



# ‘To Be Truly British We Must Be Anti-German’

New Zealand, Enemy Aliens and the Great War Experience, 1914–1919

Andrew Francis

Peter Lang

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# BRITISH IDENTITIES SINCE 1707

This book is a study of the treatment of New Zealand's German-speaking settlers during the course of the Great War. As with Britain's other dominions, New Zealand's German and Austro-Hungarian residents were subject to a raft of legislation which placed restrictions on their employment and activities, while those considered a danger to domestic security found themselves interned for the duration of the conflict. This book examines public, press and political responses to their presence, and describes how patriotic associations, trade organizations, xenophobic politicians and journalists undertook a vigorous anti-alien campaign resulting, in a number of instances, in anti-German riots.

Central to this book is an examination of the extent to which pro-imperial sentiment, concepts of citizenship and national identity, increasing European settlement and a progressively volatile European scene set the tone for the manner with which the dominion's British settlers treated its enemy alien counterparts. Themes discussed include the public's reaction to war; the government's internment policy; the establishment of anti-German trade organizations; and the challenges facing Prime Minister William Massey, whose wish to remain fair and just towards enemy aliens often brought him into direct conflict with the more hostile anti-German elements within New Zealand society.



Andrew Francis is an independent historian living in Wellington, New Zealand. His research interests include the New Zealand home front during the First World War, the history of British imperial advertising and British film propaganda of the Second World War. This is his first book.



‘To Be Truly British  
We Must Be Anti-German’

# BRITISH IDENTITIES SINCE 1707

Vol. 4

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This book is dedicated to my parents.

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## Introduction

Germany's violation of Belgian neutrality on 4 August 1914 led Britain's Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, to issue an ultimatum to the German Foreign Ministry insisting on an immediate withdrawal. The ultimatum was ignored and Britain declared war that evening. The thousands assembled in Trafalgar Square, Whitehall and outside the Houses of Parliament, waved Union Jacks, sang patriotic songs, and cheered enthusiastically at the news.<sup>1</sup> In Paris, Germany's declaration of war on France prompted *Le Temps* to state that the mood was serious but not sad. Patriotic crowds, comprised mainly of young men, gathered in the city's streets.<sup>2</sup> In St Petersburg, Germany's declaration of war on the Russian Empire was greeted with mass enthusiasm. Thousands converged on the square in front of the Winter Palace to hear the Czar's appeal for all Russians to defend the motherland using exactly the same words and tone as used by Alexander I in 1812 when Russia faced the Napoleonic threat. Tumultuous cheers and various renditions of the national anthem followed.<sup>3</sup>

The enthusiasm for war in New Zealand was an extension of the European mood. The enduring image of the Dominion's entry into the Great War is of the Governor, Lord Liverpool, standing on the steps of Parliament in Wellington and delivering King George V's proclamation that the British Empire was at war with Germany and her allies.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 15,000 people who had gathered greeted this news with delight; hearty cheers rang out and later the same day an even greater crowd marched

- 1 Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British society and the First World War* (London: The Bodley Head, 1965), 31.
- 2 Hew Strachan, *The First World War, volume 1: To arms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 154.
- 3 William C. Fuller Jr., *The Foe Within: Fantasies of treason and the end of Imperial Russia* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), 118–19.
- 4 *Evening Post* (Wellington), 5 August 1914, 8.

through the city's streets in support of the war.<sup>5</sup> Wellington's *Evening Post* reported that there had been a complete absence of jingoism; instead a collective mood of sombre reflection that derived from a 'calm confidence in the justness of [New Zealand's] quarrel' had taken hold.<sup>6</sup> John A. Lee, prospective recruit and Labour Member of Parliament after the Great War, witnessed the scenes in Wellington: 'Everybody rushed of course to enlist. That was the spirit. A lot of folks sang patriotic songs and they cheered ... Folk talked about the great sacrifices of young men that would be made.'<sup>7</sup> The Prime Minister, William Massey, echoed the Governor's words in Parliament, and Joseph Ward, leader of the Liberal opposition and himself a former Prime Minister, appealed for 'solidarity and union of spirit' from the New Zealand public.<sup>8</sup>

The King's declaration of war in London was not simply a British statement; it encompassed all his territories and dependencies, including the self-governing dominions of New Zealand, Australia and Canada. However, constitutional law dictated that there was no necessity for the dominions to send troops, ships or supplies; the decision to extend practical support was left in the hands of individual parliaments. In Wellington, Massey announced that Parliament had already approved the necessary steps to have in readiness an expeditionary force. 'This was,' he stated, 'a time for action and not words.' He already had letters pouring in from volunteers and announced that, if New Zealand men did go overseas to help Britain, they would give a good account of themselves, 'as in the dark days of the South African war.'<sup>9</sup> Maori too were included in Massey's statement, arguing that they were prepared 'to fight anywhere'; though he acknowledged that imperial regulations would probably prohibit this.<sup>10</sup> It should be noted

5 Paul Baker, *King and Country Call: New Zealanders, conscription and the Great War* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1988), 15.

6 *Evening Post*, 7 August 1914, 8.

