand manufacturers into specialised export fields, in much the same way that Denmark in glass and crystalware and in furniture had established very remunerative specialised overseas markets. Good design should also be the basis of standards of quality and performance, and the committee believed that it was necessary to get behind the Standards Institute.¹⁵

This was—under the political circumstances—a relatively sophisticated argument for the role of design, seeing it as a process rather than an issue of aesthetics, and while the methodology of its approach may have been based on British precedents, the paradigms cited were those of Scandinavia. The part played by the Department of Industries and Commerce in the success of the conference was pivotal notwithstanding the denial by P N Holloway, the minister for Industries and Commerce, who declared in the conference report that his ‘department went to extremes to make certain that no one could say it had attempted to dominate the discussion or to substantiate policies it was administering.’¹⁶ It was a necessary caution: as was widely anticipated, Labour lost the election later that year; Holloway’s caveat enabled the incoming National party government to claim the legacy of the conference. As the British had first done some 125 years previously, the New Zealand government had now, finally, paired the binaries of design and trade.

Sutch’s conversion to the perceived benefits of design were made tangible immediately the following year when, under his chairmanship, the 1961 Festival of Wellington organised an Industrial Design Exhibition; Sutch wrote the introduction to the catalogue.¹⁷ While not the first exhibition in New Zealand to investigate the issue—an industrial design section had formed a prominent part of an art and design exhibition at the ‘Auckland Carnival’ in 1952—it was timely.¹⁸ Reviewing the Wellington exhibition for the literary journal *Landfall* and echoing the recommendations of the Industrial Development Conference, P M Hill declared that ‘The need now is for a Council of Industrial Design to give a lead to the designers

and artists to relate and reveal the fabric of New Zealand life and its productions and to make possible a specific style for these Islands.’¹⁹ Like Gray earlier, with his comment that ‘no Australasian style of design of mass-produced goods has yet evolved’, Hill seems to have equated the design process with the development of an identifiable, nationally-based ‘style’ yet, contradicting the underlying principle of this assertion, he then observed that ‘we are overburdened with the term utility in our designs, never fully realising that the function of the object involves the human being.’ This confusion of design rhetoric derived, in part, from an attempt to merge a nationalist agenda with the perceived benefits of progressive modernism.

Concomitant with the exhibition, the Festival also organised four design competitions; for carpets, printed lightweight wool, wallpaper and ceramics. The ceramics competition, sponsored by Crown Lynn, ‘had the object of distinctive and original design adaptable to commercial production.’ Sutch was reported as observing that ‘the competition and subsequent exhibition of prize-winning work will continue to broaden the well-formed bridge between New Zealand’s many enthusiastic and highly competent studio potters on the one hand and the manufacturers and public on the other.’²⁰ Again, there is evidence of design confusion, of a failure to recognise a differentiation between the processes of design and the fabrication of a hand-made object, between the occupations of designer and potter, between craft and industrial production; issues of distribution and consumption were ignored. The confusion was recognised by at least one visitor to the exhibition who observed that ‘While I appreciate [the winning entries in the ceramics section of the Industrial Art Competitions] as good examples of studio pottery, I cannot see any relationship to industrial design [...] none lends itself to mass production.’²¹

A belated modernism

Even so, the notion of industrial design was now on the national agenda. In August 1962 the Tariff & Development Board, the reconstituted New Zealand Board of Trade, began an enquiry into the criteria for industrial development in New Zealand. Its conclusions were based loosely around the recommendations of the Industrial Conference but there were subtle ideological shifts: the Board argued that while tariffs provided a level of protection to industry other options such as tax concessions might encourage further development. Design issues were alluded to gnomically: ‘Perhaps the most important requirement to which industry should conform is that it should produce an article acceptable to users and consumers as to price, quality, design and range.’²² The way that this would occur would be through

competition ‘not only from other units of the industry within New Zealand, should they exist, but also from imported goods.’ This scenario envisaged a reduced role for the state relegating it the passive, non-interventionist position. It was far removed from the proactive involvement in the design process postulated by Sutch.

Three years after the Industrial Development Conference, the Department of Industries and Commerce organised an Export Development Conference: it would be Sutch’s final contribution as ‘permanent’ secretary of the department.²³ And while the rationale for the conference promoted his vision of a ‘mature’ economy it also reflected a pluralist approach to economic issues characteristic of the early years of the Holyoake administration in its response to what was perceived of at the time as the major threat to New Zealand trade: the mooted, although unsuccessful, accession of the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community (EEC). The National party minister for Industries and Commerce, John Marshall, addressing the participants outlined, unsophisticatedly, this unease:

New Zealand must export more if it is to continue to live well. We were brought face to face with this need when Britain applied to join the European Economic Community. Then we realised fully for the first time not only our vulnerable dependence on the British market but also that our traditional patterns of trade did not have the permanence which we firmly believed they had.²⁴

New Zealand trade with Britain was, by then, based on agreements negotiated by the Labour government in 1958 that effectively extended those of the post-war period while taking into account GATT membership of both countries. Notably, these agreements were a tentative step towards New Zealand’s participation in an increasingly globalised trade, rather than in a two-way trade with the United Kingdom.

Labour’s long held policy of encouraging manufacture had, over some twenty two years, borne fruit in terms of the quantities of New Zealand pottery production: at the time of the Industrial Development Conference the country’s tableware production, and that from Crown Lynn, was valued at £501,786; by the time of the Export Development Conference, in June 1963, it had grown by some ten per cent in value. Of this, a mere £294 worth of ceramics was exported, primarily to Pacific island states; however, by the year ended June 1964 this had expanded to £74,434, the bulk of which was destined for Australia. By contrast, the value of imports had slumped from a 1952 peak of £1,263,455, or 0.5 per cent of the total, to £823,276 in 1960, or 0.3 per cent of the total and £709,359, or 0.2 percent of the total in 1963. And while Britain remained the principal source of ceramic imports

(£622,706 in 1960), there was a growing trade with both the German Federal Republic (about £30,000 in 1960) and Japan (about £140,000 in 1960). Thus by 1960 New Zealand was producing over 40 per cent of the value of its annual total ceramic consumption of £1,325,062 while the British proportion was 47 per cent.

The Export Development Conference was a lavishly promoted, intensively researched and articulately presented. Sutch's exhibition experience at the Festival of Wellington two years previously was put to good use: the Parliament Buildings where the conference was held were also used to house an exhibition, 'Design for export' to 'demonstrate that good design has become a necessary ingredient in the quality which must be built into exported goods in order to make headway in competitive export markets.'²⁵ A panel discussion on quality and design in exports reiterated the need to establish an Industrial Design Council. This time deleting overt references to European paradigms, the panel opined that 'good design was vital to enable New Zealand to produce distinctive goods which would rival those of other small manufacturing countries in the markets of the world.' Moreover its deliberations went further than articulating a belief that 'good design' could be a beneficial component part of local manufacturing processes:

The panel felt that public appreciation of good design needed to be developed and that this should be an integral part of the education system. Improvements in the design of goods supplied to the domestic market would provide greater opportunities for developing the sale of goods to overseas markets.

The panel's discussion was based on a background paper 'Industrial design for export' apparently prepared by the industrial design section of the department but published under the name of Philip Proctor, managing director of the British-owned tyre manufacturer Dunlop New Zealand Ltd. The paper provided a definition of 'good design' that drew significantly on CoID rhetoric but that, later, would be wholly ignored. Warning that:

Too often people use the words 'good design' loosely, meaning not much more than pleasing or attractive appearance, frequently the result only of applying some outward embellishment to an existing product. True design in a manufactured article embraces form and shape, but it embraces also the article's usefulness or adequacy [...] design implies, as well, the best use of the most suitable raw materials, so processed that the completed article reaches the consumer at a reasonable price.²⁶

Turning to the situation in New Zealand, the paper opined that:

Our manufacturers must launch their export drive handicapped by smallness, and a lack of design traditions, because of the comparative newness of industry, and the fact that many units until recently were assemblers of bits and pieces rather than converters of raw materials into finished products [...] but the problem is not simply one of concentrating on good design for a limited range of export products. Export markets and the domestic market must in

general be looked upon as a single entity. If public taste, and the appreciation of good design, is developed among our New Zealand people, this will automatically be reflected in better-designed goods.²⁷

Proctor's borrowed rhetoric, while generalist in focus and uninspiring in delivery, highlighted the need for a central agency involved with the promotion of industrial design. And if Proctor observed an absence of design consciousness in 'our New Zealand people', his assumption that design appreciation would remedy this deficit was, by 1963, palpably unsupportable: two decades of design appreciation had not resulted in any quantifiable 'improvement' in British 'public taste' but, as reflected in the New Zealand market, the export of British manufactured commodities had declined. Yet the train of thinking about design that Sutch initiated did have tangible consequences: in the establishment of a partially state-funded design council and in the adoption of design as a pivotal element in its expansion programme by Crown Lynn, the country's only tableware manufacturer.

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- 1 W B Sutch, *The next two decades of manufacturing in New Zealand*, Paper presented at 32nd meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science conference, Dunedin, 1957, to Section G - Economics, Statistics and Social Science, (Wellington: [New Zealand] Department of Industries and Commerce, 1957), p. 1.
 - 2 Ibid., p. 20.
 - 3 'Aid for three industries: tariff protection', *NZH*, 23 July 1960, p. 2.
 - 4 'In the House: Protection for crockery firm questioned', *Nelson Evening Mail*, 7 October 1960, p. 5.
 - 5 The chairman of the New Zealand Board of Trade, Sir David Smith, was Sutch's father-in-law.
 - 6 Sutch, *The next two decades of manufacturing*, p. 21.
 - 7 Walter Nash, 'Building the future' in *Industrial Development Conference*, (Government Printer, 1960), pp. 1-15. Sinclair comments that Sutch was most probably responsible for the speech although Nash modified it. Ironically, Nash was in Copenhagen the week prior to opening the conference. See: Sinclair, *Walter Nash*, p. 343.
 - 8 Sutch, *The next two decades of manufacturing*, p. 13.
 - 9 W B Sutch, 'Programme for growth', in *Industrial Development Conference*, (Wellington: Government Printer, 1960), pp. 1-29, (27).
 - 10 Lynn de Silva, *Culture and government*, ed. by O St J Vennell, (Wellington: [New Zealand] Department of Internal Affairs, 1978), p. 1.
 - 11 'Guarantee by Mr Nash; benefit to country', *NZH*, 18 June 1960, p. 18.
 - 12 'Industrial talks representation: dissatisfaction expressed', *NZH*, 06 June 1960, p. 18.
 - 13 'Industry leans heavily on state', *NZH*, 20 June 1960, p. 12.
 - 14 *Industrial Design Conference: Report*, (Wellington: Government Printer, 1960), p. 129. Committee II also recommended earnestly that consideration be given to the establishment of New Zealand brandy and port production.
 - 15 Ibid., pp. 123-124.
 - 16 Ibid., p. 6.
 - 17 The 'Industrial Design Exhibition' was held in the National Gallery and Dominion Museum building and opened on 25 February 1961. The programme described it as 'the largest art exhibition ever to be held in New Zealand. Its general theme is the furnishing of the house through history and in different parts of the world. Assembled in a comprehensive collection from New Zealand and overseas sources are historical and

- current exhibits of carpets, wallpapers, ceramics and lightweight wool. The exhibition covers both handmade and machine made articles in each field. These include products of New Zealand manufactures and the prizewinning and other selected entries in the recent national industrial design competitions organised by the Festival of Wellington Arts Committee.' See: 'Industrial Design Exhibition', *Evening Post*, 15 February 1961, p. 14.
- 18 Peter Middleton, 'Industrial art exhibited at Auckland's Carnival', *H&B*, vol. 14, no. 8 (February 1952), (pp. 26-27, 60), 27.
- 19 P M Hill, 'Industrial design: objects and buildings', *Landfall*, vol. 15, no. 58 (June 1961), (pp. 168-170), 168.
- 20 'Festival design competitions: object is to produce something of lasting value', *Evening Post*, 18 January 1961, p. 11.
- 21 'Gothic', 'Ceramic art', *Ibid.*, 3 March, p. 7.
- 22 [New Zealand] Tariff and Development Board, *Report to the minister of industries and commerce on criteria for industrial development*, (Wellington: Government Printer, 1963), p. 22.
- 23 Sutch was 'involuntarily retired' in March 1965. See: Brian Easton, *The Nationbuilders*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), p. 169.
- 24 J R Marshall, 'Opening of Export Development Conference; Tuesday, 4 June 1963' in *Report: Export Development Conference June 1963*, ([New Zealand] Department of Industries and Commerce, 1963).
- 25 [New Zealand]. Department of Industries and Commerce, 'Exhibition: design for export' in *Ibid.*
- 26 P Proctor, 'Industrial design for export, background paper 9', *Ibid.*, pp. 1-6, (1).
- 27 *Ibid.*, (5).

9.2 Good economics: the Industrial Design Council, 1968-88

If the British CoID aspired to egalitarian principles in its first promotions of ‘good design’ then the same could not be said of its late coming New Zealand equivalent that, unequivocally, was conceived of from the first as a promotional tool for exported commodities. Equally, by the time the New Zealand Industrial Design Council (NZIDC) was finally mooted at government level in late 1965, the proselytising energy that had characterised the activities of the CoID in the 1940s and 50s had long since dissipated: in Britain the ‘good design’ debate had been fought and—in the view of some—lost. More dispassionately, Woodham has observed that ‘over the first half-century of the Council’s life there had been many recommendations which had hinted at a need for a sharpening of its role in the face of comparative indifference to its campaigning on the part of industry.’¹ It can be contested that the original CoID model on which the NZIDC was based was an anachronism: the focus of the debate in Britain had shifted from attempts to persuade manufacturers to adopt the principles of ‘good design’ to efforts to persuade a wider public that design was an ubiquitous presence; it had relocated its focus from the factory to the high street. Moreover, there was—and, arguably, still is—an ‘anti-design’ streak in the New Zealand psyche; a common belief that ‘making do’ is as good as, if not better, than purposeful planning. Crown Lynn’s early efforts at production—which ignored the concept of design—were widely admired for the very reason that they were ‘experimental’, that is, rather than planning production, developing marketing strategies or investing in new machinery, the company relied on the modification—with number eight wire—of in situ technologies and the adaptation of existing work practices. This fundamental conservatism, which embodies the frontier’s distrust of sophistries of the metropolis, resonates in Sutch’s observation ‘the need is here for many more people highly qualified in the arts—to help the balance of payments, to provide a cultural climate for New Zealand industries.’² This wariness not only permeated the establishment of the NZIDC but also worked against those who identified themselves as designers. Few in authority heeded Sutch’s jeremiad, raised in an address he delivered in 1960, that:

If New Zealand manufacturers are to compete in other markets [...] they must have a New Zealand climate in which to flourish [...] This can only come if the arts flourish. From the economic point of view New Zealand industry needs a rapid, deep and pervasive development of the arts.³

The short history of the NZIDC reflected its anachronistic conception, its conservative remit and, ultimately, its practical isolation.

Modelling design

Following on the recommendations of the 1963 Export Development Conference the government announced in 1966 that it would introduce an Industrial Design Bill into parliament that would establish an industrial design council along with a professional body, the Industrial Design Institute. Placing the bill before the house Marshall alluded to its genealogy arguing that it arose from the 1963 election manifesto of the National party which had advocated encouraging ‘improvements in design and presentation of products, especially where there may be export potential. In particular, a design council will be promoted in industry with some Government assistance in its initial years’. Quite without irony, Marshall provided a potted history of other national design bodies:

The British Council of Industrial Design was set up in 1944 [...] The French Institute for Industrial Design was created in 1951, the Netherlands institute in 1950, and the Italian association in 1955. Even Pakistan has an institute of design, set up in 1956. Australia set up its Council for Industrial Design in 1957. The Danish association was founded as far back as 1907, and the Swedish society was established as long ago as 1845. It is perhaps significant that the high standard of design in the products of Scandinavia, which has encouraged and assisted the export trade of many of their products, may be connected with the early establishment in the Scandinavian countries of institutes of design.⁴

He then observed ‘that the council should be concerned with the standard of design of goods packaged for export and the advertising of these goods and consumer goods generally in order to further the development of New Zealand trade abroad.’ Notwithstanding the precedents alluded to by Marshall, the NZIDC, as Labour members observed in the ensuing debate, had a distinctly circumscribed function. Not only was government funding for the council’s activities limited but also the act’s definition of design focussed on issues of appearance, despite amendments introduced at the committee stage.⁵ The egalitarian expectations that ‘good design’ would benefit society embedded in Sutch’s initial proposals were jettisoned in favour of an ideology that viewed design as a tool for enhancing the appearance of exported commodities; as an aesthetic experience rather than a process of planned manufacture, distribution and consumption.

The NZIDC commenced operation in 1968; its first chairman, Philip Proctor, by then chairman of Phillips Electrical Industries New Zealand Ltd, justified the late emergence of the council in the first issue of its magazine *Designscape*, arguing that: ‘The concept of industrial design gained impetus in New Zealand later than in other countries because of its limited relevance in the context of a primary [products] based economy.’ Industrial design, he argued was all about ‘efficiency and economy, which results in greater consumer satisfaction and greater profits [...]

good design, then, represents another means of increasing both the production and exports of our manufactured goods.’⁶ This ingenuous correlation between economic good practice and trading success on the one hand and ‘good’ design on the other was to characterize the twenty-year existence of the Council as advisers to New Zealand industry. Yet from its establishment, the role of NZIDC was questioned by the private sector who argued that the funding directed at it would be more efficiently acquitted by being made available directly by way of grant to companies involved in design. At the end of 1968 the government organised a National Development Conference; its manufacturing committee recommended that the ‘newly established Industrial Design Council should not be expected to undertake the task of design promotion single-handed.’⁷ Rather, this was better handled by encouraging manufacturers to employ staff or consultant designers. This activity, the committee contended, should be funded by direct grants to industry for the purpose of industrial research and development along the lines of those promoted by recent Australian legislation.

