Community formation in a colonial port town

Port Chalmers, 1860-1875

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Abstract

This thesis explores ideas about the nature and development of colonial communities raised by Miles Fairburn and his critics in a specific local context. Fairburn’s bold characterization of colonial New Zealand society as “atomized” has provoked numerous responses but not yet yielded sustained analysis of social formations and community in a port community. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative evidence from newspapers, Census data, and archival material relating to churches, voluntary institutions, and the police, this thesis examines the ways in which colonists, both settled residents and mobile sojourners, worked to build community against challenges particular to Port Chalmers during the period 1860-1875. Colonists built strong communities around religious denominations and other voluntary institutions, which provided opportunities for sociability and promoted the negotiation of interdependencies and shared values. The relatively fluid and flexible community boundaries shaped by the port’s characteristically high rates of population mobility enabled these smaller communities to coalesce into two larger communities with relative cohesion. The most significant social boundary in the port existed between the communities of seamen and non-seamen, but even these overlapped and the results of their interactions suggest that histories of colonial community formation need to consider the nature of interactions between mobile and more settled populations as well as the respective characteristics of both. Analysing how high population mobility shaped Port Chalmers as a location indicates the need to reassess mobility’s role in defining colonial places and shaping the formation of colonial communities. This demonstrates the advantages place-centred local studies hold for unravelling how the global processes of colonialism played out on the ground and shaped colonial lives lived in local contexts.
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Abbreviations

NZIH – New Zealand Journal of History
ODT – Otago Daily Times
OPGG – Otago Provincial Government Gazette
OW – Otago Witness
Map 1. Dunedin and Otago Harbour in the late-twentieth century

Map 2. Colonial Port Chalmers

Source: Map drawn by Claire Campbell, based on maps shown in Ian Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1994), 29, 164-165.
Introduction

This thesis examines community formation in colonial Port Chalmers from 1860 to 1875. The port experienced high population mobility during this period. Migrants, travellers and seamen flowed in and out in their thousands as neighbouring Dunedin and the Otago colony as a whole experienced a commercial boom catalysed by the gold discoveries in 1861. Yet, contrary to what influential historians have argued, high mobility did not forestall the development of community. Building a community with tight social bonds occupied colonists in Port Chalmers, and mobility played a defining role in the port’s community formation processes. This thesis discusses the ways in which colonists, both settled residents and mobile sojourners, worked to build community against challenges posed by the environment of a busy colonial port town, a context that has largely escaped critical scrutiny in New Zealand’s historiography of colonial community formation to date.¹

Chapter one introduces colonial Port Chalmers and each subsequent chapter explores a particular aspect of community formation in the port. Chapters two and three examine the ways in which colonists built community through institutions: churches in chapter two and friendly societies and the Mechanics’ Institute in chapter three. Despite the bias towards more settled colonists inherent in an institutions-based approach to community, these chapters also explore the ways in which mobility shaped institutions and their contributions to community formation. Chapters four and five explore what might appear to indicate the limits of community. Chapter four discusses alcohol and crime, while chapter five discusses seamen’s experiences at the port. However, these

chapters identify ways in which seemingly disruptive forces could also help to build community. The notion that a negotiation between centripetal (centre-seeking) and centrifugal (centre-fleeing or “atomizing”) forces helped to produce community in the port connects the four chapters.

**What is “community”?**

“Community” is at the heart of thesis, but it is a slippery concept. The term is loaded with positive emotional connotations of friendly social bonds, support networks, cooperation, shared interests, identity, stability, and harmony. It also encompasses an attachment to place. By unpicking the concept of “community” historians and other scholars have sought to move beyond these sentimental connotations. Minimal interpretations have defined “community” as “merely the concurrence of group and place, social interaction defined by geography and shaped by certain well-defined nodal points such as taverns, churches, or courthouses.”\(^2\) Dean Wilson has qualified this definition by emphasizing the shared “values, assumptions and interactions” that define community irrespective of geographic context, and that represent something more specific and tighter than “society.”\(^3\) David Pearson has identified boundaries (both social and geographic), social interdependencies, and ideology as defining features of “community.”\(^4\)

Scholars of community have highlighted the ways in which conflict, contestation, and exclusion help to produce and reinforce the features of community identified by Wilson and Pearson as much as cooperation and harmony.\(^5\) An approach that treats both stability and instability critically acknowledges that a particular community does not require everyone within it to agree, and that not all people in a particular place will necessarily belong to that place’s community.\(^6\) There may be

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\(^3\) Wilson, 25.


\(^5\) Waldrep, 3; Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 151; Heidi Whiteside, “‘We shall be respectable’: women and representations of respectability in Lyttelton 1851-1893,” (MA Thesis, University of Canterbury, 2007), 13; Wilson, 25; Pearson, 151.

\(^6\) Wilson, 25; Whiteside, 13.
multiple and competing communities occupying one place and they may overlap.\(^7\) Perhaps most importantly, this approach treats community as a process, neither static nor complete, but in constant renegotiation by its participants.\(^8\)

This thesis addresses the particularities of Port Chalmers as a place throughout, acknowledging that place sets the boundaries for community but does not define it absolutely.\(^9\) I have looked for instances of friendly social bonds, support networks, cooperation, shared interests, identity, stability, and harmony as indicators of community in Port Chalmers. But I have also cast the historian’s critical gaze towards difference, separation, conflict, and disorder to determine not only where the limits of community lay, but also the extent to which these apparently centrifugal forces might provide evidence of community building through the negotiation of shared “values, assumptions and interactions,” boundaries, interdependencies, and ideologies.\(^10\)

To achieve this dual focus I have searched for evidence of community formation in patterns of sociability: that is, the myriad ways in which people came together and interacted socially. I refer to various forms of sociability as “community formation processes,” gesturing towards the constantly evolving nature of community. I have sought the tools Port Chalmers colonists used to build community, how they worked, and how they changed over time.

**Community and the historiography of colonial New Zealand**

The nature of community in colonial New Zealand has been subject to intense critical discussion during the last three decades. Few academic histories of colonial Pākehā community, social organization and culture written after 1990 do not make some reference to Miles Fairburn’s *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*. In this path breaking study, Fairburn argued that colonial New Zealand's social organization was “gravely deficient.”\(^11\) Fairburn attributed the colony’s “atomized” condition to two sets

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\(^7\) Waldrep, 3.  
\(^8\) Wilson, 25; Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 151, Pearson, 148, 151.  
\(^9\) Waldrep, 3.  
\(^10\) Wilson, 25; Pearson, 148, 152. Tony Ballantyne has suggested that students of community must also treat cohesion critically and look for tangible ties. In new societies, Ballantyne argues, a lack of disorder does not necessarily entail community. Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 151.  
of phenomena: colonists’ fervent attachment to an Arcadian vision of an ideal society, and the environmental conditions of nineteenth century New Zealand.

The Arcadian vision championed individualism. In Arcadia, its theorists contended, abundant natural resources and humanity’s innate moderation would render social organization unnecessary to the fulfilment of human needs and desires. This belief in individualism, Fairburn argued, interacted with peculiar environmental conditions to isolate colonists from one another both physically and socially. Poor transport and communications infrastructures, the dispersed nature of work in pastoralism and extractive industries, gender imbalance, and a high rate of geographic mobility (or “transience”) hampered colonists’ attempts to form social bonds. As a result, colonial New Zealand was “atomized,” a society with limited social bonds, as opposed to a hierarchical society, a class-divided society, or a society of small local communities with criss-crossing social divisions. In making his case, Fairburn drew on nationally aggregated statistics to argue that minimal social organization led to a series of unintended negative consequences: loneliness, drunkenness, violence, and a high rate of civil litigation.

This thesis explores ideas about colonial communities raised by Fairburn and his critics in a specific local context. It is not an attempt to throw out the “atomization” model in its entirety, nor is it designed to provide a definitive general statement about how community formation worked in colonial societies. As Melanie Nolan has argued, historians dealing with debates about community and atomization need to avoid conceiving of the problem as an “either/or” question. Evidence from Port Chalmers shows that the atomizing phenomena Fairburn identified certainly existed, but they existed to a far lesser extent than his model suggests amongst certain groups of people and in certain places.

By taking account of both community building and atomizing forces, this thesis demonstrates that Fairburn’s argument does not, on the whole, fit the evidence from colonial Port Chalmers. In essence, Fairburn claimed that there was a time lag between

12 Fairburn, The Ideal Society and its Enemies, 11-12; 19-70.
13 Ibid, especially 125-142.
the beginning of the pioneering phase of colonisation, characterized by high rates of transience, and the formation of strong social organization and communities. His book’s final chapter noted that family and associational ties deepened as immigration slowed and the colony’s gender ratio increasingly levelled out during the 1880s. I argue that colonists in Port Chalmers built community throughout the port’s pioneering period, which broadly corresponds to the period covered by this study. My focus on a port town draws into high relief some of the ways in which mobility contributed to community formation. Furthermore, as a study of a specific local community it raises considerations about the importance of place in colonial histories and highlights the limitations of generalized national approaches to social and cultural enquiry.

Historians have criticized Fairburn’s evidence, methodology, and conclusions, raising a range of considerations about the nature and development of colonial communities and the writing of their histories. One major criticism of the atomization thesis is the weight it attaches to the role of environmental factors such as physical geography, demography, communications, and mobility in determining the common trajectory of colonial social and cultural development. Critics argued that Fairburn’s lack of regard for the influence of imported cultural practices and values in shaping colonial society represented a key weakness of his thesis. Jock Phillips criticized *The Ideal Society and its Enemies* for its lack of “a sense behind the cold statistics of human diversity and interaction... [a] sense of a people with language, and rituals, and traditions.”

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17 Here I take “pioneering” to denote the initial phase of colonial settlement characterised by a high rate of population growth, development of basic infrastructure, and high population mobility. I outline the basic trajectories of Port Chalmers’ growth in chapter one.
19 Similarly insular interpretations of colonial history were not uncommon at the time. In the introduction to a collection of essays on colonial Wellington in 1990, for example, David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls claimed that Wellington’s origins as a planned settlement represented “one of the few points at which the city’s history intersects with the history of phenomena of wider international significance.” David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls, “Introduction,” in *The Making of Wellington 1800-1914*, 2.
Being colonial involved a complex series of negotiations between colonists and indigenous environmental particularities, colonists and indigenous cultures, and between the varied social and cultural backgrounds of the colonists themselves.\(^{21}\)

Colonists arrived from England, Ireland, Scotland, continental Europe, China, and further afield, often via North America or the Australian colonies, with a wide variety of cultural norms and practices. Erik Olssen echoed Phillips’ call to appreciate the wider cultural contexts that shaped New Zealand’s colonial pasts when he argued that “New Zealand’s history cannot be explained only in terms of what happened here.”\(^ {22}\) Recent historians of migration such as Angela McCarthy have stressed the need to examine migrant ethnic origins and associated cultural phenomena as well as transnational links between migrants as important factors mitigating the migration experience.\(^ {23}\) Colonists sought to leave behind some aspects of their social and cultural backgrounds in the Old World and replicate others in the New World. This tension between rejection and replication was a defining feature of the migrant experience.\(^ {24}\)

Besides the assumption that colonists aspired to an Arcadian vision of an ideal society, the atomization thesis takes little account of the complexities of and variations between colonists’ “cultural baggage”: their preconceived ideas, ingrained habits, and aims for the future.\(^ {25}\) Some historians, for example, have identified Fairburn’s brief and dismissive treatment of religion and the churches as a significant gap.\(^ {26}\) Fairburn’s argument about the weakness of colonial churches is based almost entirely on an assessment of flawed church attendance statistics without exploring the values

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\(^{21}\) Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 139.
expressed in the data. It also lacks reference to qualitative evidence of the extent of religious influence within and beyond the churches and the multiple meanings colonists attached to these institutions.27 In chapter two I discuss arguments that colonial churches enjoyed greater influence than Fairburn and others have allowed, and show that the establishment of these imported Old World cultural institutions in Port Chalmers provided social hubs for colonists’ new communities as well as important links to home and colonists’ former lives. Chapter three explores how colonists sought to recreate other institutions from home in the face of mobility. Chapters four and five discuss how imported cultural values and practices influenced behavioural norms in the port, particularly in relation to the consumption of alcohol and law enforcement surrounding it.