7 Michael King, *New Zealanders at War* (Auckland: Penguin, 1981), 85.

8 *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (NZPD)*, 5 August 1914, 399–400.

9 *Grey River Argus* (Greymouth), 6 August 1914, 6.

10 *Ibid.*; For further information on Maori participation see Baker, *King and Country Call*, 210–22.

that Maori support for the war effort was not universal. Maori response depended on tribal affiliation. Those who fought with the Crown during the wars of the nineteenth century – Ngapuhi and Ngati Porou to name two – were keen to serve; those who had opposed colonial forces such as Taranaki, Waikato, King Country and Urewera Maori, sent virtually no men. Within ten days of Massey's parliamentary speech, an expeditionary force of 1,400 men had been raised and was setting sail for Samoa and, by 15 October, 8,500 men of the Main Body of the expeditionary force were on their way to the Middle East.<sup>11</sup>

It is clear that belief in British and imperial superiority, and the assumption that the conflict would be short, shaped the manner in which many celebrated the declaration of war on 5 August. This outpouring of national – but more importantly, imperial – sentiment redefined what it meant to be British. Businesses, as well as individuals, reconfirmed their British roots and, in an atmosphere heightened by 'war fever', those who fell outside this rejuvenated sense of 'Britishness' were likely to be viewed with suspicion.

New Zealand displayed similar xenophobia and anti-alienist characteristics which have been observed, both in other dominions and in Britain; yet the intense fear or dislike of German people, their customs and culture were expressed in large part due to contexts unique to New Zealand. Patriotism could be displayed positively, publicly and directly via such media as festivals, flag-waving and fund-raising. However, it was also possible to be patriotic in a negative sense by vilifying the enemy. This was expressed most publicly through assaults on German-born residents and their businesses – often attributed to 'high jinks' and 'overzealous patriotism' – through vigorous anti-German advertising campaigns in the popular press, and via countless letters to newspapers appealing for mass internment or deportation of all enemy aliens.<sup>12</sup>

11 Lt. H. T. B. Drew, *The War Effort of New Zealand* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1923), 2.

12 *New Zealand Free Lance (NZFL)*, 15 August 1914, 6; also see *Gisborne Times*, 2 January 1915, 2.

This book explores two main interrelated questions. The first concerns the treatment during the Great War of New Zealand residents who were German or Austro-Hungarian by birth or descent. It analyses public, press, political and legislative responses to their presence between 1914 and 1918 and, within that, it describes how patriotic associations, trade campaigners, journalists and xenophobic, opportunistic individuals led a vigorous and destructive anti-alien campaign. The argument is shaped by a concern to determine whether New Zealand's anti-German movement was unique or indicative of a wider imperial psychosis prevalent at the time. Second, this book assesses the degree to which pro-imperial sentiment, issues of citizenship and national identity determined the actions of British New Zealanders during the conflict, with regard not only to 'the enemy in our midst' but also towards each other. This has become a renewed theme of interest with a number of historians including John Darwin, Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson, Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, and Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine.<sup>13</sup> It will also be argued the level of intolerance developed towards enemy aliens throughout the conflict was far too deep and sustained to be explained as a simple knee-jerk response to war-time conditions. It was, rather, a product of late-Victorian and Edwardian growing unease over continental European settlement in the dominions and the metropolitan centre.<sup>14</sup>

13 See John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of people, goods and capital in the British World, c.1850–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich (eds), *The British World: Diaspora, culture and identity* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), and Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

14 For Britain see Panikos Panayi, *The Enemy in Our Midst: Germans in Britain during the First World War* (New York & Oxford: Berg, 1991), and Colin Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration & British society, 1871–1971* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988). For the best Australian survey of treatment of wartime enemy aliens see Gerhard Fischer, *Enemy Aliens: Internment and the homefront experience in Australia, 1914–1920* (St Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1989) and Raymond Evans, *Loyalty and Disloyalty: Social conflict on the Queensland homefront, 1914–1918* (Sydney:



In addressing these questions, this study provides a greater understanding of the role of the New Zealand home front during the Great War, both in a national as well as a wider imperial context. While numerous studies have analysed New Zealand's service personnel's contribution to the armed conflict, less attention has been given to the home front.<sup>15</sup> Recent years have witnessed a redressing of the balance that has traditionally been weighted largely in favour of military studies of the war front and the armed forces. Yet gaps remain. Far less has been written about home front patriotism and the wider contexts and meanings of citizenship, identity, exclusion and xenophobia (in a wartime context at least).<sup>16</sup> This book fills some of those gaps. It asserts that only geographically was New Zealand detached from the various theatres of conflict. Its outlook in 1914 was that of a loyal British dominion serving the motherland; the speed with which support through recruitment and supplies alone were forthcoming, testify to this. Its relationship, therefore, with its enemy alien population is revealing, both as a national and imperial case study.

The issues of loyalty and citizenship in New Zealand are constant threads throughout this work. In the context of the Great War, New

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Allen & Unwin, 1987). For Canada see Frances Swyripa and John Herd Thompson (eds), *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada during the Great War* (Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta, 1983), and for a regional study see John English and Kenneth McLaughlin, *Kitchener: An illustrated history* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983).