At a functional level, the Council’s activities were modelled unsophisticatedly on those of the CoID: it established a designer service, where ‘manufacturers, retailers, public bodies and others in need of professional design assistance’ could be ‘quickly and efficiently’ introduced to a designer; it initiated a design index ‘a public and retail reference of well-designed New Zealand products’ where manufacturers could submit their products for assessment by an expert committee-approved products were tagged with a ‘Designmark’ label; and in 1969 it launched a monthly magazine, *Designscape*. But where the CoID (renamed the Design Council in 1972) serviced a potentially large manufacturing base and had a high public profile through its Haymarket design centre attracting eight thousand visitors a month, the NZIDC was confronted by a thin, diverse and fractured manufacturing base, had next to no public profile and at a peak in 1980 employed sixteen staff as opposed to the three hundred or so at the CoID. Where the CoID had an empowered directorate with a range of contacts within the United Kingdom establishment, the NZIDC had a single, professionally unqualified, executive officer, Geoffrey Nees, who had been transferred from the Department of Industries and Commerce. Where the CoID had the evangelising task of ‘improving by all practicable means the design of products of British industry’ the NZIDC’s function was ‘to promote the appreciation, development, improvement and use of industrial design in New Zealand with the object of improving the quality, efficiency, packaging, presentation, and appearance of goods produced in New Zealand.’⁸ It was a tenuous base on which to build an effective advocacy of industrial design.

Design exhortations

The NZIDC's principal propaganda organ, its magazine *Designscape*, like the short-lived *New Zealand Design Review*, sought to frame a national design identity around the rhetoric of modernism. With a circulation of about 3,000 copies, its audience comprised practicing and trainee designers—a 1970 survey calculated that there were forty-four designers in the country—as well as architects, manufacturers, retailers, advertisers and, appropriately given the primacy of agriculture in the country, agricultural engineers. Copies were distributed on the national airline, NAC—later merged with Air New Zealand—and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Until 1976, each issue comprised twenty sides of loose-leaf bound images and text and the content covered subjects as diverse as architecture, engineering, the crafts, graphic design, agricultural and horticultural machinery along with the most recent 'design index' approved products. An editorial policy favouring locally written articles is apparent although there appears to have been difficulty attracting sufficient copy and material sourced from overseas publications was reprinted periodically.

But editorial attempts to engender debate on design issues failed to take root. In a 1972 attempt to address the perennial question of a 'New Zealand style' the ensuing debate was described as 'not surprisingly, a somewhat nebulous topic [that] produced a lot of nebulous comment.'⁹ In 1982 this broad-spectrum approach shifted to focus on 'the more immediate current problems involving product design' making it 'a practical aid specifically for industry, designers and engineers'.¹⁰ From being a generalist, and at times popular, publication with an un-audited readership of about 30,000 persons which the NZIDC claimed did 'much to gain greater appreciation overseas of New Zealand's industrial and social climate with regard to design and quality', it became a limited-interest trade magazine-garnished with prurient photographs of scantily clad women. Circulation collapsed and it ceased publication in 1983. Regretting the magazine's demise the councils' then director,

Special report: design in plastics

Engineering plastics – New Zealand designers recognise benefits

J F B Patterson
Polymer Products Department,
Du Pont (New Zealand) Ltd

Since the advent some 40 years ago of highly specialised plastic resins which allow the designer far greater scope and freedom than was previously possible, the range also to add the material to the design of many industrial and domestic items to be moulded but could be used in place of metal in engineering fields was also heavily pursued.

The result in the 1960s is a selection of highly specialised plastic resins which allow the designer far greater scope and freedom than was previously possible. The range also to add the material to the design of many industrial and domestic items to be moulded but could be used in place of metal in engineering fields was also heavily pursued.

The development in recent years largely come from the USA, Europe and Japan but the applications and benefits are universal and virtually unlimited in their variety. New Zealand has not been slow to gain together in the use of engineering plastics. The country enjoys an international reputation in some fields. The quality of products well illustrated in the high standards of excellence exhibited in the annual Plastic Industry Awards – this year from more than 30 different companies.



The 1983 PNZ award in the agricultural section, for example, was won by a New Zealand Ltd for its new refractive plastic sprayer. The sprayer is a lightweight, portable, self-contained unit which can be used in a variety of applications. The sprayer's mechanism automatically extracts the gun – the action is so simple and fast the entire day's work can be done in less than half an hour. The product is seen as an invaluable addition to the company's existing range of glass sprayer applications due to its aluminium and so on.

Agricultural applications are major subjects for New Zealand designers using engineering plastics, and some excellent in-house work has been achieved. Included are the world's first risk meter and automatic milking systems, which, through their design, have not only improved engineering plastics.

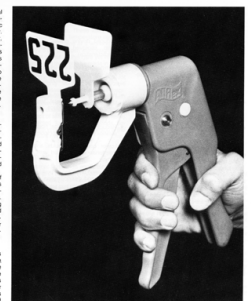
New Zealand yacht designs are, of course, internationally famous, and this is another area requiring designers from design through to engineering plastics. An Auckland manufacturer is producing composite hulls with glass reinforced nylon sandwich replacing aluminium components, and is a well-established supplier of marine hull valves engineered in glass-reinforced Zylon resin.

Delrin acetal resin was chosen for its toughness, light weight and total resistance to corrosion (even in sea water) for the handle components of New Zealand-made windproof hammers, and a Nylon resin is used for the handle and shoulder. Similar materials are used for a variety of handles and clasps in camping gear, sports kits and so on.

No restrictions on resins

There are no limitations to the amount or variety of resins which can be used in New Zealand. Free entry is offered for resins from all over the world, including ABS and PVC compounds of which only is played.

The main categories are Nylon (widely used in marine applications and for industrial cable ties and so on). Polyester (such as Du Pont Dacron) used in medical dressings, long-holders and doors. Acetal (such as Delrin) for self-lubricating, high-strength, impact-resistant parts. Other plastics, such as polypropylene, are used in products with a built-in spring such as buckets, crates and so on. Polypropylene (such as the plastic in the handle of the glass sprayer) is used in products such as camping gear, sports kits and so on.



After International Ltd won the agricultural products section in the 1983 PNZ awards for this automatic central spray system mounted in a tractor, efforts by Du Pont Nylon.

Many modifications of each are available, particularly the Nylon group. It is possible to obtain intermediate grades for particular applications, and with intermediate grades, such as the Nylon 6/6, there is an abundance of high-impact technical expertise available to the New Zealand designer and manufacturer.

Guidelines and benefits

The basic rules for engineering plastics are that the design must avoid sharp corners, must have uniform sections, must be easily assembled and must avoid heating and stress. Resins, films and preformed members should be one half to two-thirds as thick as the metal they are replacing. Avoid positive locks, cracks and notches. Engineering plastics are almost impossible to reject moulded. The exceptions are when they are subjected to profiles – nylon pipes, for example.

Many custom-moulded in New Zealand components are now, and they often have their own trading facilities or use independent tool-makers. There are more than 70 custom-moulding plants in New Zealand, with about half the country's total capacity in Auckland, so virtually any mould can be made, regardless of size.

Some resins, Polyester for example, do require operational, machinery equipment, such as pre-drying facilities, and this should be taken into account.

Designmark... recommending your products to prospective customers

Fig. 17 Changing audience: a *Designscape* layout as 'a practical aid specifically for industry, designers and engineers', June 1983.

Tom Arnold—who had been design director at Crown Lynn between 1979 and 1982—explained that ‘like many other publications and businesses, *Designscape* has become the victim of difficult economic times. The New Zealand Industrial Design Council has reluctantly concluded that the gap between what it costs to produce, and the revenue it generates, is too large.’¹¹ The magazine’s final front cover depicted a timber agricultural water tank with an inset of a Danish designed and manufactured chair, a clear indication of the collapse of the utopian and nationalist ideals that underlay its formation.

The NZIDC had little success in its other attempts to broaden public interest in its ‘good design’ agenda: as reflected in the Index to New Zealand Periodicals, the number of articles referring to design or industrial design, other than those published in *Designscape*, diminished from 1968. Newspaper commentary was likewise scarce: the *New Zealand Herald* published a single design-related article in 1970; an interview with Bruce Woods, a 29 year old designer, who commented that ‘a lot of people regard us with great suspicion, as if designing is something we do to enjoy ourselves [...] they don’t look on it as a business.’¹² In 1981 the council reported that ‘its most prominent achievement was in securing a strong promotional effect on the business community; and because of Royal Patronage obtained for the Prince Philip Award for New Zealand Industrial Design, on the community at large.’ Modelled on the eponymous British and Australian prototypes, established in 1957 and 1974 respectively, the Prince Philip award was intended to ‘recognise—particularly for export promotion purposes—the best Designmark products designed in New Zealand.’¹³ Its launch coincided with a council promoted conference ‘Product design for tomorrow’. In his opening address to the conference, the prime minister, Robert Muldoon, declared that:

There appears to be a very harmonious relationship between industry and the New Zealand Design Council. Practical worth of the Council’s work has already been given in the form of financial support from five enterprises [...] for new Council ventures to achieve the practical betterment of New Zealand design which would not otherwise be possible at present by way of grant or fees.¹⁴

Notwithstanding its bland assertion that ‘there is no doubt that in today’s world good design does pay and is the hallmark of most successful companies’ the focus of the NZIDC’s promotional activity was its attempts to secure funding from the private sector to ensure its continued existence. From the late 1970s, the council was subjected to a series of cost-cutting reviews by Treasury: notwithstanding high rates of inflation its government grant of \$213,025 for the 1975-76 financial year was cut by the incoming National government for the following financial year to

\$155,000. For the remainder of its existence the NZIDC was reliant on private sector funding for any initiatives it took beyond the bounds of its limited remit.

Design credibility

As the country's principal ceramics manufacturer, Crown Lynn, seems initially to have welcomed the establishment of the NZIDC, perhaps in the expectation that its aim of promoting indigenous design would increase its market share, both domestically and overseas. Crown Lynn products were a regular feature of early issues of *Designscape*: a design competition that the company had held since 1959 was cited as an example of benign corporate sponsorship. Moreover, the export-orientated objectives of the council coincided with those of Crown Lynn and, in 1969, it was one of the first companies to be presented with an export award by the nascent NZIDC. And a coffee set 'Luke Adams', designed by Mark Cleverley and David Jenkin, was among the first products accepted for the Design Index. But Crown Lynn had little need for support from the council: it had an established design unit and the Designmark approval scheme had little credibility in the company's growing export market; to the contrary, the identification of its products as New Zealand-made and approved may well have been perceived as a sales impediment in its largest overseas market, Australia. And the generalist flavour apparent in *Designscape* throughout the 1970s, with its equal treatment of industrially-produced and studio ceramics, may well have grated with a Crown Lynn management involved in a long-running skirmish with craft potters over the application of sales tax on this increasingly popular method of ceramic production.

From the early 1980s the NZIDC appears to have been in a state of systemic crisis. Between 1975 and 1976, 1981 and 1982 and, again, between 1985 and 1986 its functions and activities were the subject of government review. The first review, conducted by an incoming National party government, resulted in a 27 per cent cut in funding; the second in the consecutive resignations of two directors and a decision to cease the publication of *Designscape*. The council's activities became progressively more focussed on serving the needs of the light engineering industry, a move anticipated in Britain when, from the late 1960s, the Design Council—as it renamed itself in 1972 following pressure from the Council of Engineering Institutions—began focussing increasingly on similar concerns.¹⁵ But where the Design Council balanced this re-focus by encompassing a growing public interest in the crafts, the NZIDC pointedly ignored popular interest in the hand made products, probably due to the existence of a separate body, the New Zealand Crafts

Council.¹⁶ In an attempt to reanimate itself in the face of a growing scepticism of its performance from its principal sponsor, the government, the NZIDC resurrected a strategy to convince a hitherto largely ignored domestic public of the merits of ‘good design’ by opening a design centre in central Auckland in late 1984. Aimed primarily at consumers, it was intended as a venue for the display of Designmark approved products and as a temporary exhibition space for designers: the first exhibition was a display of the work of students from an Auckland polytechnical school, the Carrington Technical Institute. It was an inappropriate display to advertise the work of professional designers, it was in the wrong location and it was too late and too little: in the wake of a corporate building frenzy and a shift in consumer buying patterns from the city to suburban shopping malls, central Auckland was depopulating. In an economy where the mechanism of protective tariffs was being abandoned, where the neo-liberal ideology of the free market was being embraced in a state of frenzied haste, not only by the private sector but also by an ostensibly socialist Labour government. And in a society where the aesthetics of ‘good design’ were being discarded in lieu of conspicuous consumption, the NZIDC design centre was a short-lived, strategic mistake.

In 1988 the Lange Labour government finally terminated the NZIDC by repealing the Industrial Design Act of 1966 as part of its programme of disengagement from the private sector. The council’s remaining activities had already been merged with the user-funded Testing Laboratory Registration Council and, as its final annual report indicated, there had been an abrupt decline in the country’s manufacturing activity. Ron Tizard, who twenty-two years previously had been an ardent advocate of the concept of a state-supported design council, now, as minister of science and technology, sponsored the NZIDC’s ‘integration’ into an organisation ‘that can provide design standard assessment, quality manufacturing assessment and quality inspection and testing services.’ He noted that only one submission concerning the government’s decision had been received at committee level and that, ironically, was from the Dairy Board. The NZIDC was not the only casualty of a government cull of research bodies: PACRA, the partially-funded ceramics research arm of the DSIR, had been abolished in 1984.

Commentators on the activities of the CoID, while noting that its principal rationale was didactic—to define and propagandise ‘good’ British design—contend that the reality was otherwise. Maguire has argued that the advocacy of aesthetic self improvement which it practiced ‘often bore little relationship to the prevailing location of the design process within British industry.’¹⁷ These concerns,

ultimately, had little bearing on the situation in New Zealand. Conceived of by Sutch as part of a wider agenda to address the country's manufacturing immaturity, the NZIDC was delivered by a National government panicking at the imminent prospect of the United Kingdom joining the EEC and thus no longer a reliable market for New Zealand agricultural products. Emasculated at birth by a political ideology that cavilled at what it regarded as state intervention in the work of private enterprise and hobbled by inadequate resources both in terms of finance and personnel, the council was, ultimately, unable to pursue its limited agenda. Moreover, its formation was perhaps too late for it to play any significant part in the development of New Zealand's manufacturing industry: had it been established in 1949 it may have had the sort of impact on industry that Sutch envisaged it having in the late 1950s. As it was, the design it sought to promote and influence was located with neither the NZIDC nor the industry, but in the packaging; ultimately, the dominant rhetoric was trade, not design.

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- 1 Jonathan M Woodham, 'Design and the state: post-war horizons and pre-millennial aspirations', in *Utility reassessed: the role of ethics in the practice of design*, ed. by Judy Attfield, (Manchester; New York: University of Manchester Press, 1999), pp. 244-260, (250).
 - 2 W B Sutch, *The importance of the arts today: opening address by Dr W B Sutch, Secretary for Industries and Commerce [to the] Annual meeting of [the] New Zealand Federation of Chamber Music Societies at Wellington, 23 April 1960*, ([Wellington]: Department of Industries and Commerce, 1960), p. 8.
 - 3 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 - 4 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *NZPD*, (Hansard): Third Session, Thirty-fourth Parliament, vol. 347, (1 July-16 August 1966), (pp. 1447-1457), 1447.
 - 5 *Ibid.* (2140).
 - 6 Philip Proctor, 'Message from the chairman', *Designscape*, no. 1 (February 1969), p. 1.
 - 7 'National Development Conference: design recommendations', *Designscape*, no. 2 (April 1969), p. 5.
 - 8 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *The Industrial Design Act*, 1966.
 - 9 'Five characters in search of a style', *Designscape*, no. 33 (February 1972), (pp. [5-9]), [5]. Participants in the discussion were: James Coe, head of the Wellington Polytechnic School of Design; Michael Nicolaidi, director of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council; Ian Athfield, architect; Dr W B Sutch; and Ray Cowan, a potter.
 - 10 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report of the New Zealand Industrial Design Council for the year ended 31 March 1982', *AJHR*, vol. 6, no. G-16 (1982), (pp. 1-11), 5.
 - 11 Tom Arnold, 'Our last issue', *Designscape*, (October 1983), p. 3.
 - 12 Brian Healy, 'Design makes for better life in home or industry', *NZH*, 30 December 1970, p. 13.
 - 13 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'Report of the New Zealand Industrial Design Council for the year ended 31 March 1982', (3).
 - 14 R D Muldoon, 'Opening address by the Prime Minister the Rt Hon R D Muldoon CH', in *Product design for tomorrow: conference report*, (Wellington: New Zealand Industrial Design Council, 1981), pp. 1-143, (9)
 - 15 It is perhaps worth noting that Philip Proctor, the chairman of the NZIDC from its establishment in 1969 until 1979, had trained as an engineer.
 - 16 'Interview [with Sir Paul Riley]', *Designscape*, no. 54 (December 1973), p. 14.
 - 17 Patrick J Maguire, 'Industrial design: aesthetic idealism and economic reality', in *Design and cultural politics in postwar Britain: the Britain Can Make It Exhibition of 1946*, ed. by Jonathan M Woodham, (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 111-122, (111).