A second major criticism is that the atomization thesis ignores gender.28 Caroline Daley argued that Fairburn’s atomization model represents “a masculine culture of young, single, manual working men” rather than the population as a whole and neglects evidence of women’s colonial experiences.29 The absence of gendered analysis represents another symptom of Fairburn’s generalized, aggregated approach to social history. Some historians have argued that the colonial experience of community differed along gender lines. Daley contended that women in Taradale enjoyed more kinship bonds and geographical stability than men, and enjoyed more community as a result.30 Heidi Whiteside found that “women’s everyday activities and social interactions [played a role] in defining community mores” in Lyttelton.31 Dean Wilson found that “for the working class of Victorian Auckland, it was gender, above all else, which dictated one’s experience and level of participation in community.”32 John Stenhouse has shown that colonial church life was heavily gendered. Women shouldered much of the responsibility for their families’ religious affairs, often with passive support from their husbands, and thus enjoyed the community churches

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31 Whiteside, 13-14.
32 Using evidence from civil cases heard at the Auckland Police Court, Wilson revealed a tightly-knit women’s world based on bartering, sharing and helping within a close neighbourhood context. Court rulings, Wilson argued, helped women to negotiate and solidify the norms of their community. See: Wilson, 25, 27-32.
provided. Stenhouse has argued, “attracted women as public spaces that they could rightfully occupy,” and provided “sacred territory” for women analogous to men’s pubs, lodges and sports clubs. By neglecting these sorts of gendered differences, Fairburn’s analysis fails to account for expressions of social organization and community amongst women (and children), a significant proportion of the colonial population.

Historians have contrasted these female communities with masculine subcultures. Wilson suggested that working class Auckland hosted multiple overlapping male subcultures, based around looser, more ephemeral ties than those of the female community. Men’s ties might be established through work and sites of leisure such as public houses, as opposed to women’s ties rooted in the neighbourhood (including church, as Stenhouse’s research suggests) and household. Other historians have argued that male subcultures did produce tight communities. Phillips and Duncan Mackay have both argued that itinerant rural working men formed communities in which “mateship,” reinforced by difficult work and living conditions, and by social practices such as drinking, replaced kinship and formal institutional bonds. Belich argued that “crews” of men employed in forestry, mining, shearing and shipping often shared “manners, customs, slang, prejudices, dress, leisure habits, virtues and vices” that constructed “prefabricated communities” into and out of which mobile men could move easily.

Chapter five explores the gendered concept of a male subculture by tracing seamen’s experiences of community at Port Chalmers. I have tried to push the analysis further than previous studies by looking at the ways in which the seamen’s community and the port’s land-based community interacted and overlapped. Mackay’s study of bushmen in Auckland province largely treats that particular male subculture in isolation from the wider population, while Belich’s discussion of crew culture constructs mobility in a negative light by characterizing interactions between crews and the wider

34 Stenhouse, “God, the devil and gender,” 331.
35 Wilson, 42.
37 Belich, 428. Emphasis in the original.
population as being marked by conflict. My approach not only suggests that “crew culture” could form a sound basis for community, but also identifies how the seamen’s community and the land-based community at Port Chalmers exercised mutually constructive influences on one another.

Historians have also begun to reconsider the relationships between conflict, contestation, disorder, and community. Where Fairburn interpreted instances of civil litigation as evidence of disorder and weak social bonds – a lack of community – Wilson argued that civil litigation in Auckland helped to produce and reinforce community boundaries and norms, and revealed that tight social bonds were key factors in neighbourhood disputes. Ballantyne argued that conflicts over the Salvation Army and the location of a bridge were part of a process of defining “broadly shared aims and values” in Gore. Kirsten McKenzie has shown how scandals and gossip marked the social boundaries of colonial communities by defining insiders and outsiders. As a hub of trade, communications, and migration, Port Chalmers hosted thousands of passing seamen and travellers every year. Both mobile people and settled local colonists demanded alcoholic refreshment, which sometimes led to crime. However, chapter four demonstrates that the extent of crime and alcohol-use in Port Chalmers did not lead to widespread disorder, contrary to Fairburn’s model. Both centripetal and centrifugal forces co-existed in colonial Port Chalmers, and both operated to define the features of community. In addition, centrifugal tendencies acted to stimulate centripetal, community building impulses. Chapter four discusses how alcohol formed a central topic in colonial debates over respectable forms of leisure, and pulled some colonists together in organizations that aimed to reform society’s drinking culture through the promotion of temperance. Similarly, Chapter five discusses how concerns about seamen’s behaviour in the port motivated the mission to seamen, which tried to establish bonds between the land-based and seamen’s communities.

As I have shown, critics of the atomization thesis have identified the high level of generalization inherent in Fairburn’s arguments about the social organization of the entire colony as its key weakness. Fairburn defended his approach as a deliberate

38 Belich, 435.
39 Wilson, 27, 35.
40 Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 151.
attempt to determine typicalities experienced across New Zealand. In rejecting the notion of significant regional variation he argued that the nation should be the framework for analyses of colonial social history. However critics such as Clyde Griffen argued that Fairburn’s “national focus and... strategy of generalizing most social phenomena” obscured the reality that the meaning of such phenomena “depended upon more immediate contexts.” Social conditions varied markedly between diverse local contexts such as a loose collection of work camps in the bush, a small farming town, a large industrial urban centre, and a busy port. This study follows a lineage of local case studies that demonstrate the implausibility of mapping Fairburn’s conclusions onto specific places. Deeper understandings of local particularities traced through analytic, place-centred local studies will ultimately expand our appreciation of colonial experiences of community formation.

Place and a local history approach to colonial community formation

Attention to the specificities of place challenges national framings of colonial history and unsettles Fairburn’s generalized, placeless construction of atomized “New Zealand.” “Place” has been defined by historians and geographers influenced by the “spatial turn” in the humanities as a construct constantly in process, much like community. Place is produced and defined by negotiations between physical geography and human phenomena such as demography and global networks of trade, transportation, and communications. Historians vary in the ways in which their

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43 Miles Fairburn and Stephen Haslett, “Did Wellington Province from the 1850s to 1930 Have a Distinctive Social Pattern?” in The Making of Wellington 1800-1914, 260, 283.
44 Griffen, 99.
histories “take place.”49 Daley’s work, for example, discusses how the “inner harbour, hills and rivers that bordered the [Taradale] area helped to define what the people did and how they interacted.”50 Ballantyne’s work on Gore unravels how the intersecting circulations of people, goods and ideas that defined colonial Gore as a place shaped everyday life in that locality.51 Some historians have also posited sites such as ships as places in which history occurred outside land-based national space.52 Chapter five discusses how the ship as a “social space” shaped seamen’s lives, revealing that community formation processes operating in Port Chalmers played out on the water as well as “on the ground.”53

Serious consideration of colonial places and regional variations exposes the concept of colonial “New Zealand” as an anachronistic intellectual construct, and therefore a shaky foundation on which to build colonial histories.54 National concerns had little bearing on the everyday realities of local colonial life, at least before the abolition of the provincial system of government in 1876. Olssen has argued that local/regional particularities were more important in both the Old and New Worlds, in

50 Daley, Girls and Women, 8.
51 Ballantyne, “Thinking Local.”
54 I have continued to use “New Zealand” as a convention and have dropped the quotation marks for tidiness. On “New Zealand” as an intellectual construct, see: Gibbons, “The Far Side of the Search for Identity.” The constructed nature of the “nation” and the issues it presents for history writing have also recently emerged as a thread of concern in histories informed by postcolonial theory. See: Giselle Byrnes and Catharine Coleborne, “Editorial Introduction: The Utility and Futility of ‘the Nation’ in Histories of Aotearoa New Zealand,” NZJH 45, no.1 (2011): 1-14; Giselle Byrnes, “Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History,” in The New Oxford History of New Zealand, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2-12. Ballantyne argues, however, that previous postcolonial writing has tended to rest upon a strong concept of the nation: “On Place, Space and Mobility,” 53.
which “[m]ost people lived out their lives in local environments and thought of themselves in local or provincial terms.”\textsuperscript{55} According to Rollo Arnold colonists occupied a “village world that was responding to ideas and influences that were global in the scope of their origins,” and in which “[‘New Zealand’] was of relatively less importance as a frame of reference.”\textsuperscript{56} The colony’s provincial system of government, rendered necessary by the inherent difficulties of communication in the mountainous island colony, reinforced colonists’ regional orientations. As the seat of the Otago Provincial Government, Dunedin mattered much more politically and economically to colonists in Port Chalmers than Wellington or Auckland. Despite significant variations within the province itself, Otago and its own set of connections to the British empire shaped colonists’ political, economic, social and cultural worlds to a far greater extent than “New Zealand” did.\textsuperscript{57} Historians, however, have found it difficult to give up the nation.\textsuperscript{58} Nationally-framed narratives, historically entrenched by the “narrative contract” between professional historians and the nation state, continue to enjoy wider audience appeal due to the sense of national community and identity that earlier historians helped to create.\textsuperscript{59}

This place-centred local study responds to Ballantyne’s call for historians to unravel regional and local variations in the colonial histories of New Zealand by investigating colonial experiences from beneath the nation.\textsuperscript{60} Port Chalmers’ position as a sea port profoundly shaped its historical experiences of community formation. Like a

\textsuperscript{55} Olssen, “Where to from here?” 62, 68.

\textsuperscript{56} This concept is commonly referred to as the “village and globe” model. Arnold, New Zealand’s Burning, 118. In this world “concerns for such minutiae as the changing weather jostled with anxieties about the London markets and the clash of empires.” Arnold, Settler Kaponga, 22.

\textsuperscript{57} In his study of Otago, Olssen observed 20 sub-regions which could be reduced to seven larger sub-regions within the province, each having “a distinctive geography and clear geographic boundaries, a different economy, a different socio-ethnic mix, and a distinctive culture.” Olssen, “Where to from here?” 76. Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney’s essay on “Asia in Murihiku” explores the global connections, particularly with Asia, that shaped the colonisation of Murihiku (Otago and Southland). Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney, “Asia in Murihiku: towards a transnational history of a colonial culture,” in Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand’s Pasts, ed. Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006), 65-92.

\textsuperscript{58} Ballantyne argues that even some historians employing transnational approaches, which aim to transcend nationally-framed narratives by illuminating how global influences were transmitted by multidirectional “webs of empire,” have sometimes left the nation intact. See: Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 138, and “On Place, Space and Mobility,” 50, 55. The metaphor of “webs” is developed in: Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, “Introduction: Bodies, Empires, and World Histories,” in Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History, ed. Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 1-15.


\textsuperscript{60} Ballantyne argues that historians need to write histories from “under as well as across the nation,” which acknowledges the need for transnational approaches as well. Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 138-139, 152; “On Place, Space and Mobility,” 50, 55, 58.
heart pumping blood around a body, the port received and dispatched the people, goods and ideas that gave the colony life. In lieu of extensive rail, road and telegraph networks, the sea provided the primary mode of connection between the different colonial outposts in New Zealand, and between these outposts and the wider empire and world during the period 1860-1875.  

Port Chalmers was shaped by the constant but ever-changing presence of travellers, migrants, and seamen in the port. This floating population made Port Chalmers, in the sense that it provided much of the workforce, shaped the rhythms and patterns of social life, and helped to determine which businesses and institutions flourished. Whiteside’s study of Lyttelton has shown how being under the constant observation of newcomers in a colonial port town – a “boundary territory between old world and new” – could accentuate colonial anxieties about the recreation and rejection of Old World characteristics. I investigate how these symptoms of mobility shaped community formation in Port Chalmers.

Historians have criticized Fairburn’s largely negative treatment of mobility (or “transience”) for taking the social characteristics of the mobile population as representative of the whole, and for the portrayal of “transience” and “persistence” as opposing terms rather than as part of a spectrum. Arnold has shown that colonists who moved about could still enjoy significant social connections. Yet these critiques have tended to rest on the assumption that residential stability defined colonial communities, an assumption that may be anachronistic not least because the existence of empires

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62 The extent of this mobile population is outlined in chapter one. Because I have attempted to explore how mobility influenced community formation through a range of topics, I have employed this somewhat narrow definition of mobility over a definition that accounts for the geographic or social movements of individual colonists or families living in Port Chalmers at one time or another. Both street directories and electoral rolls for Port Chalmers up to 1875 lack the detail required to measure mobility with the same precision as Fairburn and Arnold’s respective studies of transience and persistence based on tracing heads of households over ten year periods. See: Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*, 127-134; Arnold, “Community in Rural Victorian New Zealand,” 11-19. A larger study of Port Chalmers could employ a detailed analysis of the daily shipping and commercial columns published in the *ODT*, in conjunction with statistical information gathered by the government, to build a more detailed picture of the people, goods and ideas that circulated in the port with the comings and goings of ships and deepen the understanding of how mobility shaped social and cultural formations. Extending the study’s closing date into the 1880s or 1890s would allow for an analysis of how closer links with Dunedin via the harbour side railway and later the Victoria Channel (discussed below) changed patterns of mobility at Port Chalmers.