15 More recent military studies of the period include Peter Pedersen, *Anzacs: Gallipoli to the Western Front* (Auckland: Viking, 2007); Glyn Harper, *Dark Journey* (Auckland: HarperCollins, 2007); Glyn Harper, *Spring Offensive: New Zealand and the second Battle of the Somme* (Auckland: HarperCollins, 2003), and Christopher Pugsley, *The ANZAC Experience: New Zealand, Australia and Empire in the First World War* (Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2004).

16 See John Crawford and Ian McGibbon (eds), *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies and the First World War* (Auckland: Exisle Publishing, 2007). Of the thirty-two contributions, eight are devoted to home front issues, yet none of these focus on the enemy alien presence. Also see Stevan Eldred-Grigg's *The Great Wrong War: New Zealand Society in WWI* (Auckland: Random House, 2010), and Simon Johnson, 'Home Front: Aspects of civilian patriotism in New Zealand during the First World War', MA thesis, Massey University, 1975.

Zealand citizenship is often defined by its young men dying at Gallipoli or on the Western Front. However, because of the nature of the war, it was imperative that citizenship be defined on the home front too, for the home front shaped transformative experiences just as surely as did the fields of Flanders or the beaches of Gallipoli. Indeed, it was perhaps more important domestically where tangible expressions of patriotism and loyalty encapsulated by enlistment and the experiences of military service were absent. Enemy alien legislation defined New Zealand identity. At times, as will be seen, identity became blurred as war events intervened, leading policy makers to re-define citizenship in increasingly complex ways. Notions of inclusion – identifying the differences between ‘them’ and ‘us’ – were all revised as war dragged on, and became central to many political and public debates. While expressions of continued loyalty to the British Empire were being advanced throughout the war, a palpable sense of what it meant to be a New Zealander, and who was not a New Zealander, was also being cultivated. It should be noted that this study does not consider the wartime role of New Zealand’s Irish Catholic communities. While New Zealand’s Protestant Irish – of which Massey himself was one – were predominantly loyal and supportive of New Zealand’s war effort, the dominion’s Catholic response was not so straightforward. There have in recent years been a number of studies dealing with Catholic Irish migration to New Zealand and how loyalty and support for the war changed during the course of the conflict. Given its importance it deserves a separate study rather than attempting to discuss the issue in any depth here.<sup>17</sup>

This book explains that while anti-German sentiment in New Zealand remained relatively constant throughout the war, there were periods in which hostility displayed itself more sharply than at others. Mirroring attitudes evinced in Britain, increased hostility essentially came in three

17 For further reading see Lyndon Fraser (ed.), *A Distant Shore: Irish migration & New Zealand settlement* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000). In particular see Seán Brosnahan’s chapter, “Shaming the Shoneens”: The *Green Ray* and the Maoriland Irish Society in Dunedin, 1916–1922, 117–34. Also see Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand immigrants from England, Ireland & Scotland, 1800–1945* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008).

phases. The first was the two to three months after the initial outbreak of war when it was reported in the New Zealand press that the German advance across Belgium and France was causing concern in Britain; and when patriotic proclamations in New Zealand were at their most vociferous. The second phase was from May to October 1915 when news of Gallipoli casualties, the sinking of the passenger liner *Lusitania*, and the publication of the Bryce Report – with its allegations of German outrages – prompted increased calls for tightening of enemy alien measures – in particular the introduction of widespread internment – and an increase in attacks on German-owned, or perceived German-owned businesses. The third came from approximately March 1918 onwards, again, in response to successful German advances on the western front, and a renewed lack of confidence in the New Zealand government's ability to successfully monitor all enemy aliens.<sup>18</sup>

A key focus of this work is the role of public opinion and the popular press in influencing government policy. As a result, there is a strong emphasis on newspapers, journals and pictorial weeklies from the period.<sup>19</sup> An analysis of editorials, cartoons, reports of patriotic meetings and religious services, advertising space given over to anti-German organizations, traders and producers and, crucially, reporting of wartime events and incidents from overseas, reveals that both the anti-alien hostility of the general public and popular press opinion were often in harmony.<sup>20</sup> At such times as they united, these forces were able to exert considerable pressure on a

18 Cate Haste noted that Britain experienced increased anti-German hostility at similar times; *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), 109.

19 The key weekly pictorials are the Wellington-based *NZFL*, Auckland's *New Zealand Observer* (*NZO*) and *Auckland Weekly News* (*AWN*), Dunedin's *Otago Witness* (*OW*), and Christchurch's *Weekly Press* (*WP*). Such pictorials provided a weekly round-up of news and were crucial in the development of New Zealand journalism and communication, especially in areas where access to daily newspapers was restricted. With greater development of road systems and the daily press from the 1930s onwards, the need for weekly pictorials diminished.