9.3 Cook'n serve: Crown Lynn and design

While Crown Lynn's management regarded the 1950s as signifying the company's nadir, its perception of the 1960s was that, in terms of output and performance, it reached its zenith. Much of this success can be attributed to the growing professionalism of management but it also reflected the company's escalating ability to attract trained staff from the United Kingdom, an upsurge in investment in new plant and machinery, an expansion in the range of wares produced, an increasingly sophisticated domestic market concomitant with a growing population and—not least—a series of policy decisions by both Labour and, later, National governments which encouraged the development of an export market for industrially manufactured commodities. Between 1960 and 1970 the company's profits grew by 28 per cent whilst its capital reserves expanded from \$597,024 to \$3,540,994 and its share price index by 71.4 per cent.¹ Notwithstanding the benefits accruing to the company from the Labour administrations of 1935-49 and 1957-60, the company continued its association with the National party; for many years during the 1960s the chairman of the holding company—Consolidated Brick and Pipe Investments Ltd—was the former National party minister of finance, Jack Watts; moreover, through its board of directors it was closely associated with many of the country's leading industrial concerns. But notwithstanding any impact these political connections may have had on its relations with government, it was the company's decision to elevate its design profile that changed public perceptions of its products: from 1962 when it again began exporting, design became a critical factor not only in Crown Lynn's export success but also in its eventual ascendancy over imported wares in the domestic market.

A renaissance in production

The re-imposition of licensing controls by the Labour government in 1958 was the significant factor in Crown Lynn's renaissance; as they had in the past, import licenses and tariffs provided the company both with an assured domestic market and a level of protection from the vagaries of imported products. Further assistance came in July 1960 when in its last budget prior to the election, the Labour government finally imposed a tariff on British ceramic imports. The *New Zealand Herald* reported that:

In the case of chinaware there was previously no British preferential tariff and the general tariff was 45%. This has been changed to 7 1/2d a pound on the British preferential tariff plus 55% ad valorem on the general tariff. The rates imposed here are designed to protect Crown Lynn Potteries, which employs almost entirely New Zealand materials and which the government believes is capable of sustained development.²

The *New Zealand Manufacturer* reported the company swanking its satisfaction at the re-imposition of licensing control:

Now Crown Lynn's tariff is an actuality they have not only been able to plug the crockery shortage created by import control with more than a 100% production increase, they have commenced an export drive of all New Zealand crockery to Australia with the hope of earning vital overseas exchange.³

Government intervention benefited the company in other ways: in 1959 it was licensed to import a British Murray Curvex printing machine which made possible 'total transfer' off-set printing of flatware and backstamps. Acquisition of this technology enabled the company—for the first time—not only to produce a relatively sophisticated product, equal in terms of technical quality to that produced in Europe and the United States but also to increase output. Other technical innovations included the establishment of a silk-screen printing department in 1963 that made possible the in-house production of transfer designs thus reducing production time and a dependence on overseas suppliers. Another factor contributing to the renewed development of the company included the reputed high standard of living prevailing in New Zealand, an incentive which enabled it to recruit experienced staff from factories in the United Kingdom; now not only were skilled operatives like Shufflebottom lured to New Lynn but also chemists and technicians. A 1963 issue of the company's publicity news sheet *New Zealand Ceramics* reported the recruitment of H Jones as its new laboratory head; formerly assistant chief chemist in the fine china division of Royal Doulton Ltd he declared that he 'didn't expect to find Royal Doulton quality here but I was amazed at Crown Lynn's size and efficiency.'⁴

Clark's marketing and publicity campaigns became increasingly sophisticated: from 1959 when Nash visited the factory to receive a commemorative loving cup, a stream of politicians sought to be associated with the acceptable face of industrial design, preferably in the company of their wives. This procession of notables was eclipsed in 1963 when Elizabeth II descended on the factory: she was reported enquiring of H Jones about his '10 years with the Royal Doulton factory in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent.'⁵ In a society where loyalty to the British crown remained a benchmark of national patriotism, the latter visit was undoubtedly good marketing practice and, in terms of maintaining the levels of protection the company sought, the former was a necessary political expediency.

Marketing practices

More pertinently, from 1956, the company began advertising in the national and regional press, often in collaboration with a spread of identified retail establishments ranging in size from the Farmers' department store in Auckland to the Taumarunui Hardware shop. These campaigns were co-ordinated by external consultants: Jacka-Brown Advertising Ltd and, later, a public relations firm, Ord Dryden Ltd and often went hand in hand with product promotions: the Farmers' campaign was part of an in-store 'Buy New Zealand' promotion and, from 1965, provincial newspapers ran a series of subsidised advertisements for regional retailers stressing the ready availability of Crown Lynn wares throughout the country. Likewise the advertisements aimed at changing perceptions of Crown Lynn's technical quality and design sophistication: an advertisement in the *New Zealand Herald* in April 1959, employing a style of graphic design used in British advertisements a decade previously and featuring the company's head designer David Jenkins (*sic*), stressed consumer demand as an incentive for better design while another, run during the 1960 Industrial Conference, recruited science to convey the overt message that the Crown Lynn had resolved its notorious reputation for poorly attached cup handles: 'Says Chief Ceramist Chemist Ken Seal [...], "We've perfected the method of securing handles to cups to a degree where it is virtually impossible to separate them from the cup without breaking the cup first."'”⁶

Crown Lynn's sales successes during the late 1950s and early 1960s were equally a reflection of its changed relationship with importers and distributors and retail outlets. Whereas during the early 1950s the company's output had been derided as badly made and of unrefined appearance, it was now praised not only because 'in the everyday field of medium-priced tableware its products are indistinguishable in appearance and quality from those of the corresponding grades of English tableware' but also for its apparent decision to 'concentrate on giving its products a look characteristic of its New Zealand origin'. Commemorating the factory's '100



Fig. 18 Selling design: 'From David Jenkins' board have come hundreds of new crockery conceptions that have been made ... pottery of exquisite quality he wants his Company to make, his Company wants to make, if given the support, the chance to make them', *New Zealand Herald*, 11 April 1959.

millionth article' the *New Zealand Herald* produced a four-side feature supplement embellished with advertisements from the importers and distributors L D Nathan & Co Ltd, Arthur H Nathan Ltd, Sargood Son & Ewen Ltd, John Burns & Co Ltd, Arthur Martin Ltd and Gibson & Paterson (NZ) Ltd as well as department stores including McKenzies (NZ) Ltd, the DIC Ltd, James Smith Ltd, Woolworths (NZ) Ltd and Milne & Choyce Ltd. Even the Dominion Breweries Ltd and the Gourmet Restaurant felt confident enough to be associated with the company.⁷ By May 1962 the company had negotiated arrangements with fifty-six retailers for the installation of dedicated in-store 'Crown Lynn Shops' and more were promised. With a geographical spread from Kaikohe to Timaru, from the largest department store to the smallest hardware shop, Crown Lynn's penetration of the domestic market was complete.

Design competition

Despite the considerable technical improvements and the adoption of professional marketing strategies, it was a change in the company's attitude to design that drove the transformation of public perception of its products. In 1959 the company essayed its first design competition. In an improbable echo of Sutch's reflections on the role of the arts in developing local industry, Clark was quoted as observing that 'if New Zealand industry is to progress beyond the humdrum, artists and designers will have to play a full part in this development.'⁸ In its 15 April newsletter the Architectural Centre announced:

This competition is being sponsored by Crown Lynn in association with the Auckland Society of Arts, and closes on June 1st 1959. The prize money is good—the cup saucer and platter have already been designed—all you have to do is design a decorative motive—not necessarily a New Zealandish one—so be in.⁹

But, a month later, the Centre warned that the competition was held to be unethical: 'This was discussed at the last meeting of the Association of N.Z. Arts Societies; and the Centre has spoken to the Auckland Society of Arts who sponsored it for Crown Lynn.' Despite these setbacks, some one hundred entries were received from all over the country—including one from the recently-sacked Frank Carpay who was awarded a consolation prize of ten pounds. It was a shrewd opportunity to re-brand the company, both in the eyes of the public and, most importantly, in the views of wholesalers and retailers: two of the judges were 'chinaware buyers' who expressed disappointment 'that so few floral entries were of prize winning standard' and that 'the better work was in contemporary ware.'¹⁰ The winner of the competition was a Wellington-based designer, Otway Josling, who submitted 'a pattern of four stylised fern-leaves, in black and white, on an all-over blue

background.’ Both Josling’s design and that of the second place getter, Don Mills of Auckland, were placed in production: Josling’s pattern ‘inspired by the natural fauna of New Zealand [...] with New Zealand’s hallowed national emblem, the Fern Leaf as its motif’ ‘Reflections’, was produced initially in earthenware and later in vitreous china used to decorate the in-flight china used on the national flag carrier TEAL.¹¹ The Mills’ design was marketed under the pseudo-Scandinavian name ‘Narvik’: advertising misleadingly described it as ‘an Award-Winner from Crown Lynn’s 1960 design awards—a simple yet striking pattern conceived in the true Scandinavian tradition.’¹² The pattern was to become one of the company’s most popular lines notwithstanding its often-reiterated belief that local taste inclined to ‘roses, roses, all the way.’¹³

The design competition’s success, in terms both of raising the profile of the company and providing it with an opportunity to gauge consumer preferences, was considerable. A succession of prime ministers used the design award ceremonies to reiterate government commitment to developing the country’s export trade. At the 1962 ceremony Keith Holyoake opined that ‘in many ways the sale of our products overseas will depend on the quality of the design. And here, these annual awards have been a tremendous help.’ In 1969 he declared that ‘Crown Lynn has been a pioneer in the field of good design in New Zealand.’ And in 1976 Robert Muldoon lauded the company’s achievement as:

The largest and most up-to-date tableware manufacturer in Australasia [...] they have demonstrated to less aggressive manufacturers in other fields that it is possible to compete successfully internationally on the basis of a cost structure that overcomes the disadvantage of transport charges to distant markets.

Exporting to Australia had long formed a part of the company’s strategy for expanding production. Early forays in that direction had failed with the revaluation of the New Zealand currency in 1948, the government’s re-imposition of licensing controls coincided with the conservative Australian governments decision to abandon its own protectionist tariffs. Between 1958 and 1960, Crown Lynn doubled its production and in 1962 re-entered the Australian market, exporting

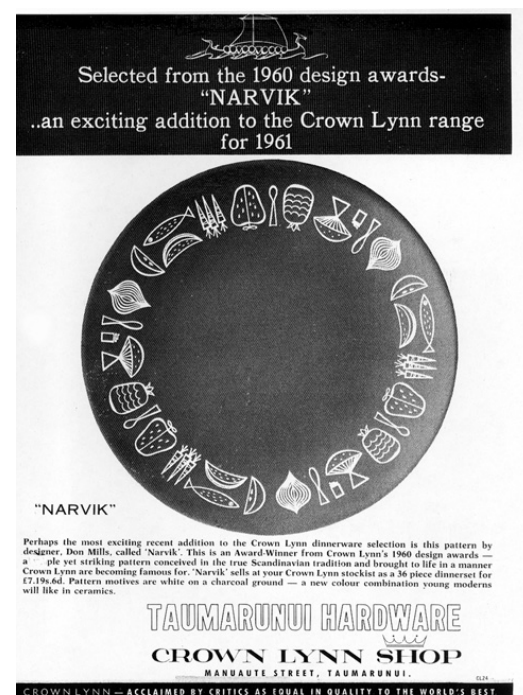


Fig. 19 Crown Lynn ‘Narvik’ plate, Don Mills’ second-placed design in the 1959 Crown Lynn design competition. Auckland War Memorial Museum Library, Crown Lynn Potteries Records, 98/34/1/5.

goods with a value of £46,197. Employing marketing strategies similar to those that had developed for the domestic market the company opened a Crown Lynn retail shop in an inner suburb of Melbourne and, in collaboration with a local retail chain ran a competition for 'a contemporary plate design' although the winning pattern of a spray of eucalyptus leaves was not put into production. By 1963 Clark could claim that he had a network of 'about 50' Crown Lynn franchise holders in Victoria alone, a fact that he attributed to 'research into new achievements and methods by which we can make better crockery of better quality, cheaper'.¹⁴

The north American dream

The focus on export production after 1965 was a result of extensive planning: in September 1964 the company flagged its intention to begin exports to Canada and the United States; distribution companies were appointed and preparations were made to extend production runs to meet new market requirements. Local designs were not perceived as necessarily appropriate for the company's new venture and in an attempt to broaden market appeal the 'world famous' Californian glass and tableware decorator and manufacturer, Dorothy C Thorpe, was retained to supervise a series of designs specifically for the north American market.¹⁵ Scarcely known outside of California, Thorpe had established a Los Angeles-based glass decorating and interior design business in the 1930s.¹⁶ In the post-war boom she extended her activities into ceramic decoration and was reputed to have had links with the modernist architects and designers Ray and Charles Eames. Recruited as the designer for the new north American lines by Clark following a visit to the USA, Thorpe, when she eventually arrived in New Zealand in mid-1965, appears to have been overwhelmed by the scale of production; when the new lines were despatched to the United States six months later Thorpe had been corporatised as Dorothy C Thorpe Inc. and was referred to merely as the company's 'United States distributing agent'. Rather than designing, Thorpe became a vehicle for the company's initial expansion into the north American market; the majority of the new lines were, ultimately, designed locally by Jenkin and Mark Cleverley, a Christchurch-based freelance designer and a frequent winner of the Crown Lynn design competition. In December 1968 Cleverley was finally recruited as an in-house designer with a remit to 'examine world trends, then produce shapes and patterns in keeping with overseas taste, but with a distinctive New Zealand "handwriting"'.¹⁷ Cleverley's employment signalled not only recognition of the growing importance that the company placed on design but also the increasing significance the company placed on designing for an overseas rather than local market. Together with Jenkin, who

had been with the company since 1945, Cleverley constituted a semi-autonomous design unit that was 'separate from the marketing and production side of things [although] it closely works in with them even in matters of fine detail, and the designers have a good deal of contact with the factory processes.'¹⁸ Cleverley's 1965 designs for Crown Lynn's north American launch had taken advantage of the the company's increasing technological sophistication; its perception of 'design' was no longer restricted to providing a variety of applied decorations for what was essentially the same shape. After 1968 an increasing number of shapes were produced. Despatched to the United States and Canada on a Department of Industries and Commerce trade mission, Jenkin reported back optimistically that 'designs and shapes being developed by Crown Lynn, particularly those aimed specially at the export market, were in line with the bold trend, and his overseas visit confirmed his view that Crown Lynn development was along the right track.'¹⁹

Equally, Crown Lynn's recruitment of Thorpe reflected a larger shift in its design ethos: the United States was not only an untapped export market but also a source of new management techniques and greater efficiencies of automation, the latter move anticipated during the early 1950s in research undertaken by the New Zealand Pottery and Ceramic Manufacturers' Association which made specific reference to production and design techniques employed by United States tableware producers. As well, it reflected changes in the country's global allegiances: America was fast occupying the hiatus brought about by the increasingly Euro-centric policies adopted by the United Kingdom. This reorientation seems to have been reflected in the growing presence of American influences in New Zealand culture, from television programming to the country's political concerns, a tendency reflected at micro level by a 1962 advertisement headlined 'Crown Lynn went to America to secure patterns like these for the N.Z. market', explaining that the imported transfer pattern 'Autumn splendour' 'is truly a natural for New Zealand tastes. The overwhelming popularity this design received in America seems certain to be exceeded in this country.'²⁰ Even Crown Lynn's design competition may have been based on similar events pioneered in the United States: the CoID publication *Design* reported a 1950 exhibition of dinnerware designs which included 'the prize-winners in a competition held at the end of last year under the sponsorship of the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts, New York, and Commercial Decal Inc, makers of ceramic lithographic transfers.'²¹ The writer of the report observed that because the designs were intended to fit rimless plates, it was unlikely that they would find any favour in Britain; there would have no such problem in New Zealand where most of Crown Lynn's tableware designs were rimless.

By the end of the decade the total New Zealand production of domestic crockery, hotelware and other pottery products was valued at \$2,920,000 of which exports amounted to \$1,035,175: crockery to the value of \$545,243 went to Australia and \$195,193 to Canada where, presumably, a percentage was re-exported to the United States.²² The majority of this trade was derived from Crown Lynn's production; it was by now the largest manufacturer of ceramic tableware in the southern hemisphere: the company had acquired the Christchurch pottery Luke Adams in 1965, its only New Zealand competitor now being the Temuka pottery in Otago. In 1968 it began to diversify its hold over the New Zealand and Australian markets by acquiring the hotelware importers and distributors Gibson & Paterson Ltd. In the same year it expanded its clay mines at Matauri Bay in Northland, establishing a joint venture, New Zealand China Clays Ltd with an American company, the Georgia Kaolin Co, to exploit the high quality clays: a significant proportion of the output was for use in paper making, not ceramic production. By the late 1960s the company was trumpeting that its asset base had expanded from \$3.42 million in 1960 to \$14.48 million. This growth was partly illusory: since 1966, when wool prices collapsed spectacularly, New Zealand had suffered from double-digit inflation, leading to increases in the cost of labour and, consequently, its products. Notwithstanding its undoubted success both in the domestic and export markets, Crown Lynn was a small player in a gradually globalising world. It remained a tariff-protected industry in a highly regulated economy, yet its future success would depend on increasingly liberal terms of trade. And while design had been a factor in the company's expansion, its prominent role would in the future be subsumed by an increasing emphasis on corporate goals.

1 *Equity investments, 1970-71*, (Wellington: Berl Publications, 1970), p. 87.

2 'Aid for three industries: tariff protection', *NZH*, 23 July, 1960, p. 3.