63 Whiteside, 7.


themselves depended on mobility. Looking at the port helps to focus attention on how the interactions between the mobile and settled populations, as well as their respective characteristics, shaped the development of community. My analysis shows that in spite of high mobility, disorder and chaos did not prevail in Port Chalmers. The mission to seamen and temperance movements demonstrate how the unsettling aspects of mobility could promote community building impulses amongst the settled population, while efforts to extend community to mobile people made institutions such as the port’s churches, lodges and the Mechanics’ Institute more inclusive and fluid. This focus on mobility, particularly in the chapter on seamen, helps to address the bias in colonial primary sources towards more settled members of the population, and provides a contrast with the greater focus on more settled institution builders in the chapters on churches and voluntary institutions. The focus on mobility also helps to link the workings of the port, detailed so finely in studies by A.H. McLintock and Gavin McLean, with their social and cultural implications for the port town.

Port Chalmers is the subject of three local histories, written by H.O. Bowman, P.J. Stewart, and Ian Church respectively. Along with McLintock and McLean’s studies of the port of Otago, several theses have also examined aspects of Port Chalmers’ history. This study owes a considerable debt of gratitude to each for the wealth of detail recorded, in particular those overviews by Bowman, Stewart and Church. Local histories such as these have often been disregarded by university-based

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66 Wilson, 26; Ballantyne, “On Place, Space and Mobility,” 65.
67 Belich, 413.
71 Bowman’s history, written for the Otago centenary in 1948, is unreferenced, and many of its stories and impressions of Port Chalmers in the 1860s and 1870s are taken from the unpublished reminiscences of Edward Barton. Barton’s reminiscences provide detailed accounts of aspects of life in the port during the 1860s and 1870s, but their use as primary evidence must be treated with caution. Barton was only born in 1865 and it appears that he recorded these reminiscences at some time well into the twentieth century. Stewart and Church’s histories are also unreferenced and borrow liberally from Bowman’s accounts of the port in the 1860s and 1870s. See: Edward Barton, “Reminiscences of early days in Port Chalmers,” Turnbull, Norman S.: Papers (Misc-MS-111/002), Hocken Collections, University of Otago. On the peculiarities of reminiscences and other forms of “social memory” as historical evidence, particularly on their function as narratives designed to persuade, see: Fiona Hamilton, “Pioneering History: Negotiating
historians due to their tendency to be descriptive and celebratory in nature, and lacking in a sense of the wider contexts that influenced life in the locality. Characterized by extensive cataloguing of biographies and narratives of institution building, local histories can convey a static and insular view of place and community and a misleading sense of coherence.\textsuperscript{72}

This study provides some wider context for the stories of the port’s colonial past and a sort of bridge between the amateur local history tradition and the historiographical debates of academic history. Given that community is largely about people and place, I have included names, anecdotes and other locally significant detail where they help to illustrate trends in order to keep the narrative spirit and feeling for the everyday reality of place in the local histories alive. As Arnold wrote: “[s]pecific events and unique experiences are of the essence of history. For a past community to become real to us we need some good stories about it.”\textsuperscript{73} But I have needed to be selective, and the Port Chalmers enthusiast should refer to the local histories for more detail. Discussing a range of topics in a thesis of this scope, from churches to courts, settlers to seamen, has meant that I have not treated any particular topic exhaustively, and I have omitted sustained discussion of topics such as business, local politics, food, work, leisure, housing, health, gender, childhood, the family, and kinship. In addition, I have not had space to engage in detailed comparisons with other ports or colonial settlements, although I acknowledge that claims to historical distinctiveness or variation require a comparative reference point.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{73} Arnold, \textit{New Zealand’s Burning}, 113.
\end{flushright}
Chapter One: Port Chalmers to 1875: an overview

This study of Port Chalmers begins in 1860, on the eve of the goldrushes that transformed colonial Otago. It ends in 1875 on the eve of another transformation: the abolition of the provincial system of government in 1876. However, Port Chalmers’ origins as a Pākehā settlement go further back. In 1844 the New Zealand Company purchased the bay that local Māori called Koputai as the port for its proposed New Edinburgh settlement. Koputai, situated about halfway along a long, sheltered, and mostly shallow harbour, boasted relatively deep water. The hilly, hammerhead-shaped peninsula on which much of the port would be built rendered the site surrounded by water on three sides, while steep hills bordered the port to the north west. A handful of unofficial settlers arrived after the purchase, followed by Company surveyors in 1846, and then colonists from the first two Otago Association migrant ships in 1848-1849. The Otago colony’s Free Church Presbyterian leaders named the bay Port Chalmers, after the memory of Rev. Dr Thomas Chalmers, a Free Church leader who had passed away in 1847. By March 1849 the port had thirty-nine residents, ten of whom were women.

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1 Most local Māori lived at the Kāi Tahu village (or kaik) at Ōtākou, near Taiaroa Head, and at Pūrākanui, along the coast to the north west of the harbour entrance. Koputai had mainly been used as a place to beach canoes, although some Māori lived there during the 1830s. Ian Church, Port Chalmers and its people, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1994), 9-12; Atholl Anderson, The Welcome of Strangers: An ethnohistory of southern Maori A.D. 1650-1850, (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 1998), 169, 172. Although few Māori ever lived in Port Chalmers, the port acted as an important service town for Ōtākou and Pūrākanui. Māori whaleboats sometimes participated in the Port Chalmers regatta, and Port Chalmers colonists supported the Ōtākou mission station and school. The Provincial Council also used prison labour, including some Māori prisoners from the North Island, to build roads on both sides of the harbour during the 1870s. Māori labourers may have been part of projects such as the blasting of Boiler Point and construction of Macandrew Terrace, linking the western end of Koputai Bay with Careys Bay. Prison labourers stationed at Port Chalmers stayed in hulks anchored close to shore. I came across little primary evidence of Māori involvement in the community life of Port Chalmers during the period 1860-1875, and consequently this does not form part of my story. However further research into this area could be illuminating. Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 69, 80-81; H.O. Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1948), 131. David Hamer notes how Māori shaped colonial Wellington as land sellers, traders, and protectors even though they were not conspicuous in the developing town – further research could pursue these lines of investigation. David Hamer, “Wellington on the Urban Frontier,” in The Making of Wellington 1800-1914, edited by David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1990), 229-231.


3 Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 14.

Port Chalmers, like neighbouring Dunedin and the Otago colony as a whole, developed steadily during its first decade. In 1850 the central government of the New Zealand colonies proclaimed Port Chalmers a town, and thus the development of the port’s local political infrastructure began. The 1852 New Zealand Constitution Act granted political representation to male, property-owning colonists and created a provincial system of government. By 1855 Port Chalmers had thirty electors which entitled them to one representative in the Provincial Council. The Provincial Council ensured important roads were metalled and tracks were cut, erected a school, developed a cemetery reserve, installed a jetty and crane, and set up a pilot service. In 1855 the town’s first police constable was appointed. Port Chalmers colonists participated vocally in campaigns to establish a road between the port and Dunedin along the harbour shoreline (the existing road traversed the hills from the port into North East Valley), which campaigners claimed would “promote a greater community of interests and feelings between several scattered bodies of [the district’s] inhabitants.” By 1857 the port’s population numbered eighty-three, and although it boasted two churches (Presbyterian and Wesleyan), a school, and several hotels and stores, the Dunedin-based Otago Witness declared that “Port Chalmers scarcely presents the appearance of a Port Town, and has made comparatively little progress.”

Life in Port Chalmers depended on the sea and ships. They connected colonists to Dunedin, the rest of Otago, and the wider empire and world, and provided livelihoods for most residents. Given the steep, bush-covered terrain of the surrounding area Port Chalmers would not become a major agricultural or pastoral settlement. Ian Church has compiled details about all shipping arrivals and departures from the Otago harbour and coast between 1770 and 1860. His records detail over 1370 arrivals between 1848 and 1860, including ninety-six migrant ships from British ports. The Otago Harbour was a busy hub of trade during 1859 and 1860. Imported supplies such as livestock, hardware, building supplies, sugar, coal, alcohol and news commonly arrived from the Australian colonies via Bluff and other southern ports, and sometimes continued up the coast to ports including Moeraki, Ōamaru, and eventually Lyttelton. Primary produce such as

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5 Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 20-22.
6 Ibid, 11-16.
7 E.J. Wakefield to Editor, OW, 22 March 1851, 2.
8 OW, 11 July 1857, 2.
9 Ibid.
10 Ian Church, Opening the manifest on Otago’s infant years: shipping arrivals and departures, Otago Harbour and coast 1770-1860, (Dunedin: Ian Church and Otago Heritage Books, 2001), 13-15.
wool, oats, wheat, barley, grass seed, potatoes, cheese and butter arrived by sea from around Otago to supply Dunedin and/or to be on-shipped elsewhere. The sea therefore kept Port Chalmers in regular contact with a wide range of ports servicing other settlements in the New Zealand and Australian colonies.\footnote{Including, but not limited to: Riverton (Jacob’s River), Bluff, Invercargill (New River), Toi Tois, Molyneux, Taieri, Blueskin, Waikouaiti, Moeraki, Ōamaru, Timaru, Akaroa, Lyttelton, Nelson, Wellington, Auckland, Hobart, Geelong, Melbourne, and Sydney. Church, \textit{Opening the manifest}, 168-224.} Steam ships slowly began to mix with sailing ships from 1854.\footnote{Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 22-23.} In 1859 the steam ships \textit{Pride of the Yarra/New Age} and \textit{Victoria} ran passengers and freight between Dunedin and Port Chalmers regularly.\footnote{Church, \textit{Opening the manifest}, 180.} By 1860 127 people resided in the port. Most were young (with few over forty years of age), male (men aged over twenty-one outnumbered women of the same age – all except two of whom were married – forty-nine to twenty-seven), and Scots or English-born (ninety-six in total, with Scots-born outnumbering English-born fifty-five to forty-one).\footnote{“Population of the Province of Otago, 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1859,” \textit{OPGG} IV, no. 116 (18 July 1860): 56. The overall gender ratio was seventy-seven males to fifty females. Of the thirty-one not born in Scotland or England, three were born in Ireland, seventeen in New Zealand and eleven elsewhere.} The colonists had invested significant efforts and funds into the future of their settlement. Hotels, houses, and small businesses dotted the streets. Arriving in Port Chalmers from Melbourne in early-1861 one colonist counted “between 30 + 40 small wooden houses in this very small sea port... three of the houses + the best houses too, are grog shops.”\footnote{John Thomson to his mother, 10 February 1861; John Thomson letters: James Herries Beattie papers (MS-528/F/33), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, Dunedin. Thanks to Dan Davy for bringing this source to my attention.} Children attended several schools, and those men eligible to vote elected an Education Board to govern the Port Chalmers Education District.\footnote{Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 16-22.} Two wooden churches adorned the hills overlooking the bay. At noon on Friday 25 May 1860 the enfranchised men assembled at the school-house and unanimously elected nine members of the inaugural Town Board.\footnote{\textit{OPGG} IV, no.121 (27 September 1860): 88.} Thomas Tayler, a local store-keeper originally from London, sat on the Otago Provincial Council as the member for Port Chalmers district. Captain William Thomson, a native of Scotland who had traded regularly between the Australian colony of Victoria and Port Chalmers as commander of the brig \textit{Thomas and Henry}, was appointed the port’s first harbourmaster.\footnote{\textit{OPGG} IV, no. 111 (3 May 1860); \textit{OPGG} IV, no. 114 (11 July 1860); Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 22. Port Chalmers electoral district comprised Port Chalmers town and surrounding districts.
Scotland in 1860, the Presbyterian minister Rev. William Johnstone confided to his sister that Port Chalmers was generally a quiet place in which excitement arrived via the sea in the form of the arrival of new migrants or the much anticipated “home mail.”