20 Andrew Francis, 'Anti-Alienism in New Zealand during the Great War: The von Zedlitz Affair, 1915', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 24/3 (2006), 251–76.

seemingly unyielding government, forcing it to impose harsher restrictions on enemy aliens. As will be shown, the role of the press in either reflecting or influencing public opinion was a constant throughout the conflict and featured heavily in issues surrounding naturalization, internment, trade boycotts and deportations.

It is clear that the role of the press and its relationship with the New Zealand public is crucial to understanding home front life during the conflict. While New Zealanders gleaned most of their wartime news from the imperial wire, the local news systems also grew to a position of mature sophistication, particularly when reporting on the home front situation.<sup>21</sup> This book focuses on the changes which underpinned the press relationship with New Zealand in these years. What developed from August 1914 onwards was an interaction between the public and print media that was largely absent throughout the late-Victorian and Edwardian years. The war altered the relationship between the public and the state. Publishers, attuned to this, reflected and influenced opinion to advance their own political and social standpoints.

The role of the public and media is counterbalanced by an analysis of parliamentary debates and official government reports that illustrate the often invidious positions in which Massey and his cabinet colleagues found themselves. This was especially true when attempting to placate an increasingly belligerent press and electorate while remaining fair and just to those being targeted. This is a recurring theme throughout the book: a Prime Minister, determined to execute a liberally tolerant policy, sometimes seeking and following advice from London, while fending off public, press and political criticism that his administration was unable to govern in conditions imposed by the exigencies of war.<sup>22</sup>

21 Simon Potter, *News and the British World: The emergence of an imperial press system, 1876–1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003). See 186–210 for a fuller discussion on imperial newspaper networks during the Great War.

22 A conference held at Massey University, Palmerston North in December 2006, focused on the contribution made by the Prime Minister during his twelve-year tenure. In the main it was a reassessment of his career, moving away from the leftist view of Massey, as one reviewer stated, as ‘the erstwhile scourge of the workers

This book is a thematic study of press, public and political responses to the presence of enemy aliens in a domestic as well as wider imperial context during four years of war. The conflict itself provides the chronological framework within which certain aspects of war on the home front can be better understood. The rhythms of the conflict itself shaped the timing and intensity of New Zealand's attitudes to war. This study provides, through an examination of the concepts of empire, citizenship and identity – both in national and imperial contexts – tolerance, liberty and developing techniques of communication, a greater understanding of how the British Empire's smallest and most far-flung dominion adjusted to four years of conflict.

The book is structured thus: CHAPTER ONE assesses the period from the 1840s to the eve of war. It examines both New Zealand as a destination for continental European settlement and the relationship between British settlers and their German, Scandinavian and Austro-Hungarian counterparts. It plots the development of New Zealand society in this period with regard to the contributions made by continental European settlers. It also considers the fluctuating international scene from the 1880s onwards to determine whether this altered relations between British and European settlers. Heightened 'Russophobia' and then Germany's naval programme and expanding Empire, particularly in the South Pacific, was a focus of considerable debate in the three decades preceding war, and, as will be shown, laid the foundations for marked anti-German sentiment that erupted upon the outbreak of war.

CHAPTER TWO examines press and public responses to the outbreak of war. It explores how newspapers, weekly periodicals, and journals published by religious, temperance, labour and farming interests reacted to war, and the differing ways in which they sought to justify the struggle ahead. Organs of the press helped to shape public and, at times, political attitudes to an array of wartime issues including initial justification for war,

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... whose repressive strings were pulled by shadowy capitalists and bigots' towards a more progressive and conciliatory representation of his leadership; <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/classroom/massey-massey>, accessed 1 November 2008.

recruitment, financial and material support for the war effort and, importantly, New Zealand's 'enemy alien question'. It explains that support for the war was not total: there were elements within society that remained detached from the wider outpouring of patriotic fervour. Through their respective journals, Catholics, Protestants, prohibitionists and socialists all failed to embrace the rampant enthusiasm for war expressed nationwide; instead they believed that war was horrific and should only be embarked upon once all other attempts at peace had been exhausted.<sup>23</sup>

CHAPTER THREE considers the issue of wartime naturalization and non-naturalization and the difficulties of declaring personal loyalty in an increasingly hostile atmosphere. It assesses the onerous task Massey's government faced in attempting to remain fair and just towards foreign-born residents who, in many cases, had contributed significantly to New Zealand society, while also trying to appease a wider public. Massey would not have been surprised to expend considerable energies dealing with Maori separatists and anti-war, anti-imperialist Federation of Labour workers, but the naturalization debate proved one of the most contentious issues of his tenure.<sup>24</sup> Until the outbreak of war, race, class and gender dominated concepts of citizenship and identity. In the context of the Great War, however, these were superseded by the presence of newly established enemy aliens. White European ethnicity became a wartime determining factor of citizenship and inclusion. Both residents and businesses with German-sounding surnames became targets. The Dresden Piano Company, though wholly British-owned, changed its name to the more palatable Bristol Piano Company in an attempt to avoid anti-German attacks. The tailors, Schneideman Brothers, took out a full-page advert in the *New Zealand Observer* (hereafter *Observer*) emphasizing their Latvian roots. Despite their Germanic sounding name, they referred to themselves in advertisements as 'The Great Russian Tailors' until late 1917.<sup>25</sup>

23 See *NZO*, 8 August 1914, 2; *Outlook*, 11 August 1914, 3; *Vanguard*, 15 August 1914, 4, and *New Zealand Tablet*, 6 August 1914, 34.