3 'Progress in pottery: booming production precedes export drive in Australia', *New Zealand Manufacturer* (15 December 1953), (pp. 64-67), 65.

4 'Royal Doulton man heads laboratory', *New Zealand Ceramics*, (January 1963).

5 'Duke watches workers at their benches', *NZH*, 09 February 1963, p. 3.

6 Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd advertisement, *NZH*, 11 June 1960, p. 21

7 'One hundred million: Crown Lynn Potteries record production', *NZH*, 18 July 1959, p. 21. The fact that the chairman of the Dominion Breweries Ltd was L J Stevens, a prominent member of the Crown Lynn holding company, may have been a contributing factor in the former company's decision to partially subsidise the *NZH* feature.

8 'Nationwide search for local designs: over 600 artists in big ceramics contest', *NZH*, 18 July 1959, p. 22.

9 ATL, MS-Papers-2778-26, Architectural Centre (Wellington). Records, Architectural Centre newsletter, 1952-1959: 15th April 1959.

10 'Pottery designs by N.Z. artists', *H&B*, vol. 22, no. 5 (01 October 1959), (pp. 61-63), 63.

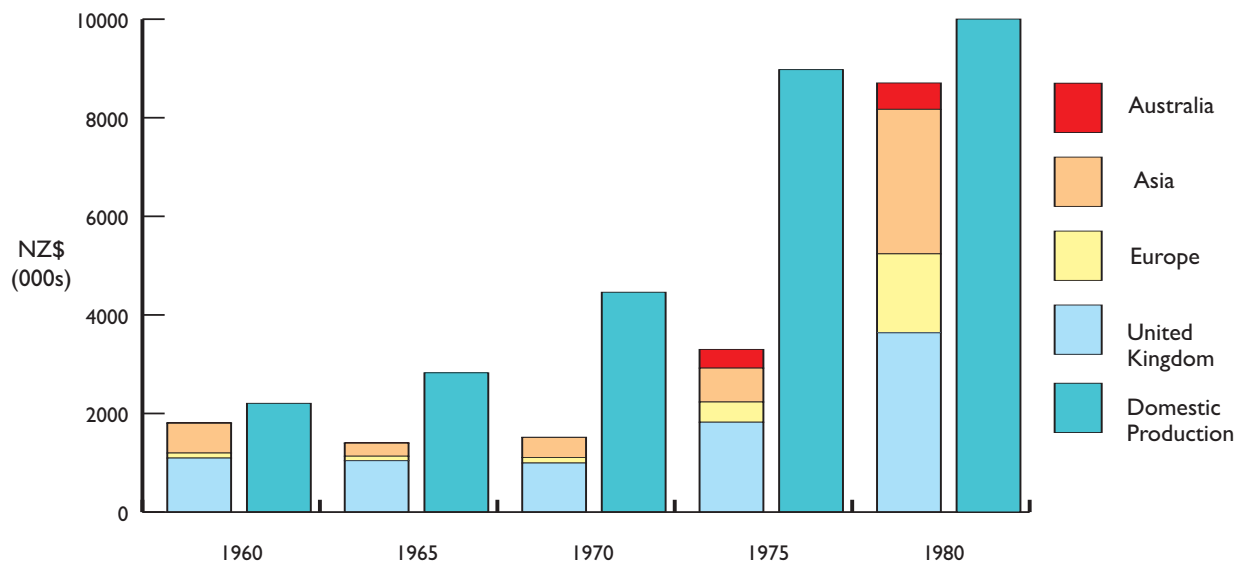
11 AWMMML, 98/34, Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd, Records, 1959-1987: Scrapbook 10.

12 Ibid.: Scrapbook 8. The winners of the 1960 Crown Lynn design competitions were Brian Calcutt, Otway Josling and Philip Ham. See: 'Aucklanders take prizes in art contest', *AS*, 01 September 1960, p.7.

- 13 “‘Roses, roses all the way’ has been your request’, *Femina*, (August 1959).
- 14 ‘Pottery industry attacking export market’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, (October 1963).
- 15 ‘Designer flies from U.S.A. for on-the-spot consultations’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, (June 1965).
- 16 Thorpe claimed Prince Rainier of Monaco and numerous Hollywood film stars as clients. Impressed, Crown Lynn asserted in *New Zealand Ceramics* (December, 1964) that ‘her original designs have brought her listings in *Who’s who in American art*, *Who’s who on the Pacific Coast* and *Who’s who in American women*.’ The company seems to have been unaware that these were vanity publications.
- 17 ‘Top designer joins pottery’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, (December 1968).
- 18 ‘Crown Lynn Design Unit Auckland’, *Designscape*, no. 20 (November 1970), pp. 4-5.
- 19 ‘Design a big factor in U.S. resurgence’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, (May 1969).
- 20 AWMML, 98/34, Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd, Scrapbook 10.
- 21 ‘US competition for design of dinnerware’, *Design*, vol. 2, no. 15 (March 1950), p. 24.
- 22 New Zealand converted to decimal currency in July 1967: \$2.00 = £1.00.

9.4 Changing consumption (1960-1980)

Between the 1960s and the 1990s, the consumption of ceramics in New Zealand underwent a number of significant changes. The most obvious related to source: where in 1960 the market was split almost evenly between domestic and imported ceramics, by 1975 some two thirds were of local origin. Yet, by 1980, and notwithstanding the protection provided by import licenses and tariffs, the gap was again closing and by 1990, as a result of the implosion of the local industry, almost all tableware consumed in New Zealand, across the entire market spectrum, was imported.



Tab. 4 New Zealand consumption of industrially produced ceramics by region of origin and value, 1960-1980.

Statistical reports of New Zealand.

Although it is difficult to quantify, change can also be discerned in the status of ceramic tableware as well as in the way it was marketed and sold; as early as the mid 1950s statistics began to register a new focus for consumer expenditure: electric household durable goods such as washing machines, televisions (from 1960) and, more recently, home computers, video players and mobile telephones; product types with a higher cost and shorter life. Brian Easton observed in 1967 that ‘the introduction of a new consumer durable reduces sales of other durables and even of clothing and footwear, as consumers switch expenditure to acquire the new good.’¹ In the face of such competition and combined with a shift in living habits, reflected, for example, in the change from formal to informal eating patterns, tableware took a lower priority in the allocation of the household budget.

Vectors of distribution

As the New Zealand ceramics market of the 1960s and 1970s was increasingly dominated by Crown Lynn productions, so too direct British influence over demand appeared to diminish: the demand for traditional British tableware dropped considerably, from a value of £548,000 (\$1,096,000) in 1960 to \$998,000 in 1970, or from 60 per cent to 22 per cent of total imports, from 27 per cent to 16 per cent of total consumption of durables. Even so, the diminishing value of imports from the United Kingdom did not lead automatically to an increase in the value of ceramic imports from the United States of America, the new cultural power, due both to the protected status of local manufacturers and American influences discernible in the productions of both New Zealand and Japan, the latter country for a time the second largest source of imported wares. Moreover, ceramic was no longer the only material in which tableware could be produced: plastic was becoming increasingly popular, particularly for everyday use. It was robust, colourful and cheap and from the 1960s began to be produced in increasing quantities: local output alone grew from a value of just under £7 million in 1960 to well over \$220 million in 1976.² Similarly, the increasing availability of plastics was matched by an increase in the consumption of craft ceramics, a category of production that, until the 1960s, had been almost non-existent. In a 1979 parliamentary debate it was asserted that, improbably, '1,000,000 kg of the tableware sold in the country [was] produced by craft potters' and that there were 'about 5,000 potters in this country [...] who have their own kilns in their own backyard, and who are making a very good name for themselves in the field of pottery.'³

Where their inner city suburb domiciled parents of the 1930s had drunk their tea from willow patterned earthenware cups and saucers and eaten their 'tea' off plates with the same decoration, the parents of the 1960s and 1970s in their 'ranch-styled' suburban bungalows, drank their Gregg's instant coffee in stoneware mugs⁴ and ate their takeaway meals from plastic plates in front of the television⁵ or, on special occasions, their beef stroganoff off Crown Lynn 'Sorrento' dinnerware at the table.⁶



Fig. 20 'Typical of Crown Lynn's more, recent up-to-date designs are Filigree (rear) and Sorrento'.

Designscape no. 85, October, 1976.

The rise of Crown Lynn as a factor in the market place, along with a reduction in imports, saw a concomitant diminishment in the significance import houses played in determining consumer taste in ceramics: Crown Lynn tended to deal directly with retailers. Moreover, improved printing technologies and better communications between New Zealand and the outside world led to increased access by the public to overseas publications. Where New Zealand consumers had once relied on what was made available to them through the mediation of the importers or by way of the local press, from the 1960s they were able to access a wide array of commodities, albeit virtually and some months after publication date, through illustrated 'home style' magazines, such as the Condé Nast *House & Garden* imprints, published in the United States and the United Kingdom. The introduction of television to Auckland in 1960 also acted to widen public perception of the outside world in much the same way that the cinema had acted as a vector for outside influences in the 1920s and 30s: the majority of programmes broadcast were of either British or American origin.⁷ These moves had a flow-on effect in that it was now possible for consumers, drawing on a wider knowledge of the world of commodities to specify to retailers and importers what they wanted rather than being necessarily dependent on what they were offered. Likewise, as the United Kingdom ceramics industry contracted—particularly after the 1973 oil crisis—importers increasingly began to look elsewhere to supply their needs: between 1960 and 1980, there was a significant growth in ceramic imports from continental Europe and Asia; those from Europe with relatively high import costs being directed at the upper end and those from Asia to the lower end of the market. Reflecting the changing market place, the managing director of the long-established importers John Raine argued in 1996 that the role of the importer was now primarily one of marketing, particularly since disposable income was directed more at 'buying a new home, home improvements, boats, cars, electronic goods [...] Even with changing tastes and the emphasis on outdoor living and eating [...] everybody still has to have a dinner set [...] We have to nurse the brands, take care of them, promote them, enlarge them and grow the business'.⁸

From High Street to Warehouse

Where in the pre-World War II period, retailing of ceramics was characterised by a mix of specialty stores, large department stores and low-priced mixed goods stores, all conventionally located in the inner city, the 1960s marked the emergence of new types of retail outlets and the dispersal of retailing across the wider city. The rapid population growth in post World War II Auckland and its concomitant suburban

explosion, along with increased car ownership and the development of the motorway system from the mid 50s, prompted radical changes in the way people acquired commodities. As early as the 1920s, suburban developments in Auckland had been based loosely on American 'strip centre' or 'high street' models but it was not until 1958, when Auckland's first supermarket, Foodtown, opened in the state housing subdivision of Otara, that the Americanisation of retailing began to have a noticeable effect on shopping habits. Auckland's first dedicated shopping mall, Lynmall which—appropriately enough—abutted the Crown Lynn factory, opened in 1963.⁹ Between 1963 and 1990 five suburban shopping malls, with their associated car parks, opened in the Auckland urban area, auguring the decline of central business district as the principal site of retail consumption. From the mid 1970s, inner city department stores either closed or relocated both to shopping malls and new inner city locations. Department stores closing in the inner city included well-known names such as John Court Ltd, George Court & Sons and a swathe of 'middle ranking' retailers such as Smith & Brown and Maples. Milne & Choyce—for many years Auckland's leading department store—sought to counter the decline in inner city shopping by opening branches in suburban locations as early as the 1960s: on the upmarket Remuera strip and in the more populist Lynmall shopping centre. These branch stores were envisaged as miniature (5,000 square metre) replicas of the Queen Street headquarters although the range of goods they stocked was reduced proportionately. It was a doomed move; by the mid 1980s, Milne & Choyce had fallen victim to corporate predators and the company was liquidated: its Lynmall site was subsequently occupied by the downmarket Rendells department store and its flagship role in the mall assumed by Maximart a mixed goods discount chain store, owned by the long-established importers L D Nathan, which bulk sold a wide range of low-priced items, most of which were imported.

The failure of Milne & Choyce's efforts to follow changing retailing trends suggests both a changing consumer perception of ceramics as a commodity and an increase in targeted retailing. As noted previously, 'design' stores, as opposed to the traditional ceramic retailers, began opening in Auckland in the late 1940s. By the early 1960s these specialist retail outlets had increased in both number and spread, in many instances operating out of suburban 'strip centre' premises vacated by businesses such as neighbourhood butchers, grocers and bakers that had closed as a result of the rise of supermarkets. They included homeware specialist shops, such as Décor in Remuera East and the Danish Design Centre in Parnell, and they sold a range of goods often stocked through a close reading of imported

publications and painstakingly located through a trawl of importers' warehouses. By the mid 1980s this pattern of retailing was becoming increasingly corporatised with the rise of specialist chain stores such as Stevens Bros Ltd—now Stevens Home & Giving—spread across greater Auckland. A review of ceramic advertisements in the 1985 issues of the Auckland lifestyle monthly magazine *Metro*, a publication aimed at the upper end of the market, reflects some of the changes in both importing and at the high end of consumption. Over twelve months, fifteen advertisements appear: nine are for German manufacturers, Arzberg, Fürstenberg, Rosenthal and Hutschenreuther; four for British manufacturers, Royal Doulton, Wedgwood, Royal Albert and Portmeirion; one for a Japanese manufacturer Mikasa; and one is non-specific. Six of the advertisements were inserted by two agents, Andrew Hawley Ltd and Cosmopolitan Agencies Ltd, and nine by four retail outlets: the Stevens Bros Ltd chain with fourteen stores in the Auckland region (Downtown, Karangahape Road, Panmure, Takapuna, Meadowbank, Mangere, Lynmall, Onehunga, Brown's Bay, Otahuhu, Otara, King's Plaza and Papakura); Form a 'centre for good design' in central Auckland; Rondo 2000 Interiors specialising in 'tableware and decorative art' in Parnell; and The Studio of Tableware Ltd in Mt Eden. The Portmeirion advertisement indicates that this line could be purchased from six Auckland ceramic retailers: Tanfield, Potter & Co, the Studio of Tableware, Beeton & Jeeves, Peppercorn, Designstore and Presence, a total of twenty two specialist ceramic retailers. There were no advertisements for Crown Lynn.

In a 1986 memorandum to the holding company management, Crown Lynn's general manager recorded that of the fifteen remaining Crown Lynn shops, eight were either closed or in the process of closing, two were to be retained on a monthly basis, and five—in the small city and suburban locations of New Lynn, Rotorua, Hamilton, Birkenhead and Henderson—he recommended should be kept open. The report suggested further that as the Crown Lynn range was now losing ground to competition from low-priced imports from recently established factories in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia, supermarket chains and bulk retailers should be approached. The strategy was identified as a 'shift from High Street to Warehouse'. Crown Lynn's return to the lower end of the market coincided with the rise of bulk discount chain stores such as the Warehouse, which opened its first store in 1982. Sited in an industrial zone, its first shop relied on low overheads, bulk advertising and low prices to attract its customers; the company based its success on excluding middlemen, such as independent importers, and a

‘continued commitment to advanced use of new technology and processes [...] controlling expenses and keeping costs to a minimum.’¹⁰ But even as the Warehouse expanded, the Crown Lynn empire shrank. Having targeted its new market, it failed to deliver: its output was irregular and inflexible, due to antiquated plant; its lines no longer reflected popular demand, due to a policy of relying on standard lines; its prices were relatively high for the quality of the goods produced, due to an over-reliance on protection and a failure to modernise; and its overheads were high, due to restructuring and management costs.

1 Easton, *Consumption in New Zealand 1954-5 to 1964-5*, p. 36.

2 Plastics Institute of New Zealand, *Plastics: partner in today's living*, ([Wellington]: Plastics Institute of New Zealand, 1978), p. 2.

3 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, *NZPD* (Hansard): First Session, Thirty-Ninth Parliament, vol. 424, (1978), pp. 1616-1618.

4 From the early 1960s, advertisements for Gregg's instant coffee, 'New Zealand's top seller', used a saucer-less cup; Louis Le Vaillant believes that it was produced by the Staffordshire company W R Midwinter Ltd. In the late 1970s the cup was replaced by a mug of the same design. Louis Le Vaillant, pers. com. 21 November, 2003.

5 Takeaway food appeared in New Zealand in the aftermath of World War II. The first New Zealand McDonald's Corporation fast food franchise opened in the Wellington suburb of Porirua in 1976. See: 'Timeline - McDonald's in New Zealand'. McDonald's Systems of New Zealand, 2003, Available: http://mccms.mcdonalds.co.nz/rexconductor/web_print.asp?ID+100002446&Sectionid=100002281, 01 October 2003.

6 'American' food recipes were published widely in the 1960s and 70s. See, for example: 'American food recipes', *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, (3 July 1972), pp. 104-107.

7 Television broadcasting began in Auckland in June 1960, in Christchurch in June 1961, in Wellington in July 1961 and Dunedin in July 1962. There were 300,000 television licenses issued in 1965. See: 'History of Television in New Zealand: the early years'. Television New Zealand, [2003], Available: <http://www.tvnz.co.nz>, 02 October 2003.

8 'John Raine', *Merchant*, (March 1996), (pp. 21-22), 22.

9 Kevin T. Anthony, 'Shopping centre developments in Auckland' (MSc thesis, Department of Geography, University of Auckland, 2002), p. 76.

10 'History & Future: The Warehouse New Zealand'. The Warehouse Group, 2002, Available: <http://www.thewarehouse.co.nz>, 02 October 2003.