The discovery of payable gold in the interior of Otago in mid-1861 brought Port Chalmers to life and drastically altered its demography and social landscape. Gold discoveries at the Lindis Gorge in March, Tuapeka in May, and Waitāhuna in July brought diggers rushing into Otago. Many came from the diggings in the Australian colony of Victoria but others arrived from New South Wales and other New Zealand provinces. In October the Otago Witness reported that the past three months had seen 8451 arrivals and 750 departures, a number of arrivals that almost equalled the total population of the province in December 1859. By December the population of Otago exceeded 27,000. With further rushes into the Dunstan from August 1862 and the Strath Taieri and Maniototo in 1863-1864 the province’s population rose to 49,019 by December 1864, before gold discoveries at the top of the South Island and the West Coast lured many diggers elsewhere.

In the words of the Otago Witness, gold ushered in a social revolution to “shores that have hitherto reposed in peaceful obscurity.” The rushes provoked both excitement and social anxiety amongst established colonists. Many saw the potential for long-term economic prosperity while others feared the impact that unchecked growth and the importation of undesirable characters from Victoria – with their drinking, gambling, fighting, Sabbath breaking, and whoring habits – would have on the colony’s moral character. Local enthusiasts worked hard to quell the fears. In an 1862 editorial review of the impact of the rushes, for example, the Otago Daily Times used education

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19 William Johnstone to Ann Johnstone, 3 September 1860, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/014), Hocken Collections, University of Otago. See also: Johnstone to Margaret King, 13 July 1858, Letters from William Johnstone to Margaret Johnstone, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/006), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
20 OW, 12 October 1861, 4. In December 1859 the population of Otago (excluding Māori) was 8899: “Population of the Province of Otago, 31st December 1859,” OPGG IV, no. 116 (18 July 1860), 56.
21 “Abstract of Census of the Province of Otago, New Zealand,” OPGG V, no. 200 (6 August 1862): 43. The exact population given is 27269, although a note appended to the table records that the enumerator believed about 3000 goldminers were unaccounted for.
22 OPGG IV, no. 370 (28 June 1865): 150; Olssen, A History of Otago, 58-64.
23 Ibid; Olssen, A History of Otago, 57-58. The OW reported, however, that “[o]n the whole we have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the orderly character of the additions to our population... the increase in crime is only proportionate to the increase in numbers.” See also: Richard S. Hill, Policing the Colonial Frontier: The Theory and Practice of Coercive Social and Racial Control in New Zealand, 1767-1867, Part 2. (Wellington: Historical Publications Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1986), 492, 562-563. Some Otago colonists had entertained these sorts of fears since the 1850s: McLintock, The History of Otago, 440-441.
statistics gathered in the December 1861 Census to argue that the rushes had not had a debilitating social impact on the province.\textsuperscript{25} Despite varied experiences, romanticized accounts of rough and unruly mining life made their way into many written histories. In a recent call for reassessments of historical perspectives on the rushes, Tom Brooking has argued that historians need to acknowledge that the Otago rush was not only small in comparison to the previous major nineteenth century rushes in California and Victoria, but also that it was “one of the most orderly anywhere.”\textsuperscript{26}

Gold fever rendered Otago Harbour “chock full of vessels of all sizes and rigs,” carrying “miners and others anxious to get to the El Dorado.”\textsuperscript{27} Shipping activity boomed as Port Chalmers cemented its position as the colony’s primary shipping hub. The port served as the gateway to Otago for most gold seekers and other migrants that came to provide the diggers with services, and the rapidly expanding colony’s main link with the outside world. The first export of Otago gold left Port Chalmers in September 1861.\textsuperscript{28} Merchant vessels carrying goods and/or passengers made up the vast majority of ships: whaling boats seldom called at Port Chalmers by 1860 and naval vessels called irregularly. Table 1.1 shows the arrivals of coastal and ocean-going vessels to Otago Harbour during the period 1860-1875.\textsuperscript{29} From sixty-nine vessels in 1860, arrivals soared to 256 vessels in 1861 and 395 in 1862, then to a goldrush peak of 983 in 1863.

\textsuperscript{25} ODT, 7 August 1862, 4.


\textsuperscript{27} George O’Halloran autobiography (MS-Papers-1345/1), Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 12. Thanks to Dan Davy for alerting me to this source.

\textsuperscript{28} Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 24.

\textsuperscript{29} Accurate statistics for arrivals at Port Chalmers are almost impossible to determine. Most sources provide statistics for arrivals at Otago harbour/the Port of Otago/the Port of Dunedin rather than specifically at Port Chalmers. The majority of arrivals, especially ocean-going vessels, probably called at Port Chalmers as the major port able to accommodate all sizes of vessels, but I have not found sufficient evidence with which to establish a meaningful method for determining how many vessels bypassed Port Chalmers and went straight to Dunedin. The Harbour Master’s Department kept records of “Vessels at Railway Pier” from August 1872 but they do not include vessels that anchored in the bay and discharged goods and passengers in smaller craft. See: Vessels at Railway Pier, Aug 1872-Dec 1877 (AG-200-12/02/22), Otago Harbour Board: Records (ARC-0014), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
Table 1.1. Vessels entering Otago Harbour (not limited to Port Chalmers)\textsuperscript{30}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ocean-going</th>
<th>Coasting</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Coasting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>1426</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Huge flows of people in and out of the port accompanied the rise in shipping (see table 1.2). As table 1.3 shows, adult males comprised the vast majority of the mobile population in 1862 and 1866. Some arrivals, including seamen who eagerly jumped ship for a chance at the diggings, spent little time in the port. Colonist George O’Halloran observed in 1861 that:

Hundreds landed at Port Chalmers ready equipped for the road swags on back who halted scarcely a moment longer than necessary to enquire the way and marched straight on over that terrible hill track to Dunedin so as to the diggings.\textsuperscript{31}

However some settled and boosted the port’s population (see table 1.4). By December 1861 the town had 390 residents, triple the 1860 figure. English-born now outnumbered Scots (although the number of English-born and Scots-born women was almost

\textsuperscript{30} The “ocean-going” figures are from the yearly volumes of \textit{Statistics of New Zealand}, 1860-1875. The “total” figures for 1860-1869 are based on Gavin McLean, \textit{Otago Harbour: Currents of Controversy}, (Dunedin: Otago Harbour Board, 1985), 248. The “coasting” figures for 1873-1875 are from \textit{Statistics of New Zealand} for those years. I calculated the “coasting” figures for 1863-1869 by subtracting “ocean-going” (\textit{Statistics of New Zealand}) from “total” (McLean). I calculated the “total” figures for 1873-1875 by adding the “ocean-going” and “coasting” figures from \textit{Statistics of New Zealand}. The figures for 1860-1862 are suspect. The \textit{Statistics of New Zealand} figures claim to exclude coasting vessels, yet they match McLean’s figures, which I assume include coasting vessels.

\textsuperscript{31} O’Halloran, 12.
identical), in contrast with neighbouring Dunedin. A significant minority of Irish males were recorded (about 11% of all males), as well as a smattering of men from places such as the United States of America, France and Germany. The gender imbalance had increased to slightly more than a 2:1 ratio of men to women. Over one quarter of the total population were single adult males. The most common occupations of the inhabitants surveyed were seamen (20%) and watermen/lightermen (12% - these men ferried passengers, goods and ballast between ship and shore in small craft), followed by those in the building trades, labourers and storekeepers (about 5% each). Forty-seven goldminers represented 21% of the workforce. Some arrivals made temporary homes in tent villages on “Gooseberry Hill” (below the Presbyterian Church) and along the Grey Street clearing.

### Table 1.2. People arriving and departing at the Port of Dunedin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals from overseas</td>
<td>26033</td>
<td>2408</td>
<td>3081</td>
<td>13285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals from within the colony</td>
<td>4028</td>
<td>3958</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew entering (coasting vessels excluded)</td>
<td>6777</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>3155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departures for overseas</td>
<td>11975</td>
<td>1754</td>
<td>1443</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departures to other ports within the colony</td>
<td>3210</td>
<td>2889</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total people potentially moving through port</strong></td>
<td><strong>52023</strong></td>
<td><strong>12835</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt;5875</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt;18408</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33 Ibid, 43.
34 Ibid, 45.
35 Bowman, 19; Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, 26. Out of seventy-eight buildings recorded at the port in December 1861, eighteen were tents, forty-nine were wooden constructions, two were brick or stone constructions, and nine were made from other materials. “Abstract of Census of the Province of Otago, New Zealand,” *OPGG* V, no. 200 (6 August 1862): 44.
36 *Statistics of New Zealand* 1862, tables 2, 3, 8; *Statistics of New Zealand* 1866, tables 2, 3, 8; *Statistics of New Zealand* 1870, tables 2, 8; *Statistics of New Zealand* 1874, 16-17, 75.
Table 1.3. Adult males arriving and departing at the Port of Dunedin\textsuperscript{37}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1866</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult males</td>
<td>% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals from overseas</td>
<td>21092</td>
<td>81.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals from within the colony</td>
<td>3429</td>
<td>85.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew entering (coasting vessels excluded)</td>
<td>6777</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departures for overseas</td>
<td>11639</td>
<td>97.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departures to other ports within the colony</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>89.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total adult males potentially moving through port</strong></td>
<td><strong>45797</strong></td>
<td><strong>88.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4. Population of Port Chalmers town\textsuperscript{38}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec 1859</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1861</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dec 1864</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Feb 1871</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>1406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Mar 1874</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>1535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Port Chalmers developed quickly as a result of the gold-related activity. The sale of town housing allotments prompted clearing of the bush that enclosed the settlement’s beachfront toehold. Buildings for the customs department and newly-formed Water Police Force appeared, as well as several new hotels and stores.\textsuperscript{39} A private company completed work linking Port Chalmers and Dunedin by telegraph by the end of 1862.\textsuperscript{40}

The development of the port’s associational culture also began to accelerate (see chapters two and three). Alongside churches and voluntary institutions, by November 1864 the port’s residents and visitors enjoyed access to services including: “two chemists, two shoe-makers, two barbers, two bakeries, three drapers’ shops, six general stores, two smithies, four carpenters, five hotels of considerable architectural appearance, [and] three restaurants.”\textsuperscript{41} By December 1864 the population had reached

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{38} “Population of the Province of Otago, 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1859,” OPGG IV, no. 116 (18 July 1860), 56; “Abstract of Census of the Province of Otago, New Zealand,” OPGG V, no. 200 (6 August 1862): 43; OPGG IV, no. 370 (28 June 1865): 150; Results of a Census of New Zealand: taken for the night of the 1\textsuperscript{st} of March, 1874, (Wellington: George Didsbury, 1875), 10, table XV. Figures are all exclusive of Māori, however most Māori in the area lived at the kaik at the Heads (Ōtākou). See: Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 80-81.

\textsuperscript{39} ODT, 15 August 1862, 4; Hill, Part 2, 559-560. See also: ODT, 7 Nov 1863, 4.

\textsuperscript{40} ODT, 18 August 1862, 5; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 25-26.