24 For more on the Federation of Labour movement see Erik Olssen, *The Red Feds: Revolutionary industrial unionism and the New Zealand Federation of Labour, 1908–1914* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1988).

25 *NZO*, 29 August 1914, 7.

CHAPTER FOUR examines the introduction and experience of internment. Concentrating on *Somes* and *Motuihi* Islands, the two main camps based in Wellington and Auckland harbours respectively, this chapter also discusses the issues of class, privilege and social status as a means of circumventing possible internment, and the problems such loopholes created within wider society. *Somes* Island, a former quarantine station for immigrants and animals, was designated to house enemy aliens, receiving its first internees within a week of war's declaration.<sup>26</sup> By 1918 the island was home to over 300 internees, a mix of German and Austro-Hungarian military reservists, and civilians deemed dangerous to home security. *Motuihi* Island housed a substantially smaller number – on average sixty to eighty internees at any one time – but they were categorized as higher status internees and therefore enjoyed greater privileges, comforts and liberty than those experienced on *Somes*. This chapter also discusses the visitor reports made by the American and Swiss Consuls to New Zealand, and the internees' reactions to being incarcerated for the duration of the conflict.

CHAPTER FIVE analyses the case of George von Zedlitz, professor of Modern Languages at Victoria College, who fell foul of a virulent press, public and, later, political campaign against him, which eventuated in the introduction of government legislation to dismiss him from his post.<sup>27</sup> The focus on this one man is because his case provided the conduit for a wider series of anti-alien hysteria. The von Zedlitz affair highlights the level of anti-German sentiment prevalent in New Zealand in the early months of the war. It was a case in which accusations of class privilege and protection supplied by influential academic and political acquaintances were vehemently debated at all levels in society. The case called into question the government's ability to administer an equitable enemy alien policy that encompassed all those who did not possess British citizenship, while also providing substantial copy for newspapers and weekly journals. Despite being exonerated by an Aliens Board Commission enquiry, von Zedlitz's continued liberty became the subject of daily conversation. His dismissal from office in September 1915 was directly a result of public, press and parliamentary pressure which had commenced four months earlier, and at a

26 *Evening Post*, 13 August 1914, 8.

27 Francis, 'Anti-Alienism in New Zealand during the Great War' 251–76.



time when initial news of New Zealand losses at Gallipoli and the sinking of the *Lusitania* were fresh in the public consciousness. That it took the passing of the Alien Enemy Teachers' Act to remove him from his position is testament to the level of disruption the case had caused.<sup>28</sup>

CHAPTER SIX assesses a highly successful campaign of boycotts against foreign-owned businesses and commodities, which was mirrored by an equally aggressive campaign of promoting imperial-made items; one consequence being a reassertion of British social, cultural and economic dominance during and after the conflict.<sup>29</sup> The establishment of anti-German trade organizations mirrored those formed in other parts of the Empire, and they were at the forefront of maintaining an aggressive policy against German trade, traders and commodities. In direct correlation this chapter also considers the proliferation of pro-British and pro-war advertising adopted by many companies in response to prevailing economic advantages offered by the conflict.<sup>30</sup> In such a climate it is unsurprising that companies either attached their products to the conflict in a demonstration of 'practical patriotism' or distanced themselves and their products from any suspicion that they were of enemy origin. This chapter illustrates that trade and commerce were not immune to pro-Empire and anti-German sentiments; in fact, they became central to many debates that continued well into the 1920s.

CHAPTER SEVEN provides a trans-national comparison with Canada to identify the extent to which the enemy alien experience was peculiarly national in its consideration, or was an experience shaped by wider imperial concerns. It examines a number of themes including the initial response to war, both in the Anglophone and Francophone communities; expressions

28 Ibid.

29 The New Zealand Chambers of Commerce debated at length pre-war German trade influence within the British Empire, and agitated for a blanket ban on German goods entering New Zealand after the end of hostilities; *Report of Proceedings of Conference of Chambers of Commerce of New Zealand held in Wellington 4–6 August 1915* (Wellington: Wellington Publishing Company, 1916), MS X-0133, Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL), Wellington, 67–91.