9.5 The great experiment (1970-1989)

By the early 1970s there were three tableware manufacturers operating in New Zealand: Crown Lynn, with factories at New Lynn, Takinini and Christchurch; New Zealand Insulators at Temuka; and the Waimea Craft Pottery Limited in Nelson. Temuka, a division of New Zealand Insulators Ltd owned by the Cable Price Downer Group, began producing domestic stoneware in the early 1970s using designs prepared by Jack Laird, an English-born potter.¹ Laird had migrated to New Zealand in 1964, establishing a small pottery at Waimea that combined a traditional craft operation with limited mass production. While this expansion in the industrial production of tableware may have been prompted by the economic success of the Crown Lynn enterprise, it was also matched by a phenomenal growth in the production and consumption of studio pottery. Studio wares appear to have had some influence on industrial production—particularly during the 1970s—notably in the shape and decoration of tableware by providing manufacturers with specific design and technical skills—as with Laird at Temuka—and raising the profile of ceramics in the market place. Crown Lynn appears to have been perturbed by the surge in the numbers of studio potters, regarding them as a commercial threat: even so, one of the few new patterns it introduced in 1978 had a hand made appearance and a distinctly craft-inspired brand name, ‘Earthstone’; and advertisements for its ‘Pioneer’ line described it as having hand made attributes: ‘the warm, earthy glaze highlights a mirror finish [...] The flame-fired high temperature glaze reflects subtle variations of shade.’²

Until the effects of the 1973 oil crisis hit New Zealand there was an air of economic buoyancy in the country, fuelled by an international commodities boom that temporarily lifted prices received for exports. This optimism translated into the ceramics industry: as late as 1975 the New Zealand Ceramic Industries Association (NZCIA), the re-named New Zealand Pottery and Ceramics Manufacturers’ Association, could still assert that:

[The] tableware industry has proved-against substantial international competition-that it can become a substantial earner of export revenue [...] Few industries have the same potential, relative to size, for achieving high levels of social net return-measured by employment, export and expansion opportunities utilising well over 90% of indigenous raw materials.³

Ceramic production was dominated by the government’s export agenda. Unlike many other converter industries, the manufacture of ceramics relied largely on local materials, labour and energy sources. In a highly regulated economy, one moreover overwhelmed by a concern with balancing trade, this was a significant factor in the

success Crown Lynn enjoyed, as the principal tableware exporter, in winning government support, not only in respect of trade protection for its domestic market, but also for its overseas trade activities. And, until the mid 1970s, design played a central role in modelling that export profile.

The tableware industry and government

In early 1971, to the surprise of the Auckland stock exchange, Crown Lynn announced that it had acquired the Staffordshire ceramic manufacturers Alfred B Jones & Sons Ltd, makers of the Royal Grafton brand of bone china, a perennial favourite with the more traditional New Zealand consumers. The move was justified as both 'a logical adjunct to our export trade'⁴ and another way of breaking into the highly-competitive North American market. But there was more than a touch of hubris involved in the acquisition: the company was renamed Crown Lynn Ceramics (UK) Ltd although the commercially viable brand name was retained. Alfred B Jones & Sons was not an highly profitable concern, but at a time when both exporters and government were concerned about the possible negative impact on trade of the United Kingdom's ultimately successful application to join the EEC, its acquisition seemed a canny decision, one exuding a confidence in the future of Crown Lynn as an internationalised company. Reflecting this wider focus the holding company, Consolidated Brick and Pipe Investments Ltd, was restructured and, in the American-influenced fashion of the day, renamed Ceramco Ltd. The success of this acquisition prompted Clark into embarking on an ambitious expansion programme that widened the company's industrial bases: he acquired two Australian companies, a tile company Metz & Co and a manufacturers' agency Incorporated Agencies Pty Ltd, diversified into abrasives, peat and horticultural suppliers, invested in finance and development by acquiring interests in Auric Finance and the property and construction company Mainzeal Corporation Ltd; more acquisitions would follow. What in the 1950s had been a small pottery company, catering to the lower end of the domestic market was transformed rapidly into a varied, international industrial corporation.

Excluding a brief term between 1972 and 1975 when the Labour party led by Norman Kirk and, following his death, Wallace Rowling held sway, government

**Save up to \$18.90
on a 36-piece
setting of
'CROWN LYNN'
PIONEER
DINNERWARE**

**TRADE IN
your old
crockery**

Simply trade in up to 9 pieces of your unwanted crockery. As each piece is worth \$2.10, your trade-in could save you up to \$18.90 on a beautiful, new 36-piece Pioneer dinnerware. This exceptional offer ends on Thursday 31st May — so hurry in now!

'Crown Lynn' Pioneer
The warm, earthy glaze highlights a mirror finish which is so easy to clean. The distinctive top decorative plate reflects subtle variations of blue, brown, green, yellow and orange. A wide rim, elegant rim and butter, salt and pepper plates, and cereal bowls.

**Usually \$78.75
\$59.85**
with your trade-in
PRICE AS SHOWN.
\$1.10 VALUE.

Fig. 21 Crown Lynn 'Pioneer' dinnerware advertisement for the Farmers' Trading Company, *New Zealand Herald*, 22 May 1979.

remained in the hands of the National party and under the thrall of Robert Muldoon, prime minister from 1975 to 1984. Clark's programme of diversification matched Muldoon's export-lead economic agenda which, contrary to previous National policy, sought to extend and expand the 'manufacturing in depth' programme originally developed by Sutch to diversify New Zealand export production and in response to the international oil crisis—the immediate impact of which lasted well into the decade—to develop large industrial enterprises, the so-called 'think big' schemes based on the exploitation of surplus energy resources. Presenting the thirteenth, and last, Crown Lynn design award in 1976, the characteristically pugnacious Muldoon fulsomely praised Crown Lynn's entrepreneurial management:

Crown Lynn had never been satisfied to sit back on the domestic market [...] They have demonstrated to less aggressive manufacturers in other fields that it is possible to compete successfully internationally on the basis of a cost structure that overcomes the disadvantage of transport charges to distant markets [...] Their goal is further export expansion, which they envisage lifting to 60 percent. The New Zealand average of manufactured production exported is only 7 percent, and the Government's aim is an average of 20 percent.⁵

Muldoon's economics lecture was music to management ears: the speech was published in the company newsletter—*New Zealand Ceramics*—alongside a photograph of Muldoon symbolically displacing any image of the designs he ostensibly was presenting awards for. The National party's new found stance that intervention could enhance the growth performance of the economy was reflected in government involvement in a 1975 development study undertaken by a finance and business consultant I D McAllister and Bryan Philpott, professor of economics at the Victoria University of Wellington, and commissioned by the NZCIA. The resulting report, *A study of the New Zealand ceramics industry*, pointedly concluded that:

Major investments should be made in the near future if the industry is to realise its potential in both volume and range of products [and that] a stable domestic market is essential to provide a base for growth in local and export production. This will require effective import regulation.

But these conclusions did not accord with the views held by monetarist economists employed within the Department of Trade and Industry.⁶ Citing the conventional excuse that the McAllister report was 'adversely affected by a lack of good data', but in greater likelihood reflecting an ideological disagreement with the research methodologies employed by Philpott, the Economics Division of the department published *An econometric analysis of the future demand for the products of the ceramics industry* which concluded that:

Total local demand for tableware is predicted to grow by 3.0% p.a. over the next ten years [...] An indication of the decreasing significance of tableware imports is given by looking at the increasing share of local production demand on the local market [...] It is expected that by 1985/86 local producers could be supplying 99% of tableware demanded on the local market [and, more significantly] 'the volume of tableware exports is predicted to grow by 17.1% p.a.' over the same period.

There was no mention of a requirement for effective import regulation; the model employed by the Economics Division operated on the fallacious presumption that domestic production would, over time, supplant imports and thus obviate the need for protection: its inaccuracy was borne out by trade figures for 1975 and 1980; even with continued protection, the value of imports in the five year period grew by 48 per cent while domestic production increased by a mere 10.2 per cent. It is argued that one of the principal faults of the Economics Division report lay in its failure to comprehend the nature of demand in the ceramics market: design as an interactive component of the market was not considered, possibly because in the 'adversely affected' McAllister report it was addressed—albeit somewhat obliquely—under the debatably provocative heading 'social and economic importance'. Even so, McAllister's understanding of design was confused and quirkily nationalistic, conveying the sense that he had arrived at the concept through a personal recognition of its absence in the overall equation:

The combination of mechanical process with craftsmanship, particularly in the shape of decorative and table ware is an unusual, if not unique, facet of the industry which enhances its social importance [...] The production of attractive, well executed designs in New Zealand motifs has a social significance not only in New Zealand but also in the picture of New Zealand industrial skills presented to importing countries.⁷

It is a measure of the failure of the NZIDC that neither report, although both were concerned primarily with export development, made specific mention of design related issues. The monetarist stance of the Economics Division of the Department of Trade and Industry did not prevail on this occasion: in 1978 the minister, Lance Adams-Schneider, signed a development agreement with the NZCIA in which government stated that its policy was to provide 'strong and effective protective measures for growth for New Zealand industry. This strategy will [...] encourage resources to move into those industries which are more internationally competitive and can make the best contribution to growth and the balance of payments.'⁸ As the agreement noted, government support for the tableware industry was already considerable:

There already exists export incentives including the export investment allowance and export suspensory loans to assist with capital projects. Also the recently introduced high priority activities scheme could benefit [...] Where a project for expansion for exports does not qualify for assistance under these schemes, or the assistance is considered to be inadequate, then the Government will consider providing support as is most appropriate.⁹

Crown Lynn, as the country's leading exporter of tableware, was the principal beneficiary of this assistance.

Diversification

The support of the National government appears to have underpinned Ceramco's expansion programme into other fields of industry: between 1978 when the development agreement with the NZCIA was signed and 1981 it 'merged' with or took over three major companies including the Dunedin sanitary ware manufacturers McSkimming Industries Ltd and an engineering concern, Mason Industries Ltd. But despite government assistance, macroeconomic conditions continued to plague the company. In its 1980 annual report Clark observed that 'New Zealand business has continued to operate in a difficult environment of high inflation and zero growth.' The problem had been exacerbated in 1979 when Muldoon, flailing in his efforts to promote growth and counter inflation, imposed a ten per cent sales tax on tableware. To the fury of studio potters, Clark allegedly lobbied government for the tableware tax to be applied to their output arguing that as they were competing in the same market they should bear the same fiscal costs. The move backfired: the opposition had a field day baiting the government on what one speaker described as a 'whacky illogical tax'. Stretching credulity, Hugh Templeton, the minister for customs, argued that 'because the potters have a very large share of the commercial tableware market [...] I believe it would be unfair to exempt them on that ground.'¹⁰ But despite this political posturing, the sales tax was subsequently made inapplicable to studio potters through the introduction of a \$50,000 tax-free threshold on sales.¹¹

Yet even while announcing record profits—which in percentage terms hardly matched the domestic inflation rate—Clark was observing in 1980 that the export markets were affected by a recession in the United States and a significant downturn in the British crockery industry. Moreover, as he noted the following year, 'very competitive pricing by traditional and Third World producers has meant that Crown Lynn's export markets, especially Australia, are extremely competitive and inflation-induced cost increases are not always able to be recovered.'¹² Clark's rhetoric concealed the fact that the company was investing in those very overseas competitors he was warning against—the Mayon Ceramics Corporation in the Philippines and in Singapore, that plant in the company's core pottery business was not being upgraded and that its product range was becoming increasingly outmoded. Moreover, its New Zealand China Clays subsidiary was now exporting

ninety five per cent of its production; selling the raw material to other convertors was more profitable than creating a finished product. As Ceramco expanded, Crown Lynn's efforts to customise its products to its markets, to link production to demand, were scaled down. In 1978, as if to reinforce the increasingly conservative appearance of the product range, the company invested in Hereford Fine China (Australasia) Ltd, a Hamilton-based joint venture with a British businessman, R Lewis, who had moved the company from the United Kingdom in 1976: it produced a range of high-priced, realistically modelled, 'hand-painted' bone china figures of animals and birds.¹³ Shortly before, Crown Lynn won a 1977 New Zealand Forest Products Ltd design award, for its packaging: skirting the fact that the packaging had been designed by its advertising agents, Carlton Carruthers du Chateau Ltd, the company newsletter claimed the award, 'reflects Crown Lynn's concern for good design.'¹⁴ To the contrary, the Crown Lynn design award, the public flagship of company design policy since 1959, was quietly dropped in 1979 as being no longer relevant to corporate interests.¹⁵ The country's premier prize for ceramics became the annual Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award established in 1977; aimed at studio potters, it was sponsored by a subsidiary of the Fletcher Challenge group. Ceramco gave every appearance of distancing itself from the manufacture of ceramics; it directed its corporate sponsorship activities at the 1981/82 Volvo Round the World yacht race.

In what can be seen as an attempt to address the company's diminishing significance in the domestic market and increased competition for its exports, Crown Lynn was restructured superficially in 1979. This management reshuffle included the appointment of a design manager in place of the retiring Jenkin: Tom Arnold, an Englishman, had held similar positions in the United Kingdom with Ridgway Potteries before migrating to Australia in 1974 where he taught at the Brisbane College of Art. The new marketing manager, to whom Arnold was answerable, opined:

The new structure reflects our determination to achieve a closer relationship with customers through the creation of a single, accessible, customer-oriented department controlling all those factors that influence the introduction and promotion of our ware in New Zealand and overseas markets.

While Arnold's tenure at Crown Lynn was of short duration his initial optimism seemed boundless: he sought to expand and update the four basic ranges then in production and aimed at setting up a 'fine arts studio, with potter's wheels,— "rather like the Swedish approach"—so that artists of international repute can be brought in for a period of three months or so to create one-off pieces.'¹⁶ But the

ambitious programme for a design-led revival of the company's fortunes touted by Arnold failed to convince a management increasingly disinterested in experimenting with rapidly changing markets: Crown Lynn opted to continue the production of 'a restricted range of replaceable patterns, conservative shapes, and an absence of the extra items such as butter dishes, teapots etc which complete the dinner set.'¹⁷ Within three years Arnold had left the company: his position was not filled and his design team of four dispersed. Mark Cleverley, who from the mid 1960s had been largely responsible for developing the Crown Lynn 'house style' including the development of 'an innovatory system for applying the intaglio technique of printing to ceramics', resigned after taking a year's leave to teach at the Ilam School of Fine Arts in Christchurch.¹⁸ Ironically, in March 1983, Arnold was appointed director of the disintegrating NZIDC where he lasted until the following year.¹⁹ Clark retired from the company in 1984, shortly before the election of the fourth Labour government. He was succeeded briefly as managing director by K M P Smith, previously executive director responsible for finance and legal matters. Shorn of its status as the jewel in the Ceramco crown, Crown Lynn was now viewed by the holding company's board of directors as a component division of a widely spread portfolio of industries.

We have no comment to make

Elected with a mandate to remedy an economy perceived as being characterised by a 'high internal deficit, overseas loans and considerable control over the operations of the labour market' the incoming Labour government, driven by its minister of finance Roger Douglas, opted to follow a policy of economic liberalisation, encouraging the activities of the private sector through a proactive policy of deregulation.²⁰ It was a strategy largely modelled on American neo-liberal economic theories—Easton describes them collectively as 'Radical Monetarism'—and its wholesale application was to have a considerable impact on not only the New Zealand economy but also, more viscerally, its society.

The dismantling of protective barriers further eroded Crown Lynn's dominant position in the domestic market. While Muldoon's 'fortress New Zealand' policy had, to a certain extent, protected industry from the effects of globalisation, it was not an impermeable barrier: the outgoing National government had been negotiating a Closer Economic Relations (CER) agreement with Australia aimed at lowering trade barriers between the two countries. Yet a more visible indicator of Crown Lynn's weakening domestic position was the rising value of ceramic imports

occurring even with protective barriers in place. In planning the removal of these barriers, the Labour government made use of a series of industry reviews—including a Ceramics Industry Study Review—that had been conducted by the departments of Customs, Trade and Industry and Treasury following a National government policy decision announced in the 1982 budget.²¹ The reviews had the overall objective of examining particular labour-intensive industries and evaluating their use of the nation's key resources on the understanding that it was the intention of government to remove import license controls and introducing transitional tariff-based protection. Submissions were requested: the Pottery, Household Hardware and Glassware Traders Association—the successor organisation to the English Pottery and Glassware Agents' Association—claimed that 'its objectives were to achieve a level of imports at reasonable rates of duty, recognising the position of manufacturer, importer and consumer' while calling for the abolition of the licensing system which had established a 30:70 ratio market sharing principle—introduced after a 1972-74 enquiry—which favoured manufacturers.²² Predictably, Crown Lynn advocated the retention, but updating, of the existing protective structure in order to preserve existing levels of production. Equally predictably, the officials conducting the Ceramics Industry Study Review observed blithely that 'Over recent years the size of the market for tableware, particularly lower-priced items, has contracted. This contraction can be attributed to a reduction in new household formation.'²³ In their conclusion the officials argued that:

New Zealand tableware production has the potential to compete successfully with a greater degree of international competition than might be thought from simply examining the present New Zealand protective structure [...] Removal of the threshold and specific duties would expose the New Zealand industry to a much higher level of competition from low priced imports. The exposure would be dependent on the level of demand for these products.²⁴

The review ultimately recommended the removal of all threshold duties and import licensing controls with a seven-year phase out period, allowing companies such as Crown Lynn sufficient time to re-structure their operations to meet future operating conditions. In effect, the application of neo-liberal ideology foreshadowed the end of state-protection for the tableware industry in New Zealand.