\textsuperscript{41} As observed by J.G.S. Grant, quoted in Bowman, 19-20.
939. The gender ratio had balanced considerably to 6:5 males to females, a trend mirrored in Dunedin but not the province as a whole, where the ratio of men to women remained almost exactly 2:1.\textsuperscript{42}

As the intensity of gold fever subsided by the mid-1860s Port Chalmers stood as Otago’s major port and a significant southern hemisphere port, despite its small size by global standards.\textsuperscript{43} An average of 792 vessels arrived annually between 1864 and 1868, loaded with migrants, livestock, and goods of all descriptions. 1869 saw the gold rush peak eclipsed with 986 arrivals. 1426 vessels arrived in 1875, some of them bringing a new wave of migrants under Julius Vogel’s massive assisted migration scheme.\textsuperscript{44} By this stage crowded wharves had become commonplace. In 1874 the \textit{ODT} boasted that “Port Chalmers is thought to be bare when there are only half-a-dozen square-rigged craft at anchor there or at the wharf, whilst at times there are as many as thirty square rigs.”\textsuperscript{45} The gradual transition from sail to steam technology accompanied these years of expansion. Sail remained the primary ocean-going form of transport during the period 1860-1875, but steam began to revolutionise shipping by providing services unprecedented in their reliability and, in some cases, speed.\textsuperscript{46}

Steam technology effectively brought Port Chalmers closer to the rest of the colony and the world.\textsuperscript{47} As much a destination for migrants and goods as a port of call on major global shipping routes, ships often discharged their cargos at Port Chalmers and left in ballast.\textsuperscript{48} The majority of vessels arrived at Port Chalmers from New Zealand or Australian ports, a significant minority arrived from Britain itself, and others came

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{OPGG} IV, no. 370 (28 June 1865): 150.
\textsuperscript{44} On Vogel’s migration scheme see: David Hastings, \textit{Over the Mountains of the Sea: Life on the Migrant Ships 1870-1885}, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006), 1-5.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{ODT}, 15 August 1874, 2. See also: \textit{ODT}, 22 August 1874, 2.
\textsuperscript{46} Hastings, 3-4; Marian Hutchinson, “Bound for New Zealand: Seamen under sail and steam in the nineteenth century,” (MA Thesis, University of Auckland, 1995), 58-62. Steam also changed the nature of seamen’s lives and work in many ways, including through a more rigid division of labour and stricter discipline, and through spending time in port at more regular intervals: Hamilton, 3-4; Steel, 113-128, 136. See also: \textit{ODT}, 22 August 1874, 2.
\textsuperscript{48} Bowman, 40. c.f. Cape Town: Hamilton, 3.
from myriad origins including America, China, Mauritius and continental Europe.⁴⁹ As shown in table 1.1, the ratio of coastal shipping to ocean-going shipping was about equal at the goldrush peak in 1863. Following the gold boom, coastal shipping took over as the primary enterprise. As table 1.2 indicates, the presence of a large mobile population associated with shipping remained a constant feature of the port throughout the period in question. On top of passengers and crew of ordinary trading vessels, Bowman estimates that an average of forty-five migrant ships per year brought 300 to 450 people each to the port.⁵⁰

Histories of Port Chalmers, the port of Otago, and associated industries in the 1860s and 1870s abound with detail about shipping and harbour development: ships, cargos, dock building, dredging, and the lively local politics that accompanied it all.⁵¹ As Otago’s trade increased through the 1860s Dunedin merchants fought tenaciously to develop Dunedin’s port facilities. In a potent display of the importance of transport and communications in making and maintaining place, Port Chalmers residents and their political supporters campaigned vigorously to retain Port Chalmers as Otago’s primary anchorage. This provided a community rallying point and residents celebrated victories with appropriate enthusiasm.⁵² Jubilation, marked by the firing of rockets and the hoisting of bunting around the town and shipping, swept the port in August 1870 when news arrived that the New Zealand government had decided to make Port Chalmers the terminus of the San Francisco mail service.⁵³ As the source of news, goods, and people, shipping touched the interests of everybody.⁵⁴

A travel piece in an 1866 edition of the Otago Daily Times described Port Chalmers as “that semi-amphibious town, whose inhabitants seem to consist chiefly of

⁴⁹ Margaret Taylor, “Otago’s Seaborne Trade from the Pioneering Days to 1870,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Otago, 1946), 119-144. In addition to these global links, Port Chalmers played an important local role as a service town for small neighbouring settlements including Sawyers Bay, Mansfords/Careys Bay, Portobello, the Heads (including the kaik at Otākou) and other Lower Harbour settlements, as well as Pūrākanui and Blueskin, and the quarantine station on Quarantine Island. Small boats facilitated much of the interaction between these settlements and the port.
⁵⁰ Bowman, 61.
⁵¹ Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 32-41, 52-56, 84-86; Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” 203-217; Bowman, 25-37, 55-79; McLintock, The Port of Otago, (New Zealand: Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, 1951), 54-70, 73-77; McLean, Otago Harbour, 43-74; Bidmead, 107-112, 128-132.
⁵² David Hamer argues that development projects that could be dramatized through the involvement of a competitive aspect could foster community spirit, as with the project to open colonial Wellington’s hinterland by rail. See: David Hamer, “Wellington on the Urban Frontier,” 239, 244-245, 252.
⁵³ ODT, 29 August 1870, 2. See also: Edward Barton, “Reminiscences of early days in Port Chalmers,” Turnbull, Norman S.: Papers (Misc-MS-111/002), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, 3.
⁵⁴ Bidmead, 136-137.
sailors, ships chandlers, boatmen, barmen, and barmaidens.”\textsuperscript{55} Shipping directly or indirectly engaged much of the port’s working population. Hotels provided entertainment and accommodation for visitors.\textsuperscript{56} The construction of a floating dock in 1867-1868 and a graving dock in 1868 comprised two of the largest projects undertaken in the port during the late-1860s.\textsuperscript{57} In 1870 the graving dock’s operators employed between eighty and one hundred men as stonemasons, quarrymen and labourers.\textsuperscript{58} Before the development of adequate jetty facilities at the port, large vessels anchored in the bay and discharged passengers, crew and cargo on small boats. A flotilla of lighters transhipped goods to shore and up the harbour to Dunedin. The same vessels loaded ships with cargo for the next legs of their journeys: usually with ballast (sometimes quarried by the lightermen themselves), gold, or wool.\textsuperscript{59} Other workers engaged in shipbuilding and repairing work. The “metallic clang” of shipwrights’ wooden mallets on iron resounded in chorus with the other sounds of the busy settlement: saws at work clearing bush, shovels scraping, hammers banging, and sailors singing.\textsuperscript{60} Local builders such as William Isbister and William Murray increasingly fulfilled the demand for small boats for lightering work and medium-sized vessels for coasting as these industries boomed in the 1860s.\textsuperscript{61} Several ship chandling businesses provisioned ships with food and hardware,\textsuperscript{62} and customs, shipping and immigration agents ensured that goods, people and all related charges were accounted for.\textsuperscript{63} Some small-scale capitalists had interests in multiple shipping-related enterprises. George Dodson, owner of the Port Chalmers and Provincial Hotels, also ran a ship providing business, and brothers Charles, George and Peter Clark were partners in ship chandling and sail making, as well as being coal merchants, landlords, and shareholders in several vessels.\textsuperscript{64} Ships

\textsuperscript{55} “A Cruise to the Chatham Islands,”\textsuperscript{56} ODT, 1 August 1866, 5.  
\textsuperscript{57} See chapter three for more on hotels and their role in community formation in colonial Port Chalmers.  
\textsuperscript{58} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 42-44.  
\textsuperscript{59} ODT, 26 August 1870, 3. The Otago Dock Trust, established by the Provincial Council in 1866, took over the operation of the graving dock in 1872. Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 43-44.  
\textsuperscript{60} Bowman, 38-41, 98-102, 110-111; Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” 209-210; H.M. Chapman-Cohen, “Port Chalmers, the Port of Otago,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Otago, 1942), 146-147; Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 34, 42-47, 56-58; McLean, 60, 66; Barton, 2.  
\textsuperscript{61} Barton, 2-3.  
\textsuperscript{63} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 39, 52-55.  
\textsuperscript{64} Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” 213-214; Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 38.  
\textsuperscript{64} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 37, 55, 58-59.
also functioned as sources of interest, and captains of new or otherwise intriguing vessels sometimes offered tours for the curious.\textsuperscript{65}

The opening of the harbour side railway between Dunedin and Port Chalmers on 1 January 1873 and the accompanying Bowen Pier (opened August 1872) represented the victory of Port Chalmers interests over the Dunedin residents who wanted to dredge a channel to allow large ships to travel all the way up to their jetties. Six trains travelled the line each day, drawing the port and Dunedin into closer and more reliable connection.\textsuperscript{66} The new pier allowed large vessels to discharge their cargos directly onto the wharf and into railway cars, and thus retained the shipping industry at Port Chalmers and created a wharf labour industry that gradually replaced the lighter trade.\textsuperscript{67} Wharf labourers formed a “lumpers” union in January 1875, the first occupation-based association at the port.\textsuperscript{68}

The port’s political institutions continued to grow during the post-rush decade. Seventy-nine residents petitioned for Port Chalmers to be proclaimed a municipality, and the Provincial Council granted the request on 11 April 1866. Daniel Rolfe, a thirty-one-year-old legal clerk originally from London but a resident of Otago since 1861, was elected the port’s first mayor. 172 electors cast votes overall. The Port Chalmers Borough Council replaced the Town Board from 1866, and from the previous year Port Chalmers electors voted for their own member in the New Zealand House of Representatives as well as the Provincial Council.\textsuperscript{69} Port Chalmers’ affairs received the special attention of their own daily newspaper, the \textit{Evening Mail and Port Chalmers Express}, published in Dunedin by Joseph Mackay for a brief period in 1867.\textsuperscript{70} In 1874 the Provincial Council set up the Otago Harbour Board. Three Port Chalmers representatives sat on the inaugural board chaired by James Macandrew, then Provincial Superintendent and a long-time advocate for Port Chalmers interests. However the Board failed to assume control of the Port Chalmers wharves from the railway

\textsuperscript{65} ODT, 22 August 1874, 2.
\textsuperscript{66} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 47.
\textsuperscript{67} The new pier did not entirely extinguish the lighter trade: it lacked sufficient space to accommodate all of the vessels trading at the port and left some to continue anchoring in the bay and engaging the services of local lightermen. Chapman-Cohen, 146-147; Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 34, 42-47, 84; McLean, 60, 66; Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” 211.
\textsuperscript{68} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 84. “Lumpers” was a term commonly used to describe wharf labourers, also known as stevedores.
\textsuperscript{69} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 42. The Hocken Collections holds one edition of the paper: \textit{The Evening Mail and Port Chalmers Express} 1, no. 174, Friday 25 October 1867 (YVPw Por P), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, Dunedin. I have not found any explanation as to why its life was so short.
\textsuperscript{70} Bowman, 127; Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 67.
department and instead began taking steps to execute the plan, long-feared by Port Chalmers residents, to dredge a shipping channel up to Dunedin. After many setbacks, the Victoria Channel, which many believed would make Port Chalmers obsolete, opened in 1881.\(^{71}\) The Union Steam Ship Company, founded by Dunedin businessman James Mills in 1875, helped to maintain economic activity and employment in the port through general economic downturn in the 1880s.\(^{72}\) The first exports of frozen meat bound for British markets left Port Chalmers in 1882 and provided hope for the port’s continued importance.\(^{73}\)

At the 1874 Census Port Chalmers had 1535 residents. Men still outnumbered women, though not by much.\(^{74}\) 39% of the total population were born in New Zealand, while 25% were born in England, 20% in Scotland, 8% in the Australian colonies, and 6% in Ireland.\(^{75}\) Port Chalmers continued to be the primary port of disembarkation for migrants and the major port for handling the colony’s imports and exports. On census night it hosted the largest floating population in the entire colony: 1352 passengers and crew, comprising 948 males and 404 females.\(^{76}\) If considered a town in its own right, the floating population ranked as the fifth largest “settlement” in Otago after Dunedin, Ōamaru, Invercargill, and the port itself.\(^{77}\) Port Chalmers, although bounded by water and hills, enjoyed connections that plugged it into networks ranging in scale from the local, to the regional, to the global. These connections and the people, goods and information that flowed between them profoundly shaped community formation in the port.

\(^{71}\) McLean, 66-67.
\(^{72}\) Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, 89-92.
\(^{73}\) *Ibid*, 86, 88.
\(^{74}\) There were 408 adult men to 319 adult women. Here “adult” is defined as over 20 years of age. The total male: female ratio was 780: 755. *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 10, 134-135.
\(^{75}\) *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 96. The remaining 2% were born elsewhere. Surprisingly no Chinese-born were recorded. Ian Church notes that some Chinese men worked on extending the railway line from Sawyers Bay to Waitati in 1874-1875, and that about a dozen others lived and operated fishing businesses around the Lower Harbour. See: Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, 49, 79-80.
\(^{76}\) The floating population exceeded the populations of important provincial settlements such as Milton (977), Riverton (728), Queenstown (705), and Lawrence (697). *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 23.
\(^{77}\) *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 14-15.
Chapter Two: The Port Chalmers churches and community formation

Churches played important parts in the formation of nineteenth century local communities. Historians of Otago have described the Free Church of Scotland’s central role in establishing the colony, and its leaders’ desire to build a society based around the Kirk’s moral and spiritual guidance.¹ Yet mixed migration altered Otago’s intended religious trajectory from the colony’s early years, and the goldrushes entrenched the development of diverse religious traditions.² Port Chalmers colonists established churches representing four Protestant denominations during the period up to 1875: Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Congregational, and Anglican. They also formed a Catholic congregation and an evangelical, non-denominational mission to seamen.