30 The anti-German tone of Jason's Hosiery Company's advertisement and the pro-war focus of Bovril's campaign are two such examples; see *OW*, 4 August 1915, 4, and *NZFL*, 3 March 1916, 19 respectively.



of anti-German sentiment, in particular in response to wartime events; and also a case study of Berlin in Ontario, a city heavily populated with German-born residents.<sup>31</sup> While not representative of Canada as a whole, the wartime experiences of Berlin's residents, from accusations of disloyalty, a lack of wartime commitment due to a perceived sluggish recruitment, and the hostile battle over the city's name change, demonstrate the hostile environment wartime conditions were capable of perpetuating, during and after the conflict.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, the CONCLUDING CHAPTER examines the legacy of the wartime experience including the release from internment, the revocation of naturalization, and eventual deportation of approximately 400 German and Austro-Hungarian-born residents. The wartime introduction of legislation, whether it limited the civil rights of enemy aliens, suppressed German trade activity, or ousted a non-naturalized resident from their employment, was designed to last only for the duration of the conflict. However, the war had taken a monumental toll on the New Zealand home front psyche to the extent that some restrictions were maintained, some even expanded, in the months following the 1918 Armistice. This chapter places in the immediate post-war context the difficulties facing politicians, press and the populace in coming to terms with fifty-one months of war. The devastating 1918 influenza pandemic and the military losses felt in Europe, Turkey and the Middle East threatened to overwhelm the nation.<sup>33</sup> The Armistice, the following July's peace celebrations, and the unveiling of war memorials the length and breadth of the dominion may have signalled the commencement of collective relief, celebration and grieving but, for enemy aliens, the end of war did not entail the end of hostility towards them.<sup>34</sup>

31 Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896–1921: A nation transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 212–74.

32 English and McLaughlin, *Kitchener*, 107–67.

33 Geoffrey Rice, *Black November: The 1918 influenza pandemic in New Zealand*, 2nd edition (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2005).

34 David McGill, *Island of Secrets: Matiu/Somes Island in Wellington Harbour* (Wellington: Steele Roberts and Silver Owl Press, 2001), 67–71. For further discussion on New Zealand war memorials see Chris Maclean and Jock Phillips, *The Sorrow and the Pride: New Zealand war memorials* (Wellington: G. P. Books, 1990).



## ‘Proven Worthy Settlers’?: European Settlement and the Rise of Anti-Alienism

*The question of primary importance is the character of the proposed emigrant and his suitability for colonial life. If the character is good and the emigrant possesses qualities which will enable him to become a good colonist the place of birth is of no importance.<sup>1</sup>*

While New Zealand was a British colony, with approximately 90 per cent of its settler population comprised of people from the British and Irish Isles, non-English-speaking Europeans were present at the new nation's birth. Continental European arrivals continued to increase steadily as Britons arrived in greater numbers throughout the mid to late Victorian years. In 1870 colonial treasurer Julius Vogel introduced the Immigration and Public Works Act which signalled the start of a concerted campaign to attract first British, and then later, European settlers for agricultural and industrial schemes to 'open up' the country.<sup>2</sup> While continental Europeans formed a minority of the New Zealand settler population, which at the height of assisted migration in 1874, stood at 300,000, they nevertheless were noticeable. Of the 100,000 assisted migrants brought to

- 1 Attorney General Robert Stout quoted in A. R. Grigg, 'Attitudes in New Zealand to Scandinavian Immigration, 1870–1876', BA (Hons) thesis, Otago University, 1973.
- 2 Immigration and Public Works Act, 77, 12 September 1870, *New Zealand Statutes* (Wellington: Government Printer), 313–36. Also see Tony Simpson, *The Immigrants: The great migration from Britain to New Zealand, 1830–1890* (Auckland: Godwit Publishing, 1997), 169–87.

New Zealand during the 1870s, it has been estimated that approximately 6,500 of these were continental Europeans predominantly from Germany and Scandinavia.<sup>3</sup>

These early settlers encountered similar conditions to those faced by their British counterparts. Settlement blocks throughout the country were often in densely forested localities. Some areas in the Palmerston North region of the North Island were prone to flooding, making the spread of disease all the more likely. The Jackson's Bay Special Settlement in Westland in the South Island, attracted agricultural workers and fishermen through public works schemes, while the South Island's gold rush in the 1860s and beyond attracted prospectors.<sup>4</sup> The main centres of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin also experienced considerable immigration from Europe as new arrivals sought employment away from the rural areas.<sup>5</sup> Wild vegetation, homesickness, physical isolation and, in some cases, excessive rainfall, were some of the difficulties experienced by early settlers. However, continental European migration continued sure and steadily for these major groups from the 1840s until 1914. In that time major contributions to almost every sphere of New Zealand political, social, cultural, educational and economic life had been made.

On the outbreak of the Great War, however, many of these European settlers were mistaken for Germans and vilified in a similar manner. That they came from vastly different areas of Europe, were non-German speakers and, indeed, harboured their own hostilities towards Germans, counted for little in the nationalist and imperial atmosphere created by the

3 Val Burr, *Mosquitoes & Sawdust: A history of Scandinavians in early Palmerston North & surrounding districts* (Palmerston North: Scandinavian Club of Manawatu, 1995), 7.

4 A Royal Commission was established in August 1878 to review the Jackson's Bay Settlement; 'Jackson's Bay Special Settlement Commission', *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, vol. II, H-9, 1-21 and H9A, 1-106 (Wellington: Government Printer, 1879).

5 Marian Minson, 'Trends in German Immigration to New Zealand' in James Bade (ed.), *The German Connection: New Zealand and German-speaking Europe in the nineteenth century* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1993), 43.

outbreak of war. That they were by ethnicity non-British established them immediately as potential enemy aliens, and their presence helped patriotic citizens, organs of the popular press, and racially motivated politicians to shape their responses to the new threat posed by European settlers.