The introduction of CER in 1984 boosted Crown Lynn profits in that it was able to place its relatively cheap lines on the Australian market through its existing network of retailers: as the Ceramics Industry Study Review observed in light of its comments concerning the potential competitiveness of the New Zealand industry '27% of earthenware dinnersets imported into Australia in the six months to December 1982 were New Zealand [Crown Lynn] sourced.'²⁵ But the failure of the

board to modernise its plant or product range lead to problems: in monthly reports to Ceramco management for 1986, the general manager of Crown Lynn warned repeatedly of the impact that supply and distribution problems were having on the Australian market. In July 1986 he detailed that:

Sales continue to run 20% ahead of budget and the forward orders remain at 1.5 million pieces or 3 months. Our problem is still to get the volume through the plant to meet the immediate demand. Demand for the 3 basic patterns in Australia is extremely high.²⁶

Generally the July report identified more systemic problems: the company ‘had lost ground in [the] market’, it was a ‘poor performer-deliveries [and] range’ and it was mooted that the plant was too big and should be vacated and demolished but ‘not removed’. It was advice that was ignored. Earlier, in 1985, the board announced the sale of its United Kingdom operations ‘following a review of the Company’s offshore investment priorities [...] the ongoing achievement of acceptable returns on this investment had been affected by logistical difficulties with running a company 18,000 kilometres removed from the home base.’²⁷ Given that the Staffordshire concern had been run relatively efficiently and even profitably from the same distance for fourteen years and that technological developments had improved communications considerably between New Zealand and the rest of the world, it was an unconvincing rationale but it gave a clear indication of the future direction of the company.

While management continued to stress the difficulties of ensuring the profitability of the ceramics industry in the de-regulated economy, it failed to either re-equip or to develop new products but began implementing an aggressive industrial relations policy with its workforce: in February 1989 the situation reached breaking point when the company threatened to shut the plant during a strike if production workers did not accept flexible working hours.²⁸ Management argued that ‘anyone trying to manufacture a product with a regulated labour force in a deregulated market is going to be killed by imports every time. The labour force must be de-regulated for flexibility’.²⁹ But the problems Crown Lynn faced lay not with the loss of high levels of protection or even an ‘inflexible’ labour force but rather in the structure of its holding company, the membership of the board and the deregulated environment in which it was operating. What now characterises the economic reforms of the 1980s—Easton has coined the expression ‘the decade of greed’—were the activities of a diverse group of entrepreneurial businessmen who, initially, taking advantage of the Muldoon government’s publicly-funded but privately managed ‘think big’ projects and, subsequently, the Labour government’s loosening of financial controls

embarked on the opportunistic acquisition and de-merger of long-established companies and, later, state owned enterprises. A leading player in this market was the corporate investor Alan Gibbs who by 1982 had accumulated sufficient shares in the company to be accorded a seat on its board of directors.³⁰ Ceramco's corporate profile was enticing: it was large, diverse and profitable with a then asset base of \$85 million dollars and a managing director on the brink of retirement. In 1985, following the 'merger' of his Atlas whiteware company with Ceramco, he assumed the position of chairman of the board and replaced senior management with his own appointees. By 1987 his personal shareholding had reached 10 per cent and the company merged with the undergarment manufacturers Bendon Industries to form Ceramco Corporation Ltd. The expanded concern's industrial base now covered clothing manufacture, white ware retailing, consumer electronics, hospitality and catering; the company headquarters were moved from west Auckland to a 'posh' tower block in central Auckland. Finally, in response to falling share prices, on 5 May 1989 the board—which Clark had recently rejoined—announced its decision to close the Crown Lynn works.³¹ The plant's general manager was reported as blaming the closure 'on the lost protection of locally made goods, trade union resistance to changes in working conditions and continuing losses suffered by Crown Lynn in recent years.'³² Shirley Musin, a Northern Labourers' Union delegate who had worked for the company since 1970, perhaps better informed than most, attributed the closure to 'The government let all these cheap imports flood in and we just couldn't compete [...] Also, the company never re-invested any money into the plant when it was doing well. The machinery is old, outdated and the factory is falling apart.'³³ The local Labour Member of Parliament, Jonathan Hunt, likewise discerned a degree of corporate neglect. He was quoted as observing that:

The plant's demise is due to the outdated equipment used and the range of products produced [...] Crown Lynn took the decision to aim at the lower end of the market, but the future of New Zealand's exports depends on developing quality goods.

The board of directors announced that it had no comment to make but Gibbs gradually disposed of six per cent of his shareholding: the decision to close the plant had briefly impressed the New Zealand stock exchange although soon after the company announced an 85 per cent profit slump. Even so, the directors decided to issue a dividend amounting to 50 per cent of the trading profit for the year; the company was no longer a manufacturing concern but rather more of a shareholder cash cow.³⁴ The two hundred and twenty remaining staff, out of the seven hundred that had been employed a decade previously, were made redundant, the company

name along with its moulds, patterns and a selection of machinery was sold to a Malaysian company, Goh Ban Huat Berhad, and the New Lynn site was sold off to property developers. In the New Zealand Company's Register for the following year it was commented that:

Since Ceramco came into being in 1987 is (*sic*) has shed some of its traditional operations, notably Crown Lynn Potteries and the Henry Berry food involvement, and sold other smaller businesses which were regarded as being incapable of achieving a satisfactory level of competitiveness in an open economy.³⁵

Ceramco Corporation share prices continued to fall. What remained physically of the pottery business was abandoned on site until retrieved by a local collector Richard Quinn; subsequently the subject of acrimonious dispute with the local Waitakere City Council, the future of this archive has yet to be determined.³⁶ The Ceramco Corporation was eventually subsumed within the Bendon Group Ltd, placed into administration and finally sold to the Pacific Retail Group which, among its other operations, controls the Living & Giving retail chain, 'a specialist gift and homeware retailer operating in high foot traffic locations'; its leading lines include imported ceramics.³⁷

A myth promulgated by Crown Lynn management over the company's fifty years of existence argued that the protectionist policies of the first Labour government had frustrated the establishment of a tableware industry in Auckland and, equally, that the economic and labour market policies of the fourth Labour government lead to its demise.³⁸ The actuality was that the company depended on the existence of a protected domestic market both for its survival and its success. Had the first Labour government not sought to develop, in the face of metropolitan antagonism, a local industry and a 'full employment' policy with its introduction of import licensing in 1938 it is unlikely that Ambrico would have established its 'specials' department. And if that same government had not directed the company to undertake the production of tableware in 1942, it is improbable that Ambrico would have undertaken its manufacture. Likewise, had the second Labour government, while maintaining its protectionist stance, not promoted design as being integral to the development of industry or laid the foundations for an export driven economy, it is apparent that the company would have followed many of its Staffordshire counterparts into liquidation. The fourth Labour government's attempts to remedy the macroeconomic ills bequeathed by its National party predecessor saw it liberalise the economy to the satisfaction and profit of corporate entrepreneurs, yet they complained bitterly that its tokenistic labour policies affected adversely the profitability of the company. Crown Lynn management in the 1980s refused to

acknowledge that the pottery industry is labour and skills intensive, that survival in a competitive market environment requires investment in labour, plant and machinery and that design is a key process in generating demand. Moreover, the positioning of Crown Lynn as part of a corporation driven by the ideology of the free market and activated by the relentless pursuit of profit to the exclusion of the social contract between capital and labour, made the failure of the company inevitable. In an audit of the corporate restructuring of the New Zealand economy, Belich observes pointedly both that deregulation was not all pervasive and that ‘The fully free market has yet to arrive. Paradoxically enough, history suggests that it requires a (sparing and intelligent) use of the state to thrive in local conditions.’³⁹ On a micro scale, design history suggests that, in the end, three factors were vital to the survival of the Crown Lynn potteries: a corporate focus, government support and an engagement with design.

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- 1 Marie Mihajlovich, ‘Tekapo, Waihi and Opihi: place names have a new significance now that stoneware is being made at Temuka’, *New Zealand Woman’s Weekly*, (10 July 1972), pp. 6-7.
 - 2 ‘You always get a better deal when you shop at Farmers’, *NZH*, 22 May 1979, p. 1:17.
 - 3 New Zealand Ceramics Industries Association, *Facts about the New Zealand ceramics industry*, (Wellington: New Zealand Ceramic Industries Association, 1975), [Ceramic facts; tableware].
 - 4 ‘Crown Lynn Buys English China Firm’, *NZH*, 03 April 1971, p. 1.
 - 5 ‘PM accents Crown Lynn’s export record’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, (Autumn 1976).
 - 6 For an account of the disputes between the protectionist Philpott and the monetarist economists at the Department of Trade and Industry see: Easton, *The Nationbuilders*, pp. 222-225.
 - 7 I D McAllister, *A study of the New Zealand ceramics industry*, (Wellington: New Zealand Ceramic Industries Association, 1975), pp. 91-92.
 - 8 NZ Ceramic Industries Association, *The New Zealand ceramics industry: a plan for future development*, (Wellington, NZ Ceramic Industries Association, 1978), p. 3.
 - 9 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
 - 10 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, (835).
 - 11 Hugh Templeton, *All honourable men: inside the Muldoon Cabinet 1975-1984*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995), pp. 119-121.
 - 12 Ceramco Ltd, *Annual report 1981* (Auckland, Ceramco Ltd, 1981), p. 26.
 - 13 *Ceramic industry study review, July 1983: a report prepared by Customs, Trade & Industry, Treasury* (Wellington, [New Zealand] Department of Trade and Industry, 1983), pp. 57-58. Hereford Fine China (International) Ltd became a wholly owned Ceramco subsidiary in 1984.
 - 14 ‘Concern for design is acknowledged’, *New Zealand Ceramics*, no. 4 (Autumn 1978).
 - 15 The last Crown Lynn Design Award, the thirteenth, was held in 1976. In late 1978 it was announced that the fourteenth competition would be held in early 1979 but this did not occur.
 - 16 ‘Crown Lynn at the crossroads’, *Designscape*, no. 119 (November 1979), (pp. 31-33), 31-32.
 - 17 *Ibid.* (31).
 - 18 Sarah Lockie, ‘Designer profile: Mark Cleverley’, *Ibid.*, no. 128 (September 1980), (pp. 26-27), 26.
 - 19 Arnold was gazetted to the Council of the NZIDC in February 1981 and appointed director of the same organisation in March 1983.
 - 20 David C Thorns and Charles P Sedgwick, *Understanding Aotearoa/New Zealand: historical statistics*, (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1997), p. 92.

- 21 *Ceramic industry study review*, pp. 40-62.
- 22 Ibid., p. 47.
- 23 Ibid., p. 3.
- 24 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
- 25 Ibid., p.49.
- 26 AWMML, 98/34, Crown Lynn Potteries Ltd: item 33: General Manager's monthly reports, 1986-87, July 1986.
- 27 Ceramco Ltd, *Annual report 1985* (Auckland, Ceramco Ltd, 1985), p. 6.
- 28 James Weir, 'Profit slump for Ceramco after closures', *Dominion*, 16 June 1989, p. 15.
- 29 Charles Bidwill, managing director of Ceramco Corporation Limited, in: David Pardon, 'Politics & the workforce: let's get a divorce', *Management*, vol. 34, no. 11 (December 1987), (pp. 12-20), 20.
- 30 Gibbs was described by the social analyst Bruce Jesson in 1987 as 'a hardline right-winger, a friend of Roger Douglas, and a driving force behind the right-wing Centre for Independent Studies. Gibbs is chairman of the Forestry Corporation'. See: Bruce Jesson, *Behind the mirror glass: the growth of wealth and power in New Zealand in the eighties*, (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 93.
- 31 Ceramco shares peaked in 1986 at \$14.50 per share; along with the rest of the sharemarket they collapsed dramatically along on 'Black Friday' in October 1987, rallying from a low of \$1.11 to \$3.08 after the closure of Crown Lynn. By 1991 they had collapsed to \$0.76.
- 32 'Crown Lynn closing down: staff fear joining West's jobless', *Western Leader*, 11 May 1989, p. 3.
- 33 Ibid., p..3.
- 34 Weir, p. 15.
- 35 Headliner Publishing, *The New Zealand company register 1989-90*, (Christchurch: Mercantile Gazette Marketing Ltd, 1990), p. 48.
- 36 Brian Rudman, 'Westies pay dearly for old crocks', *NZH*, 02 July 2001, p. A:7.
- 37 Pacific Retail Group Ltd, *Annual report 2002* (Auckland, 2002), p. 6.
- 38 Discussing the establishment of the company in 1969, Clark declared that in 1939 'we had an unsympathetic Labour Government talking about monopolies and our brick prices.' Henry, citing an article in the Sunday Star Times of 30 April 1989, quotes 'a source close to Ceramco' stating that the board decision to close the company was taken both because of labour market regulations (qv) and 'to stem the losses from a sharp drop in the market share caused by imports since deregulation.' See: Brett, p. 4; Henry, p. 208.
- 39 James Belich, *Paradise reformed: a history of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000*, (Auckland: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 2001), p. 417.

10 Postscript (2003)

10.1 Industry New Zealand – the Design Taskforce

In May 2003, fifteen years after the third Labour government abolished the NZIDC, a Labour party-dominated coalition government published, as part of its ‘Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF) policy, a ‘new strategic vision for the economy’ entitled *Success by design*. It was the result of deliberations conducted by a Design Taskforce formed in May 2002 under the aegis of Industry New Zealand, the reformed bureaucratic successor to the abolished Department of Industries and Commerce.¹ Its principal term of reference was to suggest ways of ‘raising an awareness of design as a key enabler for industry’.² Among additional remits, it was instructed to develop: ‘an understanding of what “partnership” means between government and industry, and the extent and nature of potential government involvement in the industry.’ A revisiting of the role of design, its links with industry and business and its interaction with the state is no new thing as Woodham has recounted in an analysis of the parallels in the United Kingdom between the early years of the CoID and the re-branding of design by its successor organisation the Design Council during the first years of the Blair Labour government—‘Design and the state: post-war horizons and per-millennial aspirations’.³ Yet, in its quest to be seen as treading new ground and seeking to raise fresh and relevant issues, the Taskforce gave no hint of recognition that it was treading the same paths that had been mapped in New Zealand some forty years previously and that, in turn, these were a reworking of many of the beliefs and practices current in the United Kingdom twenty years earlier.

In addressing its ministerial instructions, the Taskforce defined its objectives as ‘to achieve three things: more New Zealand businesses achieving sustainable export success; a more capable, business-savvy design profession; greater international recognition of New Zealand design.’⁴ Underlying these overt goals was the tacit assumption that the state has a role to play in the design process, if only as a ‘driver’ of the resulting strategy and as the primary funding source. In this and in a number of other respects, the Taskforce revisited the same issues and proposed the same solutions that led to the establishment of the NZIDC in 1966, although the

existence of an historical dimension to New Zealand design was not recognised either in the report or in those documents on which it was based. To the contrary, the existence of the NZIDC was ignored as was a recognition of an historical dimension to design in New Zealand, a stance reinforced by a number of statements suggesting that New Zealand's design capability benefits from 'a fresh perspective unencumbered by tradition (remote yet internationally aware)'⁵, 'there's a fresh "Pacific" perspective that helps define us' and that 'we tend to carry less "baggage" from the past than in some countries.'⁶

Success by design draws its data substantially from two reports: one commissioned by Industry New Zealand from the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (Inc), *Building a case for added value through design*;⁷ the other, commissioned by the Taskforce, *integrate (sic): a critical look at the interface between business and design*, prepared by the consultancy firm Innovation & Systems in association with Noel Brown and Janice Burns.⁸ Neither of these reports make reference to issues of design history or theory: the NZIER report, prepared by a statistician, Mark Walton, bases its understandings of design on guidelines provided by the Taskforce and local design conditions on a glossy commercial publication, the *Urbis Design Annual 2002*. Its measures of design efficacy are based on the World Economic Forum's *Global competitiveness report 2001-2002*. The Innovation & Systems report evolved from 'a web-based survey [...] sent directly to 300 companies as well as to 14 "hub" organisations that had agreed to forward it to their members.' This was supplemented by 'one to one' interviews with twenty CEO/GMs from 'a range of different organisations [...] most could be described as "manufacturers".' However, there would appear to be some fundamental distortions in the data provided by the survey: there were problems identified with an understanding by the respondents as to what 'design' meant and combined with a poor response to the questionnaire—only 86 replies were received—this resulted in a statement from Innovation & Systems that 'we cannot draw sound conclusions about how design is perceived and used [by business].' Adding to the distortion, while 47 per cent of the survey respondents were involved in manufacturing, a disproportionate response (18.6 per cent) was obtained from the 'creative sector', identified separately from the 'service' sector (21 per cent). Moreover, where 24 per cent of respondents were based in Wellington, a mere 15 per cent were based in Auckland,

the country's principal manufacturing and services centre. Thus where the rhetoric of 'good design' as it was understood in the mid-twentieth century focussed on the perceived benefits of industrialisation, so the rhetoric of 'good design', as understood by the Taskforce, is predicated on distorted research and an over-reliance on economic theory. Even so, this focus on the economic benefits of design was a revisiting of old ground: in 1969 the first issue of the NZIDC's journal *Designscape* carried an article by Geoff Datson 'Industrial design is good economics' arguing that 'Industrial design is wholly economic in nature, and is a matter of planning, since its essence is to use limited economic resources to give the maximum satisfaction, in short and long terms.'⁹ By de-historicising its subject, the Taskforce both proffered a vision of New Zealand design that has no past and asserted that this absence must be perceived as a positive attribute. This very refutation of history and its associated discipline of theory—equally ignored in the report—has a specific purpose in that it serves to disengage the Taskforce from being seen to promote the idea of state intervention into the activities of the private sector while simultaneously enabling it to propose the opposite. This stance might be regarded in the light of the neo-liberal agenda identified by Anne Else as occurring in New Zealand from about 1984 to 1999 which she describes as 'a widespread and deliberate political attempt to reshape [...] 'the presence of the past' in this country, in order to serve contemporary political ends.'¹⁰