This chapter examines how the Port Chalmers churches overcame challenges such as mobility to become potent agents of community formation. In developing churches colonists expressed and strengthened religious impulses. By doing so they nurtured links of both a spiritual and worldly nature to the Old World, which helped them to cope with their new environment.³ Driven by the voluntary efforts of lay people in almost every aspect, the Port Chalmers churches and the wider ecumenical community they promoted pulled people together in myriad ways, providing strong institutional frameworks for sociability and group-identification. As centres of sociability, local churches also served as avenues for “significant socialization... contributing to the shaping of values and outlooks.”⁴

⁴ Davidson, vi.
The British background and churches in the historiography of colonial New Zealand

Colonial patterns of religious life developed out of negotiations between imported cultural practices and values and the particular conditions of the colonial environment. Colonists’ “cultural baggage” contained denomination-specific attendance and organizational patterns, theological leanings, social aspirations, and attitudes to the relationship between church and state. Understanding religion and the churches in colonial Port Chalmers requires an appreciation of religion in Britain and the British backgrounds of the denominations that colonists established in the port. Below I outline criticisms of the “secularization” thesis in the British historiography and provide a brief and generalized sketch of characteristics Protestant denominations transplanted to Port Chalmers. This section closes with a discussion of developments in the New Zealand historiography of colonial religion.

Recent historiography of British religion has criticized the long-held convention that urbanization and industrialization caused serious decline in the social significance of religion and the churches throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Critics of the so-called “secularization” thesis have highlighted problems with using church attendance statistics to measure religious belief and church involvement. According to J.C.D. Clark, statistics that ostensibly represent “regular” church attendance tend to reflect attendance values common only to adherents of evangelical Protestant churches, including Presbyterians, Wesleyan Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists. As a result, assessments of religion and the churches based on attendance statistics misinterpret the looser and less structured approaches to church attendance common amongst Anglicans and Catholics as indicative of a lack of religious life and church involvement. Clark argues that nineteenth century Britons were significantly more engaged with religion and involved in church life than many older studies have claimed. Colonists arrived in Port Chalmers with different religious backgrounds, but very few, if any, arrived as entirely secular individuals.

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5 Catholics seldom appear in this chapter due to a lack of primary sources on their activity in the port, and so I have excluded background discussion of Catholicism here.
7 Clark, 167.
Nineteenth century Scottish Presbyterianism encompassed a range of beliefs and practices. Several dissenting Presbyterian churches had already broken away from the established Church of Scotland prior to the Disruption in 1843.\(^8\) Callum Brown has described mid-nineteenth century church attendance rates in Scotland as “high.” The proportion of attendances at all Scottish churches represented 47.9% of the total population in 1851.\(^9\) This reflected a widespread Presbyterian expectation of regular weekly church attendance. Presbyterian aspirations to build a “godly commonwealth,” a society that conformed to the word of God in social, economic and political terms, entailed an emphasis on personal piety and a moral reform agenda concerned with issues such as the consumption of alcohol and keeping the Sabbath.\(^10\)

Individual Presbyterian churches were meant to be run in a relatively democratic fashion. The minister governed church affairs with the assistance of two bodies of male representatives elected from the congregation. However, state interference in church affairs became a source of division within the Church of Scotland during the first half of the eighteenth century. The patronage system allowed the state or members of the wealthy elite to sponsor candidates for parish positions, but developed to the extent that it began to subvert the ability of parish communities to determine who their own ministers would be. Ministers of the Evangelical faction within the Church took issue with this erosion of congregational autonomy. The Disruption occurred when 454 ministers out of a total of 1195 (both Evangelical and Moderate) walked out of the Church’s General Assembly to form the Free Church. About half of the Church of Scotland’s adherents followed. Although they walked out of an establishment they deemed deeply flawed, the disruptors remained committed to the principle of an Established Church. The Free Church aspired to have the ear of government, and the “godly commonwealth” ideal entailed that Church and state would work together to establish the desired moral paradigm.\(^11\) Not all Otago colonists were Free Church adherents, but many Scottish Presbyterians arrived in the colony with world-views

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\(^8\) Brown, 17-31.  
\(^9\) The figure for “attendances” included second and subsequent attendances by people who attended more than one Sunday service on the same day. Ibid, 55-61. Churchgoing in Scotland varied considerably by region. Ibid, 56, 59.  
\(^11\) Brown, 17-22, 25-28; McClean, 21; Hempton, 67-68.
shaped by the Free Church’s religious enthusiasm and moral sensibility expressed through the “godly commonwealth” ideal.\textsuperscript{12}

Nineteenth century Anglicans also varied widely in beliefs and practices. Many lay members of the Church of England considered regular Sunday church attendance unnecessary, but attended church to mark rites of passage such as baptisms, marriages, and funerals, and to celebrate festivals such as Christmas and Easter. In addition, they tended to adopt more relaxed attitudes to “moral” issues such as alcohol and the sanctity of Sunday.\textsuperscript{13} Some Presbyterians were shocked by the relative laxity Anglicans displayed with regards to Sunday observance during the sea voyage to the colony.\textsuperscript{14} In addition, Anglican leadership was more vertically structured than the Presbyterian system: a hierarchy of clergymen led by bishops governed church affairs.\textsuperscript{15}

By the nineteenth century the presence of significant populations of “Nonconformists” (who had left the Church of England to join other Protestant denominations), Catholics and freethinkers challenged the Church of England’s privileged position within the English state. Critics within the Church also challenged aspects of the Establishment, including its own patronage system. “[L]iberal Anglicans who loved their church but wished its abuses dead and its dignity revived” found that they shared some common sentiments with Nonconformists.\textsuperscript{16} Evangelical factions within the Church promoted personal piety and encouraged individual donations towards church projects during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. This helped to move the evangelically-inclined away from reliance on the Church’s Established position and towards a voluntaristic, congregation-driven approach to parish governance. Taking a different approach during the 1830s, the reformers of the Anglo-Catholic-inspired Oxford Movement sought to limit political interference in church affairs by emphasizing the divine authority and autonomy of the traditional episcopal hierarchy.\textsuperscript{17} This faction, however, probably enjoyed less support amongst colonial

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{12} Olssen, 32-34, 39-41.
\bibitem{13} Hempton, 12, 15-18; Davidson, 69-71. Clarke shows that Anglican views on the Sabbath in Otago varied in “A godly rhythm,” 54.
\bibitem{15} McCarthy, \textit{Scottishness and Irishness in New Zealand since 1840}, 121.
\end{thebibliography}
Anglicans than the evangelicals. According to Douglas Pike, evangelical Anglicanism played an equally important role in movements against setting up an established church in the British colonies as Nonconformist agitation.

English Nonconformists such as Methodists (varieties of which ranged from Wesleyan Methodists, similar in many ways to evangelical Anglicans, to Primitive Methodists more inclined towards puritanism), Congregationalists and Baptists broadly shared evangelical emphases on religious enthusiasm and personal piety with Presbyterians. They encouraged regular church attendance and were much more likely to attend on a weekly basis than Anglicans. They employed congregation-based governing and funding mechanisms and displayed concern about alcohol and Sabbath breaking. They also favoured religious equality, if not the complete separation of church and state. Under the Anglican Establishment Nonconformists had long been denied equal rights to participation in politics and civil society, and for many the memories lingered long after restrictions were eased by reforms during the period 1828-1832. The colonies offered Nonconformists opportunities to participate in building a new society based on voluntary religious association and free of the religious and political discrimination that characterized their old home.

No denomination secured the position of established church in New Zealand and the colony remained “secular” in that respect. At a provincial level, there were some attempts by Free Church leaders to control Otago’s political development and by Anglicans to establish a shadow establishment in Canterbury. Without government funding or organizational assistance, however, all colonial denominations essentially became voluntary organizations. Voluntarism, high population mobility and the presence of multiple denominations formed the main environmental factors that interacted with imported beliefs and practices to shape colonial religious trajectories in Otago. Voluntarism meant that successful ventures to found and maintain churches in colonial settlements depended upon the initial impulses and on-going support of a

18 Pike, 249.
19 Ibid, 48.
21 Wesleyan Methodists in particular were unlikely to support the complete disestablishment of the Church of England. Hempton, 37-38; Pike, 22.
23 Olssen, 35-48; Davidson, 51-53.
vigorous, though sometimes small, group of lay people. As shown below, lay people drove almost all aspects of congregational life in Port Chalmers, even in the Church of England. The financial and organizational challenges posed by voluntarism promoted sociability and a sense of shared purpose within denominations and also encouraged different churches to work together. Interdenominational cooperation emerged out of necessity as denominations sought help from each other in order to survive.

New Zealand histories have often side-lined the religion of the colonists. Nationalist historians such as Keith Sinclair championed a secularization narrative that emphasized religion’s dwindling, though sometimes divisive, influence on New Zealand society. Like the British version, New Zealand’s secularization narrative described the widespread abandonment of the churches by working and lower-middle class people during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, dubbed the “lapsed masses” thesis by critics.

Subsequent histories of colonial New Zealand perpetuated the secularization model by accepting colonial church attendance figures at face value. Miles Fairburn barely mentioned religion or the churches in The Ideal Society and its Enemies, other than to quote “low” church attendance rates evidenced in the 1874 Census. As noted in the introduction, Fairburn cited church attendance as part of his evidence that colonial voluntary societies had small memberships and therefore limited impacts on social organization. Colonial institutions such as churches, he explained, struggled due to a lack of a “critical mass” of population at first settlement, and because rapid frontier expansion kept population numbers low and settlements dispersed for years to come.

By taking a placeless and generalized approach to religion and the churches, focusing on attendance and failing to look deeper into colonial religious beliefs and practices, Fairburn effectively wrote religion and the churches out of the history of community formation in colonial New Zealand.

26 Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 340; Matheson, 40-41.
29 James Belich’s brief treatment of Pākehā colonial religion adopted a similar approach. Belich quoted attendance rates as evidence that churches did not bond many colonists. However, he added the qualification that the figures at least suggest that colonists lived in circumstances where the possibility to bond through institutions like churches existed, and concluded that a “vague, shared Protestantism…
As noted above, church attendance statistics underplay church connections and obscure the wider significances of religion.\textsuperscript{30} Historians of religion in colonial New Zealand such as John Stenhouse and Alison Clarke have challenged the “secular New Zealand” and “lapsed masses” theses by re-evaluating their statistical basis and by employing a broader definition of religion that reconnects religion with its “this-worldly” expressions in institutions, communities and cultures.\textsuperscript{31} Such histories have explored the diversity of colonial religious experiences by widening the focus of inquiry from attendance statistics and the “official religion” endorsed by male ministers and lay leaders to include “popular religion”: the everyday religious beliefs and practices of lay colonists, exercised both within and beyond the churches.\textsuperscript{32} Examining popular religion, Stenhouse argues, reveals that colonial New Zealand society cannot be described as non-religious or anti-religious, even if it was “secular” due to its lack of established church.\textsuperscript{33} Believing without regularly belonging characterized the religious lives of many colonists, and continuity in religious beliefs and practices often characterised the transition to colonial life.\textsuperscript{34}

This chapter illuminates aspects of both popular and official religion in colonial Port Chalmers and their relationships to community formation processes. Drawing together fragmented source material from church archives (often patchy, as churches were predominantly run by ordinary members of the congregations who exchanged ideas face-to-face without recording them in detail), Census data, newspapers, and local histories, and taking considerations from other colonial contexts, I demonstrate the broad extent of church influence in the port and provide an overview of the varied ways in which the churches promoted sociability and built community.


\textsuperscript{30} On the colonial New Zealand context, see: Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 327-328, 343-344.

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid}, 330.


\textsuperscript{33} Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 339-343.