Pre-war relations between British and continental settlers were, in the main, characterized by peace and harmony. That said, in times of economic depression or where geopolitical and military tensions rose between Britain and a European power, New Zealand's European settlers were viewed with a growing suspicion.<sup>6</sup> Though there was not the direct hostility shown towards Chinese migrants whose own settler communities ran concurrent with other migrant settlements, press and public utterances on European threats to British – and therefore New Zealand – security laid the foundations for later condemnation.<sup>7</sup> However, in times of economic prosperity – in particular the 1870s and then the decade and a half prior to the Great War – Europeans played progressive roles in the advancement of New Zealand society and, in many cases, assimilated into an overwhelmingly 'British' way of life.

To understand fully the wartime reaction of New Zealand's British settlers towards the Dominion's continental European residents, it is necessary to examine their participation within, and their contribution to, the development of New Zealand from their arrival in the early-Victorian era until the final days of peace in August 1914. In pursuit of this theme, a number of questions must be addressed. Was New Zealand society prejudiced towards non-British white settlers prior to the war, or was it simply the outbreak of war alone which created the conditions for years of bitterness? Were mounting overseas tensions, as reported daily in the New Zealand press, and periods of economic downturn the only cause of animosity, an

6 In times of economic hardship, British settlers argued that European migrants represented unfair labour competition and urged successive governments to address this pressing concern; Andrew Trlin, *Now Respected, Once Despised* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1979), 75.

7 For Chinese migration to New Zealand see Manying Ip, *Dragons on the Long White Cloud: The making of Chinese New Zealanders* (North Shore City: Tandem Press, 1996).

animosity that dissipated in times of economic prosperity and improving Anglo-German relations? Or were they factors that merely accentuated the innate hostility held by British settlers towards European arrivals of any persuasion? Were British settlers anxious that the speed with which European settlement was taking place would hinder the progress of New Zealand as a British colony? In turn, would imported British customs, institutions and traditions be diluted by the arrival of non-English speaking stock? If so, could the outbreak of war be regarded as an opportunity to reassert 'Britishness' in the Dominion?

As this chapter provides a broad overview of the experiences of European settlers who in 1914 fell under the suspicion of the British and New Zealand governments, the experiences of non-European groupings such as Chinese and Indians are not fully explored. However, since these groups helped to shape Victorian and Edwardian alien legislation, an awareness of their treatment, especially in terms of legislation, offers vital context to the specific anti-alien responses which developed in 1914. Precedents had been set in dealing with non-white immigration. Throughout the Victorian and Edwardian eras more than twenty immigration and economic-based Bills, including the introduction of a poll tax in 1881, passed into law.<sup>8</sup> Though Bills passed against Chinese and Indians may have been extreme, they do illustrate to some degree the attitudes towards non-white and, periodically, non-British stock prevalent in New Zealand society. Though it took the outbreak of war to bring virulent and systematic anti-European hostility to the fore, the ease with which it was summoned on a nationwide scale had its roots in the nineteenth century when, by attempting to restrict the movements of non-white immigrants, Britain and its Empire expanded their capacity for prejudice and racism.

In numbers alone, Germans, Scandinavians and Dalmatians constituted the three major ethnicities of continental European settlement.

8 David Pearson, *A Dream Deferred: The origins of ethnic conflict in New Zealand* (Wellington: Allen & Unwin, 1990), 93. For a full list see Nigel Murphy, *Guide to Laws and Policies Relating to the Chinese in New Zealand 1871–1997* (Wellington: New Zealand Chinese Association, 2008).

Germans, in fact, made up the second largest immigrant community after the British.<sup>9</sup> It is important to understand that, unlike other European settlers, Germans did not necessarily head for settlement blocks. While in one way this assisted their integration into an overwhelmingly British way of life, it also contributed to a wartime belief that the pre-war years spent assimilating 'too well' had allowed them to plot from within.

There have been a number of accounts of the contribution made by German-speaking settlers to New Zealand's business, art and scientific communities. Particular attention has been given to the predominantly Lutheran message the German Missions delivered.<sup>10</sup> Examinations of German immigration to New Zealand highlight not only the motivations behind nineteenth century German settlement, but also the migration sequence between 1842 and 1914; the points of departure and areas of settlement of those migrants; the occupations pursued; and the legacy of those settlements.<sup>11</sup> There were many reasons for Germans leaving their homeland including regional unrest, unemployment, crop scarcities, and religious discrimination. Main areas of settlement were Nelson, Jackson's Bay, and the Waimate Plains in the South Island, and Manawatu and Taranaki in the North Island. Settlers' occupations included engineering, surveying, teaching, storekeeping and farming.<sup>12</sup> The arrival of Germans in New Zealand coincided with journeys made by other European settlers. To differing

9 Bade, *The German Connection*, 37.

10 For contributions to the arts and sciences see chapters twelve to eighteen, and for German Missions in New Zealand see chapters twenty-three to twenty-five in Bade (ed.), *The German Connection*. Also see Bob McKerrow, *Teichelmann: The story of Ebenezer Teichelmann, pioneer New Zealand mountaineer, photographer, surgeon and conservationist* (New Delhi: Tara-India Research Press, 2005). For contributions made by Germans and Austrians to the New Zealand musical landscape see John M. Thomson, 'The Ebb and Flow of Cultures: Some German and Austrian influences on New Zealand Music', *Turnbull Library Record*: 27, 1994, 75–90. For the business contribution made by the Hallenstein family see Charles Brasch and Colin Nicolson, *Hallensteins – the First Century, 1873–1973* (Dunedin: Hallensteins, 1973).