Defining design

The inability of the target—New Zealand business—to understand the Taskforce's 'disciplinary' definition of design or how it might affect production is neither a new thing nor is this incomprehension restricted to the business sector. Attempts to enshrine a definition of industrial design in New Zealand law occurred when an Industrial Design Bill was submitted to Parliament in 1966 at a time when the state was involved in developing a similar, export-driven design strategy. The definition—plausibly extracted from a dictionary by legal draughtsmen—posited it as meaning:

Features of shape, configuration, pattern or ornament intended to be applied to any article by any industrial process or means, being features which in the finished article appeal to the eye or assist in the function which the article has to perform.¹¹

This object-focussed definition was amended three months later by one that more accurately reflected the modernist agenda of the sponsors of the Bill: "Industrial

design” means the practice of planning the properties, or the presentation, of the products of industry with the object of improving their quality, utility and appearance.’¹² Nearly forty years later the Taskforce framed its definition of design in similarly general, production-focussed terms, while couching it within the aspirational rhetoric of contemporary business consultants, as being: ‘a creative and integrative process. It is a methodology (a way of thinking) that guides the synthesis, technology, scientific and commercial disciplines to produce unique and superior products, services and communications.’¹³ As a corollary to this, the Taskforce provided a definition of ‘aesthetics’ as ‘relating to issues of beauty and good taste. A product described as aesthetic is one that is considered a “handsome” design.’¹⁴ While both these definitions assume a priori that a primary function of design is to enhance things through process, neither addresses the issue of for whom the things are designed. More surprisingly, given the emergence over the last three decades of the discipline of design theory, the Taskforce relied on definitions of design that exclude any significant role for the consumer and which fail to address in any significant manner issues of distribution. The consumer’s role as articulated in *Success by design* is one of passive acceptance: ‘Design capability is about employing vision, process, creativity and technical skill to develop products, services and brands that capture the imagination of customers throughout the world.’¹⁵ The consumer is identified as ‘the end user’ who exists to be ‘excited’. Thus, for the Taskforce, the consumer ‘experience’ is the end product of ‘design enabled value generation’.¹⁶ This narrow, production driven definition of design reverberates with an unrecognised historical perception of the New Zealand market as reflexive consumers of commodities, supine participants in the trade of goods identified by a notionally relocated metropolitan elite of designers and ‘design-enabled’ businesses. Yet, on the basis of both this restricted view of the domestic market and the flawed results of its survey, the Taskforce aspires to an internationalisation of a consumer base for its ‘Questors: businesses with aspirations to succeed internationally as exporters’.¹⁷ It denies the social and political contexts of a more widely based definition of design in favour a myopic vision of product-making in an undefined but internationalised ‘new’ business environment.

Positioning design and the state

The Taskforce has identified the government's primary role as funding the implementation of its proposed strategy. Government will 'provide funding to establish and implement the priority inform and enable initiatives during the first five years [and] support and fund the establishment of an independent executive design agency over the longer term.'¹⁸ In October 2003 the *New Zealand Herald* reported that:

The Government had decided to meet each of the taskforce's recommendations. That meant spending \$12.5 million over four years [...] The only difference between the Government's response to the taskforce and the wish-list itself is the money being spent—the taskforce had asked for \$18 million over five years.¹⁹

As noted above, in terms both of the source of its funding and its institutional profile, the implementation of the Taskforce's proposed strategy differs little from that expounded by the Department of Industries and Commerce for the NZIDC during the early to mid 1960s. But where the NZIDC relied predominantly on British CoID (Design Council) precedents in its attempts to articulate its mission, the Taskforce asserts that its strategic references had been taken from a survey undertaken by the United Kingdom arm of the financial consultancy PriceWaterhouseCooper along with un-cited studies undertaken by two British design consultancies, Fitch and the Design Innovation Group.²⁰ Without recognising any sense of the irony involved in this neo-colonial dependency, or any appreciation that the conditions under which design is viewed in the United Kingdom are significantly different from those obtaining in New Zealand, the Taskforce observed approvingly that 'the UK Design Council adopted the Fitch approach and in 1999 applied it to six hypothetical funds comprised of British design-embracing firms.'²¹ Even so, the specifics of the Taskforce's strategy echo those of the NZIDC: 'a communications programme pushing the virtues of good design to business' evokes the primary remits of both the CoID and the NZIDC; the 'holding [of] a conference of design and business leaders' was, as has been outlined in this study, undertaken on a number of occasions in New Zealand from the 1960s up to the early 1980s; and the aim of 'starting an audit/mentoring programme to help businesses improve their design capability' was a key element in the work of the NZIDC with its field advisory, product evaluation and designer services.²² History too suggests that a New Zealand manufacturing industry has needed some form of protection or state support if it is to compete against comparable industries

both domestically and overseas. But, even with its focus on production, the Taskforce ignores any debate on the issue of location, presumably on the assumption that free trade is a given in the global market place: matters of trade policy seemingly have no part to play in the development of a design enhanced business. In the Taskforce's opinion design in New Zealand is a local inflection of the dominant universal model of design development—as Fry observes:

From such perspectives design fades as just style, and the appropriation of style trivialises the project out of which it was generated. Such decontextualisation reduces design simply to the management of appearances and diminishes the prospect of the rise of a local self aware and critical practice.²³

Design for export

The Taskforce argued that: 'The primary focus of the design taskforce strategy is the integration of design into businesses with aspirations to succeed internationally as exporters'²⁴ and prefaced its findings with the observation that:

With this task we are up against some formidable competitors—sophisticated global businesses with ingeniously designed products, compelling brands and cost efficiencies that are difficult to match. These businesses and the countries that breed them have not achieved their success by chance. Many of the higher performing countries have succeeded by design.²⁵

In its pairing of design and business, of what it perceives of as aesthetics and efficiency, in the face of overseas competition, the Taskforce returns unwittingly to the ideas enunciated in Proctor's 1963 Export Development Conference paper:

New Zealand industries must [...] expect to face strong competition from the older industrialised countries, in their attempt to break into the export markets. And no matter how generous the tax concessions the Government may offer to induce producers to export, success will not follow unless—as we have seen—the article is of good quality, and thus, well designed.²⁶

While the 1963 conference was based on a thorough investigation of a range of factors involved in the export of goods, design was just one of the parameters considered. Proctor's committee recognised the reality that design was a relatively small part in a complex web of economic and political factors, a stance that the Taskforce has chosen to ignore in favour of an imbalanced and ill-informed distortion of design as a factor in both industrial manufacture and trade. And the state-sponsored efforts of the 1960s to 1980s to build up and diversify a trade in 'well-designed' New Zealand manufactured exports failed. While the manufacturing sector did develop and goods were exported in increasing amounts, this growth was created in an artificial environment of direct and indirect

subsidisation; with the collapse of state support in the 1980s, the export market for manufactured goods shrunk: notable exceptions being in the niche whiteware and fashion industries. The Taskforce identifies these industries not as survivors of an earlier state strategy but as ‘success stories where design has been central to the activities leading to success.’²⁷ In the absence of a substantial manufacturing industry, the Taskforce turns its focus to design exports: New Zealand-based designers exporting intellectual rights to the production of furniture and architecture to overseas concerns. While comprising a miniscule stream in comparison with the flood of imported designs, the net benefits to the economy of exported design are questionable: to the contrary, it evokes the subject of a campaign undertaken by the British Design Council in the early years of the Thatcher government ‘Designed in Britain, made abroad’ which drew attention to a small number of commercially successful products which were not manufactured in Britain due to a lack of interest in design by manufacturers. As Paul Burall has observed, the resulting ‘high level of interest was never really concerned with analyzing good or bad design in any practical way’ further noting that this ‘design bubble burst towards the end of the 1980s, and was almost obliterated by the 1990s depression.’²⁸

Scandinavia revisited

Underpinning the Taskforce’s strategic document are a series of case studies explained through the aspirational exhortation: ‘a business will become a global brand by taking the lead in design, not by following others’. The first case study pinpoints Finland generally and the mobile telephone manufacturers, Nokia, specifically: Finland ‘has truly integrated design with business to become a global leader’ while Nokia ‘has become the industry benchmark for handset design, primarily due to its philosophy that handsets are a stylish fashion accessory.’²⁹ Scandinavia has long been argued as an exemplar for New Zealand industry, a stance based on a perception that many Scandinavian countries have comparatively small populations, have had predominantly agricultural economies and, in the case of Denmark and Finland until comparatively recently, had low levels of industrialisation. In the 1950s and 60s a view that ‘design’ was one of the key factors in Scandinavian industrial success was promoted vigorously by Sutch and subsequently adopted as a mantra by the Department of Industries and Commerce. This notwithstanding the fact that, in its purported execution, the model for design development that New Zealand ultimately pursued was one modelled crudely on United Kingdom precedents rather than those of Scandinavia.

The Taskforce has likewise proposed a Scandinavian model for ‘developing a design-focused strategy for [...] New Zealand industry in general’ arguing that: ‘We need look no further than Finland for evidence of this. A country with a population similar to New Zealand has produced world-beating products from companies such as Nokia.’³⁰ While the product type evoked by the Taskforce has, over a period of forty years, shifted from more traditional industrial manufactures such as ceramics and glass to portable electronics, it is a reductive and formal assessment of a form of production, based in part on a perception of global desirability of a product, rather than an understanding of the embedded elements of the design processes applicable in the Scandinavian countries at the time these products were developed. Thus the complex design cultures that have evolved in Scandinavia following industrialisation are reduced to a commercial decision by Nokia to develop a particular product type—the mobile telephone—and the Finnish government’s 2002 Industrial Design Technology programme which ‘seeks to build on its already well-established cultural heritage of a strongly design-enabled nation.’³¹ Predictably, the Taskforce chooses to ignore the point that there might be a connection between this unspecified ‘well-established cultural heritage’ and the quality of Nokia’s design practice, rather than a recently formulated Finnish government policy.

Design and business

If it dismisses its own history and fails to convey an understanding of the theoretical processes underpinning design, then the Taskforce equally fails to convey the nature of the relationship between design and business. In an unconscious resonance of the past it repeats the CoID’s 1948 slogan ‘Good design is good for business’ but attributes it mistakenly to ‘THOMAS WATSON JR, IBM CEO, LATE 1950S’, additionally prefacing its report with a graphically tortuous equation ‘(COMMERCIAL) SUCCESS = BUSINESS + **DESIGN**: Design makes first world economics’. Like the design councils in both the United Kingdom and New Zealand before it, the Taskforce was unable to quantify the benefits that accrue from the use of design other than in the broadest sense. At a micro level, both explore the relationship on a case-by-case basis: Gloag’s 1948 CoID text, *Good design good business*, used a series of case studies ranging from the production of gas heaters to the redesign of a department catering ‘for the more progressive elements in contemporary taste’ in the Lewis’s Ltd store in Liverpool.³² The latter case study observed that while the department attracted ‘fresh customers

and increased [...] turnover' it was closed at the time of writing 'simply because of the supply position.' *Success by design* cites six case studies: the aforementioned Nokia, and five New Zealand-based companies: a whiteware manufacturer, a design consultancy, an architectural firm and two garment manufacturers. The 'case studies' comprise a series of statements extracted from informal interviews with 'key personnel' extolling the design base of their success.

And notwithstanding the upbeat tone of *Success by design*, the Taskforce appears to have failed to address the vital issue of convincing the private sector of the necessity of even the efficacy of design in industry. The *New Zealand Herald* reported soon after the launch of the report that 'fifty top business executives' were dismissive of the government's attempts to promote economic development 'as little better than a public relations stunt [that will] do nothing for the economy beyond supporting another raft of consultants.'³³ By way of contrast, and three years before its effective abolition, the prime minister, Robert Muldoon, could opine of the NZIDC in 1981 that 'there appears to be a very harmonious relationship between industry and the New Zealand Design Council.'³⁴

Ceramics?

Provisional statistics suggest that New Zealand will import ceramics with a value of \$168,685,000 in 2003, the thirty-eighth largest category of imported manufactured commodities. The same source indicates that exports of ceramics will amount to \$4,236,000, or 0.015 per cent of the country's merchandise trade exports by value. While the statistics are crude—it appears that the former figure includes sanitary ware and the latter studio ceramics—they suggest both that New Zealand consumption of ceramics remains high and that the local industry has survived the tariff reforms of the 1980s and 90s, albeit on a considerably smaller scale than previously. New Zealand's sole industrial manufacturer of tableware is now known as Temuka Homeware, the re-branded domestic pottery division of New Zealand Insulators Ltd and now a subsidiary company of Tiri Group Ltd, an investment company owning various businesses in the industrial and engineering sectors. Its contemporary product range includes traditional items, such as dinner and tea services, as well as items of more recent adoption to the New Zealand table such as sushi dishes—first produced at Crown Lynn in the late 1960s for the Expo 70 international exhibition at Osaka—pasta bowls and pizza plates. The company

promotes itself as being design conscious: its website provides a potted history of the company but stresses that:

While the company [...] and our styles are moving with the times, our brand values—quality, longevity and durability—stay the same. We are taking a contemporary, modern approach to homeware design, but will continue to produce the popular lines to which we owe much of our success in the past.³⁵

History is evoked, albeit ironically, in a recent advertisement for the company's new 'Platinum' line: 'Brown, overweight and made in the 70s: Platinum reflects the evolutions of contemporary dining; versatile, clean lines, sharp yet smooth. Wide-rimmed plates in three sizes, generous bowls in two, white is only the first colour.'³⁶ The reference to Temuka's 1972 stoneware productions, designed by Jack Laird, acts as a foil to the modern range; Laird's local variant of the type of brown-glazed pottery—first popularised in New Zealand through imports of British manufactured Denby stoneware—have now acquired iconic significance; they have become an indigenous, thirty year old *tradition*. In an ironic twist of fate, Temuka Homewares are popular selling lines in the Living and Giving chain of home style shops, one of the retail identities of Pacific Retail Group Ltd, the owners of the now liquidated Ceramco companies.

Demonstrably, the connections that existed between Crown Lynn and the state were fundamental to the success of the company. The controlled economic policies of the 1940s to the early 1980s not only gave rise to the company but also provided a high level of protection during its protracted establishment period and funded its export development



Fig. 22 Temuka Homeware 'Platinum' range from the Temuka Homeware website.

programme. But the state-sponsored design programmes promoted by the NZIDC were, in practice, of minimal benefit to a company that had developed its own design agenda, albeit through a process of commercially precarious experimentation made possible by protection and subsidy. In part, this irrelevance

reflects the low status of the NZIDC as an under-resourced arm of government, subject to the variability of changing political circumstances and impotent in the face of indifference from the private sector. Crown Lynn's greatest export successes, in the late 1970s, came at a time when the company had abandoned effectively its commitment to the state-sponsored notion of 'good design' as a factor in its production strategies in favour of a return to a reinvented 'utility' range. But the changed conditions of domestic and international trade exposed the weakness of this reductive tactic and it would become a prominent factor in the eventual collapse of the company.

But if the manufacture of ceramics can be seen historically as one of the success stories of the state-controlled Keynesian economy, it seemingly has no place in that export-driven, design-enhanced world evoked by the Design Taskforce for New Zealand's current de-regulated neo-liberal economy. The industrial paradigms conjured up by the Taskforce in its vision of design led industry lie in the electronics, fashion and brand making industries: but is this where design lies? By denying the marginality of design in New Zealand through a disowning of its record, the Taskforce posits a vacuum in which it has hopes of shifting—or creating—a new site of design. But even as the Taskforce advocates a reliance on the power of capital to realise its aims, it refuses to recognise the condition of marginality obtaining in New Zealand through its distance from the loci of power, from its systemic reliance on externally sourced capital. And in its essential denial of a *tradition*—no matter how amorphous—the Taskforce fails to provide a ground against which the difference implied in the 'new' relationships it proposes can be judged.

1 The Taskforce comprised the 'brand identity consultant' Ray Labone as chair, Richard Cutfield (executive director, Pencarrow Private Equity), Mary Davy (director and partner, Maxim-Group Ltd), Neville Findlay (designer, Zambesi), Professor Simon Fraser (professor of industrial design, Victoria University of Wellington), Peter Haythornthwaite (CEO, Creativelab Ltd), Michael James (head, School of Design, UNITEC), Bina Klose (creative director, Shape Design Ltd), Jeremy Moon (managing director, Icebreaker), Rick Wells (Formway), Henare Walmsley (Opus International Consultants), Professor Leong Yap (Lim Kok Wing University, Malaysia) and Professor John Raine (pro-vice chancellor, Canterbury University). See: Design Taskforce, *Success by design: design makes first world economies*, (Wellington: Industry New Zealand, 2003), p. 5, [np]; Appendix 3.