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid}, 343.
The Port Chalmers churches

Colonists in Port Chalmers erected six churches by 1875: two each for the Presbyterians and Wesleyans, plus a Congregational Church and an Anglican Church. At a tea meeting for the Congregational Church in 1871, prominent Dunedin prohibition advocate Mr J.W. Jago conjectured that “Port Chalmers, according to its population, came forward and supported more Churches than any other place in the Colony, “ay, even the world.””35 At the 1874 Census Port Chalmers town offered one church for every 384 of its residents, compared with a 1:774 ratio for the province of Otago and a 1:547 ratio for the colony as a whole.36

Presbyterian services began soon after settlement. Rev. Dr Thomas Burns, spiritual head of the Otago colony, conducted occasional combined services for Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and Anglicans in the Port Chalmers Hotel from 1848. In 1852 Port Chalmers Presbyterians erected the second Presbyterian house of worship in Otago at the top of Mount Street, with seating for 150 people. Burns and various lay preachers, not all Presbyterian, held regular services in the building. The congregation elected its first office bearers in 1856 and celebrated its first communion season in 1857. That same year the congregation called its first minister. Rev. William Johnstone, a Free Church minister, arrived from Scotland in 1858. Johnstone served Port Chalmers Presbyterians and the wider community until his death in 1881. Under Johnstone’s leadership, with the help of an active lay community, the congregation replaced their original church with a stone building that held 300 people in 1872, and added a gallery in 1876.37

Wesleyans initially worshipped together with the Presbyterians, enjoying occasional visits from the missionary stationed at Waikouaiti and the lay preaching services of J.R. Monson, Charles Logie, and William Morris (later the Presbyterian

36 *Results of a Census of the Colony of New Zealand, taken for the night of the 1st of March, 1874*, (Wellington: George Didsbury, Government Printer, 1875), 59, 72, 272.
37 The Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church is the subject of four parish histories, containing valuable records of people who worked for the church over the years. All are held at Presbyterian Archives and Research Centre, Dunedin. David Mawson, *A Sketch of the History of the Presbyterian Church, Port Chalmers, from 1848 to 1902*, (Dunedin: The Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers Company, Ltd., 1902); Alexander Whyte, *The Second Church of Otago. 1852-1916: Thanksgiving Sermon…*, (Dunedin: Otago Daily Times Co., 1917); H.O. Bowman, *Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church: Centennial Survey 1848-1948*, (Dunedin, 1948); Ian Church, *A Guiding Light: The Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church and its People: Commemorating 150 Years Since the Opening of the Second Church in Otago in October 1852*, (Dunedin: United Church of Port Chalmers Presbyterian Parish, 2002).
missionary to the settlements north of Port Chalmers). The Wesleyan congregation opened their own, self-funded wooden church with accommodation for 120 people in Grey Street in 1855. Wesleyans resumed worshipping with the Presbyterians after Johnstone’s arrival and the departure of their own minister to live at the Heads. Wesleyan activity revived when Port Chalmers became attached to the Dunedin circuit in 1862. Rev. R.S. Bunn arrived in 1863 with experience from the Victorian gold fields. Under Bunn’s leadership, with strong support from laymen such as Monson and Resident Magistrate T.A. Mansford, the Wesleyans first enlarged their chapel in 1863, then erected a new one (the enlarged one having been undermined by road works) which opened in January 1864. A succession of ministers followed Bunn; Wesleyan clergymen typically changed stations every three years or so.38

Anglicans initially worshipped with the Presbyterians, then with the Wesleyans from 1854. Priests visited occasionally, but services lapsed altogether between 1865 and 1869. In 1870 a group of lay people headed by figures such as J.R. Monson and T.A. Mansford who had previously been active in Wesleyan lay life re-instituted regular services. The congregation formed a building committee in 1871 and soon acquired a section on the corner of Grey and Scotia Streets. Between 400 and 500 people attended the ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone in June 1871.39 Builders completed Holy Trinity Church, a stone building with accommodation for 300 people, in 1874. By this stage Rev. M. Leeson (arrived 1873) provided services as a resident minister. Lay efforts in the 1870s focused on securing funds for the church building and servicing its debt, and having the Port Chalmers Parochial District declared a parish.40

Rev. John Fraser arrived in Port Chalmers from British North America in late-1863 and, together with a group of lay people, many of whom had been involved with the Wesleyans, established a Congregational Church. The Congregationalists erected a simple wooden church in Wickliffe Terrace in 1864, after substantial excavation carried out by men of the congregation in the evenings. The church appointed its first deacons in 1866, one of whom was John Joyce, formerly active in the committees of the Wesleyan Church. Rev. T.S. Forsaith, an English Congregationalist and former Member

38 Bowman, _Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago_, 141-144; _ODT_, 15 April 1869, 3; Church, _Port Chalmers and its people_, 20.
39 _ODT_, 8 June 1871, 5.
40 This goal was not achieved until the twentieth century. Bowman, _Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago_, 145-147; _ODT_, 15 June 1870, 2; _ODT_, 12 August 1870, 3; Evelyn E. Lloyd, _Safe Harbour: Holy Trinity Church, 1874-1994_, (Dunedin: Evelyn E. Lloyd, 1994).
of the House of Representatives, ministered to the congregation from 1865-1867. Rev. Stephen Smith took over from 1867 until illness forced him to resign in 1871. Rev. James Maxwell served the Port Chalmers Congregational Church from 1871 until 1882.41

In 1871 Rev. Johnstone wrote to his brother of “quite a plethora of Churches….. Independent, Wesleyan, Episcopalian, Catholic, & Plymouth Brethren!!”42 Table 2.1 demonstrates the range and nominal sizes of denominations in Port Chalmers recorded by the 1874 Census. Table 2.2 compares the major denominations as proportions of the populations of Port Chalmers, Dunedin, Otago, and the colony as a whole. Table 2.1 shows that by 1874 the Church of England claimed the most adherents in Port Chalmers at 37%, followed by the Presbyterian Church at 30%. Table 2.2 illustrates that although Port Chalmers was slightly less Presbyterian and more Anglican than Dunedin and Otago, it was more Presbyterian and less Anglican than the colony as a whole. Wesleyans and Congregationalists boasted similar numbers in the port. In both cases, and especially in the case of Congregationalists, these numbers represented significantly higher proportions of the population compared with Dunedin, Otago and the colony as a whole. Conversely, Port Chalmers’ one hundred Catholics represented a smaller proportion of the population than elsewhere. Lacking a church of their own until 1878, visiting Catholic priests celebrated masses in Dodson’s Bond or the Royal Hotel during the 1860s, and the Town Hall in Currie Street during the 1870s.43 Members of the other small Protestant denominations shown in table 2.1 probably worshipped in private premises, in Dunedin, or as part of another Port Chalmers congregation. The ten colonists who answered “no denomination” may have worshipped with the non-denominational mission to seamen (see chapter five). While eight people objected to state their religion, not one returned “no religion.” I have not come across evidence of any freethinker/rationalist presence in Port Chalmers, although some, such as lawyer and politician Robert Stout, enjoyed a high profile in Dunedin.44

41 Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, 144-145; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 29; OW, 26 March 1864, 13; Research notes into Port Chalmers Congregational Church History, Rev. William Mugford Grant Papers (MS-0609-02), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
42 William Johnstone to James Johnstone (brother), 14 April 1871, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/014), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
43 Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, 147-149.
44 Stenhouse, “God, the devil and gender,” 336-338.
Table 2.1. Census data for religious adherence in Port Chalmers town, 1874

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>male</th>
<th>female</th>
<th>% of PC total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterians</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesleyan Methodists</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Methodist Free Churches</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptists</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Independents</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutherans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitarians</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other protestants</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholics</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No denomination</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object to state</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1535</strong></td>
<td><strong>780</strong></td>
<td><strong>755</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2. Denominational adherents as a percentage of the total population, 1874

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Port Chalmers</th>
<th>Dunedin</th>
<th>Otago</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterians</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesleyan Methodists</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptists</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Independents</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholics</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In illustrating adherence rather than attendance the statistics presented above encompass those who seldom went to church and/or those who attended irregularly, but remained nominally attached to a denomination. They tell us little about the extent to which the population engaged actively in church life. Accurate church attendance rates, clearer but partial measures of religious belief and church involvement, cannot be established for this period. The 1874 Census reported on the number of people in each province who “usually attended” church – differentiated by denomination – but the figures are questionable. In 1983 Hugh Jackson noted that Census organizers provided churches with few guidelines on how to estimate “usual attenders” for their returns. However Jackson concluded that the figures were likely to be accurate overall, and

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45 Results of a Census of the Colony of New Zealand... 1874, 72.
46 Ibid, 59, 71-72.
therefore that churchgoing in nineteenth century New Zealand was “mediocre” in comparison with Britain.\textsuperscript{47} Subsequent historians have tended to rely on Jackson’s assessment, but recent research has called his interpretation into question.

The definition of “usual attenders” raises several considerations about the usefulness of Census attendance figures. One concerns how the figures equate “usual attendance” with the model of regular weekly attendance favoured by the more evangelical Protestant churches, in spite of the different, looser Anglican and Catholic definitions of “usual attendance” discussed above.\textsuperscript{48} Another concerns the issue of multiple Sunday services and “usual attendance.” Most churches held more than one Sunday service and in some cases, particularly in urban centres where people could easily access their church, some would have attended more than one. Alison Clarke explains that many churches calculated an average figure based on the number of people who attended the largest service of the day plus one third of the attenders at the second service, so as not to count people who attended both. However, methods of calculation were not uniform, and emphasis on the largest service of the day undoubtedly skewed results. Some Catholic churches, for example, hosted up to three Sunday masses that attracted similar numbers.\textsuperscript{49} In these sorts of instances, Census rates would have represented a significant underestimate of the actual number of people who attended church on that particular day.

Clarke also notes that factors such as proximity to church, domestic situation, and even the seasons and weather influenced individual colonists' abilities to attend church regularly.\textsuperscript{50} In addition, Stenhouse and Caroline Daley have both shown that women attended church more often than men, particularly unmarried men. Stenhouse posits the family as a better unit of analysis for church attendance than the individual, and argues that it was a common feature of the gendered division of responsibilities in some households for women and children to attend church as representatives of the family while the man of the house remained at home. Given the very small numbers of men expressing no-religion on Census returns, it seems that many, perhaps most, non-

\textsuperscript{47} Jackson, 46-47, 51.
\textsuperscript{48} See also: Davidson and Lineham, 182; Clarke, “‘Tinged with Christian Sentiment’,” 106-107.
\textsuperscript{49} Individual churches were charged with responsibility for enumerating and filing the Census returns themselves. Guidelines for the how to calculate “usual attenders” have not survived, nor have the Census schedules. Only the published reports remain. Alison Clarke, “Churchgoing in New Zealand, 1874-1926, a re-evaluation,” Paper presented at the New Zealand Historical Association conference, (Hamilton, November 2011 - courtesy of the author), 1-2, 4-6.
\textsuperscript{50} Clarke, “Churchgoing in New Zealand,” 4-6.
churchgoing men probably practiced this sort of “vicarious religion” or “religion by deputy.”

Church attendance, therefore, was contingent on a number of factors including personal convictions and preferences, denominational norms and expectations, gender, and place. Clarke’s research shows that the method of enumerating “usual attenders” in the Census underestimated actual numbers of attenders, and therefore that Census data provides a misleading indication of the social significance of the churches in the colony. This means that assessments of the churches’ place in colonial society by the likes of Jackson, Fairburn and Belich are based on a false premise of low attendance (estimated at an average of 23.5% across the colony by the 1874 Census) and require revision that accounts for both higher attendance rates and evidence of popular expressions of religion.

Clarke estimates that “close to a third of adult New Zealanders could be found in the biggest service of the day on any given Sunday in the late nineteenth century.” Accounting for those who attended the smaller services, less-regular attenders and children who attended Sunday schools (discussed below) pushes this figure higher. By 1875 the Port Chalmers Presbyterian and Anglican churches alone could seat 300 worshippers each. The port’s unusually high proportions of excellent church attenders such as Wesleyans and Congregationalists, along with the Presbyterians, would likely have elevated attendance rates above the colony-wide average, while the provision of four different Protestant churches as well as a Catholic service all in close proximity to the town centre made church attendance accessible. Extreme weather and commitments such as domestic service and caring for young children or sick relatives aside, few colonists would have had difficulty attending Sunday services in Port Chalmers if they so desired.