11 Ian Burnley, 'German Immigration and settlement in New Zealand', *New Zealand Geographer*, 29/1, 1973, 45–63.

12 Ibid., 46–52.

degrees they settled down to full and active participation in New Zealand life only to find themselves open to hostility and threats when Britain and the Empire went to war with Germany in 1914.

Although initially small in number, Danes first arrived in New Zealand as early as the 1820s. These were followed in greater number by settlers attracted by news of gold deposits in the South Island and, in the 1870s, as assisted passengers under Vogel's public works schemes.<sup>13</sup> Dalmatian settlers arrived and many took up employment in the Kauri gum industry in the north of the country.<sup>14</sup> An examination of Polish migration illustrates that their motivations for settlement and the contributions they made to New Zealand society did not differ from those of other European settlers. A chance to build a stable and secure home life and to participate in a newly developing society was a common incentive.<sup>15</sup> Many early Jewish settlers were English-born, though often of German or Polish descent.<sup>16</sup> Significant early figures including David Nathan and the aforementioned Vogel involved themselves in trade and later were both prominent in New

- 13 Henning Bender and Birgit Larsen (eds), *Danish Emigration to New Zealand* (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1990). Also see Burr, *Mosquitoes & Sawdust*. While retaining traditions from their homelands, Danes were keen to take out British naturalization in the years prior to the war. In 1899, 146 Danes from an overall annual total of 674 received British naturalization papers. They were second only to German settlers (190 certificates) in doing so; *New Zealand Official Year-Book (NZOYB) 1900* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1901), 121.
- 14 R. A. Lochore, *From Europe to New Zealand: An account of our continental European settlers* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1951), 36–49; Trlin, *Now Respected, Once Despised*, and Brian Marshall, 'Kauri-gum Digging, 1885–1920: A study of sectional and ethnic tensions', MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1968. Also see K. W. Thomson and Andrew Trlin (eds), *Immigrants in New Zealand* (Palmerston North: Massey University, 1970), and for the Dalmatian experience during the Great War see Judith Bassett, 'Colonial Justice: The treatment of Dalmatians in New Zealand during the First World War', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 33/2, 1999, 155–79.
- 15 See J. W. Pobog-Jaworowski, *Polish Settlers in Taranaki 1876–1976* (Wellington: J. W. Pobog-Jaworowski, 1976), 46–58, and his *History of the Polish Settlers in New Zealand* (Warsaw: CHZ Ars Polona, 1990).
- 16 Lazarus Goldman, *The History of the Jews in New Zealand* (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1958).



Zealand's civic and political spheres.<sup>17</sup> Jewish immigrants arrived along with gold speculators but tended to supply the mercantile needs of the miners rather than prospecting for themselves. Though relatively small in number and with a significantly shorter immigration timeframe than other Europeans – it has been noted the vast bulk arrived between 1861 and 1867 – British and European Jews nevertheless were central in developing immigration for other settlers, and provided much employment along the way.<sup>18</sup>

## Early European arrivals

In June 1843, the *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator* reported that a party of over 130 German settlers had set sail for New Zealand. This party had chartered the vessel *St Pauli* from the New Zealand Company, and would depart Hamburg for a new life in New Zealand.<sup>19</sup> They were to arrive in Nelson and take up residence on land some had already purchased in settlements in the South Island that were later named Sarau and Neudorf. It was expected, the article stated, that the arrival of the *St Pauli* would herald the beginning of a vigorous German emigration campaign to New Zealand. The New Zealand Company, whose information campaign concerning the Company's settlements in New Zealand did much to attract these early settlers, enthusiastically welcomed these industrious, sober people.

- 17 Nathan was a prominent merchant, shipping agent and community leader, and Vogel established the *Otago Daily Times*, New Zealand's longest running daily newspaper, in 1861; Janice C. Mogford, 'Nathan, David, 1816–1886', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, v.1 (Wellington: Allen & Unwin, Department of Internal Affairs, 1990), pp. 305–6, and Raewyn Dalziel, 'Vogel, Julius, 1835–1899' in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, v.1, 563–6.
- 18 Goldman, *The History of the Jews in New Zealand*, 91. Also see Odeda Rosenthal, *Not Strictly Kosher: Pioneer Jews in New Zealand* (Wainscott, NY: Starchand Press, 1988), and Stephen Levine, *The New Zealand Jewish Community* (Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 1999).
- 19 *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator* (Wellington), 3 June 1843, 3.