2 Ibid., p. 3.

3 Woodham, 'Design and the state: post-war horizons and pre-millennial aspirations', (245-246). More recently, the United Kingdom Design Council has undertaken a similar although better organised and

- researched exercise (by the economic consultancy Public and Corporate Economic Consultants Ltd) to that undertaken by the New Zealand Design Taskforce which asserts that 'The Design Council's latest research (PACEC 2001) confirms that UK businesses recognise design as being about more than simply the colour and shape of things [...] The same survey also shows that around half of UK companies identify design and innovation as contributors to increased profits, better quality services and products, higher employment, improved communications with customers and an enhanced company image.' See: [Great Britain] Design Council, *Design in Britain 2001/2002: facts and figures on design in Britain*, (London: Design Council, 2001), p. 4.
- 4 Design Taskforce, p. 5.
- 5 Ibid., p. 26.
- 6 Ibid., p. 4.
- 7 Mark Walton, *Building a case for added value through design: report to Industry New Zealand* (Wellington, NZ Institute of Economic Research (Inc), 2003), p. i.
- 8 Innovation & Systems, Noel Brown and Janice Burns, *integrate! a critical look at the interface between business and design. Commissioned by Design Industry taskforce* ([Wellington], 2002), p. 2.
- 9 Geoff Datson, 'Industrial design is good economics', *Designscape*, no. 1 (February 1969), (pp. 6:1-4), 6:1. Datson was examiner of trade practices and prices and later a deputy secretary in the Department of Trade and Industry. In the latter role he developed his ideas on design and industry, publishing them in a 1975 paper issued under the aegis of the New Zealand Institute of Public Administration. See: G H Datson, 'Foreign investment in New Zealand Industry', in *Foreign investment policy in New Zealand*, ed. by R H Carey, (Wellington: New Zealand Institute of Public Administration, 1975), pp. 26-40, (33).
- 10 Anne Else, 'History lessons: the public history you get when you're not getting any public history', in *Going public: the changing face of New Zealand history*, ed. by Bronwyn Dalley and Jock Phillips, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001), pp. 123-140, (135).
- 11 Industrial Design Bill. New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives. 27 May 1966.
- 12 New Zealand. Parliament. House of Representatives, 'New Zealand Hansard', (2139).
- 13 Design Taskforce, [np], Appendix 2.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid., p. 14.
- 16 Ibid., p. 21.
- 17 Ibid., p. 9.
- 18 Ibid., p. 51.
- 19 Paula Oliver, 'Wish-list comes true for design taskforce', *NZH*, 17 October 2003, p. C:3.
- 20 Trevor Davis, *Innovation and growth: a global perspective*, ([London]: PriceWaterhouseCoopers, [2000]). The report does not appear to be held by any major public library either in New Zealand or elsewhere (British Library, Library of Congress, etc). An internet search of the PriceWaterhouseCoopers website resulted in a 'file not found' response. See: <http://www.pwcglobal.com/extweb/ncsurvres.nsf/docid/DD9FE29FFB674C5C8525683F004E2E4E>.
- 21 Design Taskforce, p. 25. The Fitch reference is taken unacknowledged from the NZIER report, see: H Aldersey-Williams, 'When good design pays dividends' available: <http://www.bluegoose.co.uk/resources/resa.htm>. At the time of writing this link is no longer available.
- 22 Ibid., p. 40.
- 23 Fry, *Design History Australia*, p. 54.
- 24 Design Taskforce, p. 32.
- 25 Ibid., p. 4.
- 26 P Proctor, 'Industrial design for export, background paper 9', in *Report: Export Development Conference June 1963*, (Wellington: [New Zealand] Department of Industries and Commerce, 1963), pp. 1-6, (5).
- 27 Design Taskforce, p. 74.
- 28 Paul Burrall, 'The official critic - irrelevant or influential', *Design Issues*, vol. 13, no. 2 (Summer 1997), (pp. 36-40), 39.
- 29 Design Taskforce, p. 59.
- 30 Ibid., p. 4.

- 31 Ibid., p. 59.
- 32 John Gloag, *Good design, good business*, (London: HMSO for the Council of Industrial Design, 1948), p. 55.
- 33 Jim Eagles, 'Business leaders give thumbs down for Government's hands-on', *NZH*, 29 September 2003, p. C1.
- 34 Muldoon, (9).
- 35 Temuka Homeware, 'Temuka Homeware of New Zealand'. 2003, Available: <http://www.temukahomeware.co.nz>, 25 September 2003.
- 36 'Brown, overweight and made in the 70s', *NZH*, 16 October 2003, p. B3.

10.2 Conclusion

Three questions were posed at the outset of this study: how can either an history or a genealogy be perceived through the lens of design? How is design to be understood within a New Zealand historical context? And how can a suitable theoretical model be developed to initiate a design historical theory in a field of study that is, as yet, undefined? These interrogations have constituted the basis for this study, acting both as a set of markers and as a collection of devices enabling the identification and sorting of the documents constituting the archive; the artefacts and the texts. By defining a genealogy in the Foucauldian sense as a branch of history ‘rejecting the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and teleologies’ it becomes possible to defer the ontological imperative of conventional consecutive and developmental histories and thus, arguably, a temptation to indulge in teleological distortions of the recorded past.¹ A genealogy becomes a process of mapping tentatively an unknown, if recognised, site; in effect it consists of a series of ‘bits’ of information from which it is possible to discern patterns, linkages and disjunctions. Yet fundamental to this discourse is an understanding of what constitutes design or, more relevantly, how one might recognise the constitution of its absence, not in an ontological sense, but rather in the way that Fry identifies the designed artefact—or object—and its meaning ‘as a multiplicity of forms, relations, practices, processes and historical circumstances.’² Thus, in undertaking this study, a working understanding of design has evolved, one that posits design as a salient factor in the production, distribution, mediation and consumption of a material culture of a certain taxon of ceramics located at some point in the European construction of New Zealand. Thus, at various moments, design is viewed from the perspective: of production such as the manufacture of tableware by the various Milton potteries between 1874 and 1915 and by Crown Lynn Potteries between 1942 and 1989; of distribution through the remaining traces of the activities of New Zealand importers who also acted as agents for British manufacturers; mediation through the proselytising actions of the short-lived modernist journal, the *New Zealand Design Review*; and consumption through demand generated by a range of retail establishments. From these sections of the archive, certain tendencies can be discerned not only in the pattern of design production, distribution and consumption, but also shared with the histories that it records. Thus a series of key

binaries emerge: between the metropolitan centre that was the United Kingdom and has become the United States and the colonised frontier that became New Zealand; between the state and business; and between tradition and ‘the modern’ or the ‘progressive’. These institutionalised strands of power intimate that there is a place for design within the framework of a New Zealand history; in allowing recognition of design they reflect its centrality in the dialectics of power within the country. But set against this centrality is the disjunction of absence, the marginalisation of design from the constructions of state and business, the same issue that the Design Taskforce was instructed to resolve; a condition that it is contended has characterised periodically the position of design throughout New Zealand’s history. In part, this marginalisation can be seen to stem from the way in which an understanding of what design is and how it functions is posited within the discourses of power; how its definition is reduced to one driven by a concern with production which ignores the wider, enduring, nature of the designed commodity.

1 Foucault, ‘Nietzsche, Genealogy, History’, p. 140.

2 Fry, *Design history Australia*, p.55.

II Bibliography

Abbreviations

AJHR	<i>Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand</i>
ANZ	Archives New Zealand
AS	<i>Auckland Star</i>
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
AWMML	Auckland War Memorial Museum Library
BT	Great Britain Board of Trade
BW	Great Britain British Council
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DHRCA	Design History Research Centre Archives
H&B	<i>Home and Building</i>
IC	New Zealand Department of Industries and Commerce
PGGTR	<i>Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review</i>
NA (PRO)	National Archives (Public Records Office)
NZDR	<i>New Zealand Design Review</i>
NZH	<i>New Zealand Herald</i>
NZPD	<i>New Zealand Parliamentary Debates</i>
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales
VAMA	Victoria & Albert Museum Archive

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12 Appendix

United Kingdom ceramic manufacturers and their New Zealand agents, 1948-1956

Manufacturer ¹	Brand	Agent	Location	Date
A G Richardson & Co Ltd	Crown Ducal Ware	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1953
A J Wilkinson Ltd	Clarice Cliff	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
A T Finney & Sons Ltd	Duchess Ware	J H Oldham & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
A W Buchan & Co	Portobello Ware	Miles Rybond & Co	Auckland	1953
Adderleys China Works	Adderley	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Albany & Harvey Potteries	-	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1953
Alcock Lindley & Bloor Ltd	-	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1953
Alfred B Jones & Sons Ltd	Royal Grafton	John Shorter (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1956
Alfred Meakin (Tunstall) Ltd	-	A L Byrne	Auckland	1956
Alton China Co Ltd	-	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1956
Arthur Bowker	-	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Arthur Wood & Son (Longport) Ltd	Royal Bradwell	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1953
Bancroft & Bennett Co Ltd	Garden House			1948
Barker Bros Ltd	Royal Tudor	C Jackson & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Barratt's of Staffordshire	Corona	John Abbott Ltd	Auckland	1956
Bovey Pottery Co Ltd	Blue Waters	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Branksome Ceramics Ltd	Branksome	F O & H S Hart Ltd/[P Pierce]	Wellington	1956
British Anchor Pottery Co Ltd	Regency	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Burgess & Leigh Ltd	Burleigh Ware	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1953
C Amison & Co Ltd	Stanley China	Staffordshire Potteries (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1956
C T Maling & Sons	-	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1953
Cara China Co Ltd	Cara China	J L Garrard & Son Ltd	Wellington	1956
Carter, Stabler & Adams Ltd	Poole	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1953
Cartwright & Edwards Ltd	Boronian	F W Bee & Co Ltd	Napier	1953
Castle Wynd Potteries Co	-	Miles Rybond & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Cauldon Potteries Ltd	Royal Cauldon	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
Chance Bros Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
Chapmans (Longton) Ltd	Royal Standard	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
Coalport China Ltd	Coalport	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
Colclough China Ltd	Colclough	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1953
Collingwood China Ltd	-	Aubrey Gaultier & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd	Crown Clarence	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1956
Coopers (Anchor) Pottery Ltd	Art Pottery Co	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Crown China Crafts Ltd	China Flowers	Aubrey Gaultier & Co Ltd	Wellington	1953
Crown Staffs China Co Ltd	-	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Dartmouth Pottery	-	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1953
Denton China (Longton) Co Ltd	Denton China	F D Woodruffe & Co Ltd	Auckland	1953
Devonmoor Art Pottery Ltd	-	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Doulton & Co Ltd	Royal Doulton	John Shorter (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1953
Dresden Floral Porcelain Co Ltd	-	John Abbott Ltd	Auckland	1956
Dunn, Bennett & Co Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
E Braine & Co Ltd	Foley Ware	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1948
Elijah Cotton Ltd	Nelson Ware	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
Ellgreave Pottery Co Ltd	Lottie Rhead Ware	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1948
Empire Porcelain Company	Shelton Ivory	H E Cooper & Co Ltd	Auckland	1948
Furnivals (1913) Ltd	-	John Shorter (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1948
George Clews & Co Ltd	Chameleon Ware	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1948
George Davidson & Co Ltd	-	A L Byrne	Auckland	1956
George L Ashworth & Bros Ltd	Mason's	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
George Wade & Sons Ltd	Wade	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
Gibson & Sons Ltd	Royal Harvey	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Gladstone China (Longton) Ltd	-	D L Bade & Co	Wellington	1956
Goldscheider (Staffs) Pottery Ltd	-	J L Garrard & Son Ltd	Wellington	1956
Grimwades Ltd	Royal Winton	W G Douglas & Son Ltd	Auckland	1948

H A Wain & Sons Ltd	Melba Ware	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1948
H Aynsley & Co Ltd	Vogue Moderne	Aubrey Gaultier & Co Ltd	Wellington	1948
H J Wood Ltd	Bursley Ware	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Hall Bros (Longton) Ltd	Radnor	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1948
Hammersley & Co (Longton) Ltd	Hammersley	J L Garrard & Son Ltd	Wellington	1956
Hanover Pottery Ltd	-	British & Foreign Trading Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Henry Watson's Potteries Ltd	Wattisford Ware	Stocktons	Wellington	1956
Hexter Humpherson & Co Ltd	Royal Aller Vale	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
Hollinshead & Kirkham Ltd	-	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
Howard Pottery Co Ltd	Brentliegh Ware	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
Hudson & Middleton Ltd	Sutherland (only)	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Hudson & Middleton Ltd	Delphine (only)	Miles Rybond & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
J & G Meakin Ltd	Bleu de Roi	J H Oldham & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
J Fryer Ltd	Old Court Ware	Aubrey Gaultier & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
J T Fell & Co (Longton) Ltd	Embosa Ware	F D Woodroffe & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Jackson & Gosling Ltd	Grosvenor China	Dalgety & Co Ltd	Wellington	1948
James A Jobling & Co Ltd	-	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
James Broadhurst & Sons (1939)	-	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
James Kent Ltd	Old Foley	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1948
James Pearson Ltd	Bramfield Ware	Crisps Agencies Ltd	Auckland	1956
James Sadler & Sons	-	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
John Aynsley & Sons Ltd	Aynsley	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
John Beswick Ltd	Beswick Ware	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
John Maddock & Sons Ltd	Royal Ivory	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1948
John Tams Ltd	Top-o-the World	D L Bade & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
John Walsh Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
Johnson Bros Ltd	Carnival Ware	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Joseph Bourne & Sons Ltd	Denby/Danesby	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd	Wedgwood	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Keele Street Pottery Ltd	-	Staffordshire Potteries (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1956
Kensington Pottery Ltd	-	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
Kirkhams Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
Lancaster & Sandland Ltd	Crown Dresden	F D Woodroffe & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Lingard Webster & Co Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1948
J Lockett & Co Ltd	-	-	-	1948
Longton New Art Pottery Ltd	Kelsboro Ware	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
Lovatt's Potteries Ltd	Langley Ware	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Mason, Cash & Co Ltd	-	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1948
Mintons Ltd	-	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1948
Myott, Son & Co Ltd	-	H F Wright Ltd	Auckland	1956
New Chelsea Co Ltd	Royal Chelsea	Tallerman Suckling (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1948
New Hall Pottery Co Ltd	-	A E Potts & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Newport Pottery Co Ltd	Clarice Cliff	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1947
Palissy Pottery Ltd	Palissy Ware	Staffordshire Potteries (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1956
Paragon China Ltd	Paragon	A L Byrne	Auckland	1956
Pountney & Co Ltd	Bristol Ware	Importers & Agents Ltd	Auckland	1956
Price Bros (Burslem) Ltd	-	J H Oldham & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
R H & S L Plant Ltd	Tuscan China	J H Oldham & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
R Sudlow & Sons Ltd	-	W G Douglas & Son Ltd	Auckland	1948
Ridgway (Bedford Works) Ltd	-	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Rosina China Co Ltd	-	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1956
Roslyn China Ltd	-	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1947
Alfred Clough Ltd	Royal Art Pottery	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
Royal Crown Derby Co Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1947
Thomas Poole & Gladstone Ltd	Royal Stafford	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
Royal Worcester Porcelain Co Ltd	-	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1947
S Fielding & Co Ltd	Crown Devon	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Salisbury China Co Ltd	Royal York	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1949
Sampson Smith	-	C Jackson & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
Samuel Radford Ltd	Radfordian	Staffordshire Potteries (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1956
Shaw & Copestake Ltd	Sylvac	A L Byrne	Auckland	1956
Shelley Potteries Ltd	Shelley Ware	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1949
Shore & Coggins Ltd	Queen Anne	W G Douglas & Son Ltd	Auckland	1949
Shorter & Son Ltd	Sunray	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1949

Simpsons (Potters) Ltd	Ambassador	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1949
Spencer Stevenson & Co Ltd	Royal Stuart	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1956
Staffordshire Tea Set Co Ltd	Frank Buckley	Hill & Teasdel Ltd	Wellington	1956
Susie Cooper China Ltd	-	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Susie Cooper Pottery Ltd	-	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Swinnertons Ltd	-	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1947
T G Green & Co Ltd	Gresley	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1953
The BritishAnchor Pottery Co Ltd	-	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1949
Thomas C Wild & Sons Ltd	Royal Albert	John Raine Ltd	Wellington	1956
Thomas Cone Ltd	Royal Alma Ware	Staffordshire Potteries (NZ) Ltd	Wellington	1949
Thomas Forester & Sons Ltd	Phoenix China	A L Byrne	Auckland	1948
Thomas Hughes & Sons Ltd	Unicorn	F D Woodroffe & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Thomas Lawrence(Longton) Ltd	Falcon Ware	A L Byrne	Auckland	1956
Tooth & Co Ltd	Bretby Art Pottery	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
Trentham Bone China Ltd	Royal Crown	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
Universal Pottery Co Ltd	-	Robert Raine Ltd	Wellington	1949
Versil Ltd	-	R P M Manning & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956
Victoria Porcelain (Fenton) Ltd	-	A Bester	Auckland	1956
W H Grindley & Co Ltd	-	J L Garrard & Son Ltd	Wellington	1956
W Moorcroft Ltd	-	Manufacturers' Agencies (NZ) Ltd	Auckland	1956
W R Midwinter Ltd	Porcelon	McManemin & Co Ltd	Wellington	1956
W T Copeland & Sons Ltd	Spode	J H Oldham & Co Ltd	Wellington	1949
Wade, Heath & Co Ltd	Royal Victoria	F O & H S Hart Ltd	Wellington	1949
Wedgwood & Co Ltd	-	Andrew Hawley Ltd	Wellington	1956
William Adams & Sons (Potters) Ltd	-	W G Douglas & Son Ltd	Auckland	1956
William Morley & Co Ltd	Morley Ware	Stirling (NZ) Agencies	Wellington	1956
Wiltshaw & Robinson Ltd	Carlton Ware	C Flockton & Co Ltd	Wellington	1949
Winterton Pottery (Longton) Ltd	Bluestone Ware	P & W Henderson	Christchurch	1949
Wood & Sons Ltd	Beryl	Monginie Cooke & Co Ltd	Auckland	1956

1 This table is based on advertisements inserted in the *Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review*, 1947-1952, vols. 72-77 and listings in the *Pottery Gazette Reference Book*, 1956. These have been correlated with information contained in Geoffrey A Godden, *Encyclopaedia of British pottery and porcelain marks*, (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1964).