Evidence from the port suggests that the Presbyterian Church boasted the largest active congregation in the port throughout the period 1860-1875, despite the Church of

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53 Davidson and Lineham, 184.
55 I have not been able to find capacity figures for the second Wesleyan Church and the Congregational Church.
England registering the highest number of adherents in 1874.\textsuperscript{56} In 1871 Johnstone wrote to his brother that his congregation, albeit small, was the largest in Port Chalmers.\textsuperscript{57} The Presbyterian congregation enjoyed the continuity of a long-term minister and the support of a strong, settled laity. It also had deep roots in the Presbyterian beginnings of the Otago settlement, and was advantaged by being well established by the onset of the goldrushes and the ensuing demographic upheaval. New arrivals to the port quickly filled the places left in the congregation by the revitalization of the Wesleyan Church in 1862.\textsuperscript{58} However, in spite of its size, the Presbyterian Church did not constitute a \textit{de facto} establishment in Port Chalmers. It did not have the numbers to make it a significant majority, and, as I explain below, even its control over its adherents was limited. As chapter three shows, Wesleyans and Congregationalists as well as Anglicans all played prominent roles in the port’s public life.

Aspects of the Presbyterian congregation’s history reveal themes common to all of the Port Chalmers congregations. Johnstone and a core group of lay church officers provided stability for a congregation that fluctuated during the period 1860-1875 as the boundaries of Johnstone’s pastorate were revised. Upon his arrival, Johnstone ministered to Port Chalmers and the northern districts of the Otago settlement, which extended as far north as the Waitaki River.\textsuperscript{59} As the years passed many of the settlements that Johnstone visited gained their own minister or lay preacher and Johnstone’s energy – consistently challenged by ill health – became increasingly focused on the port itself. The pews at the Presbyterian Church seated a congregation

\textsuperscript{56} One reason for this was that by 1874 the gender ratio of Anglican adherents (shown in Table 2.1) was weighted towards men, compared with the relatively balanced Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Congregationalist congregations. This suggests a significant population of Anglican bachelors. As noted above, married men were more likely to attend church than unmarried men, and Presbyterians were more likely to attend church than Anglicans. These two factors would have helped reduce figures for Anglican active involvement below those suggested by the Census figure for adherents.

\textsuperscript{57} William Johnstone to James Johnstone, 14 April 1871, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/014), Hocken Collections, University of Otago. The Presbyterian Archives and Research Centre holds Communion Rolls for Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church from 1859, 1860, 1868 and 1872. The Hocken Collections holds a membership roll for the Port Chalmers Congregational Church, 1864-1875. I have not included the figures contained in these sources because of their incompleteness and because they do not indicate attendance rates. Becoming a communicant member was not required and many adherents, particularly more mobile colonists, would not be represented on the Rolls.

\textsuperscript{58} William Johnstone to James Johnstone, 15 December 1862, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland.

\textsuperscript{59} The Waitaki River is about 23km north of present day Ōamaru, via State Highway 1. For details of Johnstone’s preaching tours to the northern districts of his pastorate see: William Johnstone to Margaret King, 11 September 1858; Johnstone to King, 8 December 1858; Johnstone to King, 23 March 1859; Johnstone to King, 16 March 1860, Letters from William Johnstone to Margaret Johnstone, Rev William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/006), Hocken Collections, University of Otago; Johnstone to James Johnstone (father), 18 May 1866, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland.
increasingly made up of Port Chalmers residents. The congregation also oscillated. In an 1871 letter Rev. Johnstone explained to his older brother James, a Presbyterian minister in Scotland, that:

[The state of things is very different here from what they are at home. The population is very fluctuating. A great many are always moving from place to place. Hence congregations are ever undergoing a process of change.]

Here Johnstone revealed one of the key challenges to churches in a colonial environment: high population mobility. The remainder of this chapter discusses the ways in which churches promoted sociability and built community in spite of high mobility and other challenges associated with the colonial environment, particularly voluntarism. I demonstrate that the social significance of the churches extended further than Fairburn and Belich’s assessments contend.

**Institutional culture**

Sunday services constituted the Port Chalmers churches’ most basic spiritual and social function. Church services required colonists to break from their usual toil and provided opportunities to meet neighbours and exchange news and gossip. Biannual communion seasons, during which Presbyterians celebrated their church’s central ritual, were important social occasions as well as spiritual occasions because of the holidays that accompanied the special services. However, churches in colonial Port Chalmers offered far wider opportunities for sociability. Members of the congregation bonded through committee meetings, social events, and Sunday Schools. Although management of church affairs by the congregation was already an important feature of some Protestant denominations, the colonial voluntary environment placed greater emphasis on the management of each church by a small-scale local democracy. While Port

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60 People from settlements all around the harbour and the northern districts filled the early Communion Rolls. Of sixty-four communicants in 1859, only seventeen – just over one quarter – lived in Port Chalmers town. Others were distributed between: Portobello area (4); Blueskin (3); Dunedin (2); Blanket Bay (2); Lower Harbour (2); Waitaki (2); unknown (1). 1860 figures: North East Harbour/Upper Harbour East (18); Sawyers Bay (13); Portobello area (6); unknown (5); Blueskin (3); Lower Harbour (2); Waitaki (2); Mt. Pleasant (1). See: Port Chalmers Parish, P19016, Communion Roll 1859, held at the Presbyterian Archives and Research Centre, Dunedin.

61 William Johnstone to James Johnstone (brother), 14 April 1871, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland.

62 Clarke, “A godly rhythm,” 49.

Chalmers congregations faced difficulties in funding their initiatives, they also enjoyed a significant degree of flexibility to respond to local particularities.64

Interested, relatively settled, and financially secure lay people formed committees and elected officers who worked in conjunction with their clergyman to govern church financial and organizational affairs.65 In the Presbyterian Church, for example, the Kirk Session (or “Session”), comprised of elected elders and the minister, dealt with matters such as worship timetables, pastoral visits, and church discipline, while the Deacons’ Court dealt with financial matters and church property.66 Peter Matheson has described the elders as the real “rock” on which the colonial Presbyterian Church was founded.67 Harbourmaster William Thomson – a devoted elder and deacon in the Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church for more than fifty-three years – had strong connections with the maritime world, and helped to initiate the mission to seamen in 1863.68 In the Anglican case, the vestry and several sub-committees governed church affairs and elected wardens to serve the congregation and the clergyman respectively.69 In each church, the lay officers assisted the minister with pastoral visiting duties, often dividing the parish into areas of responsibility assigned to an individual.70 This helped the churches to maintain personal contact with their adherents and keep abreast of issues in the community.

In the absence of state assistance, local congregations struggled to meet their expenses through ordinary collections, and often entered into substantial debt to fund building projects on top of paying their minister.71 Fundraising provided a practical

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65 Under this regime the laity exercised a considerable degree of control over the minister himself, including setting his stipend and conditions of work. Through a letter to the Bishop approved by the parish meeting, the Anglican congregation forced the resignation of Rev. Stanley due to a rupture – details unspecified in the archives – in his relationship with the parishioners in 1872. Vestry Minute Book, 1872-1886, 3 July 1872, Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Port Chalmers): Records (MS-2300/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
66 Port Chalmers Parish, P19016, Session Minute Book, 1857-1880, held at the Presbyterian Archives and Research Centre, Dunedin.
67 Matheson, Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church, 10-11, 15.
68 Bowman, Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church, 10-11, 15.
69 Extracts from Minutes, 1870-1872, Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Port Chalmers): Records (MS-2300/007), Hocken Collections, University of Otago; Vestry Minute Book, 1872-1886, Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Port Chalmers): Records (MS-2300/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
70 See, for example: Session Minute Book, 267-268; Minutes of Church meetings, 29 January 1875, Port Chalmers Congregational Church: records (AG-141/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
71 The 1872 stone Presbyterian Church cost the congregation about £1000. William Johnstone to James Johnstone (brother), 14 April 1871, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland. Holy Trinity Anglican Church cost £1200 in total and in spite of all its fundraising efforts, the congregation was still trying to secure loans to service its building debt in 1874-75. Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway
impetus for many of the churches’ social activities and promoted sociability. Bazaars,
soirees, tea meetings, picnics, balls, concerts, and lectures doubled as fundraising events
and social celebrations. Meeting about, planning, and attending such initiatives brought
people together and helped to galvanize community spirit through the pursuit of a
common goal. Each church, for example, celebrated significant events such as
anniversaries and the inauguration of new ministers. Anniversary celebrations might
include several of the events listed above, and often drew attendances from adherents
and clergy of other Port Chalmers denominations keen to share in the festivities with
their neighbours, as well as visitors living further afield. Collections, entrance fees or
the sale of goods gathered funds. About 200 people from Port Chalmers, Dunedin, and
the surrounding districts sat down for tea to celebrate the anniversary of the Port
Chalmers Wesleyan Church in January 1871. The Trinity Church choir from Dunedin
sang, and the Wesleyan minister Rev. Bull, the Port Chalmers Congregational Church
minister Rev. Smith, Rev. Johnstone, and other visitors addressed the attendees. The
treasurer presented the financial report showing a debt of £78, which, he told the
audience, he hoped the proceeds of the evening’s collection would help liquidate.72

The meeting and planning aspects of fundraising ventures may have only
involved small groups, but the events themselves sometimes drew attendances far in
excess of regular numbers at divine services for each individual congregation. At the
1874 anniversary soiree for the Congregational Church, the ladies of the church served
dinner to 200-250 people, although the Census just over two months later counted only
153.73 In 1871 the Anglican Church recorded that an average of seventy-five people
attended morning service and 125 attended evening service.74 A social gathering
connected with the Anglican congregation in August 1870 drew a crowd of about 350 to
the Masonic Hall, some of whom had to be turned away for lack of accommodation.
Attendees listened to addresses by the Anglican minister T.L. Stanley, Rev. Johnstone,
and the Wesleyan minister Rev. Bunn, interspersed with musical items performed by

72 ODT, 5 January 1871, 3. See also: ODT, 17 August 1864, 4; ODT, 26 March 1868, 4; OW, 5 September
1868, 11; ODT, 22 March 1870, 2; ODT, 25 October 1871, 2; ODT, 20 November 1871, 1; ODT, 18
January 1872, 2; ODT, 10 April 1875, 10.
73 OW, 10 January 1874, 7.
74 Vestry Minute Book, 19 January 1872.
members of the congregation. All the while “tables groaned” under the weight of the “good things provided by the ladies.”

“The ladies” provided invaluable catering and organizational assistance at church social events. The religious infrastructure of Port Chalmers, like that of southern Dunedin discussed in Stenhouse’s work, “owed a great deal to female philanthropy.” A Wesleyan bazaar in 1864, for example, raised £166.13.8, equivalent to over $20,000 in today’s terms, towards the building fund, the minister’s house, and the Sunday school. Bazaars exhibited the craft talents of women in Port Chalmers. An 1871 bazaar in aid of the Anglican Church building fund transformed the Masonic Hall into what the ODT described as “quite a fairy-like scene.” Inside the reporter found five stalls attended by two or three local women each, including Mrs Dench, wife of publican and current mayor Henry Dench; Mrs Mansford, wife of the former Resident Magistrate; Mrs Downes, wife of the Anglican lay reader; and Mrs Erridge, wife of constable Joseph Erridge. Offerings at the stalls included woollen goods, toys, art works, artificial flowers, and “all the temperate condiments of the season.” Women, however, seldom played official roles in the management of church affairs during this period, and the organization of important family religious events such as baptisms remained predominantly in the father’s domain.

Some fundraising events combined education with entertainment and sociability. Colonial churches were also important sites of opinion-sharing and knowledge-making. Lectures provided opportunities for people to come together and share ideas. In 1864 colonists paid a small entrance fee to hear Congregational minister Rev. Fraser speak on topics such as “Wit” and “Russia and Poland,” with proceeds contributing to the Congregational Church building fund. About one hundred people came to the...
Masonic Hall in 1873 to hear the Bishop of Dunedin speak on “The True Position of the Church of England” in aid of the Anglican Church building fund.\textsuperscript{83} Other social and educational events occurred outside of fundraising efforts. Small prayer meetings, for example, directly combined religious practice and sociability. These meetings, often held in private homes, provided opportunities outside of Sunday services for colonists to bond over their religious beliefs.\textsuperscript{84} Others provided opportunities for leisure, entertainment, and friendly competition. Anglican ladies gathered at the residence of Mrs Carvossa Allan for a parochial sewing meeting, and organized a spelling bee and concert in conjunction with the men of the congregation in 1875.\textsuperscript{85}

Congregations also established Sunday schools for children, extending church roles as agents of knowledge and idea-sharing. Sunday schools were largely organized and taught by lay members of the congregation, and as a shared project with broad benefits constituted perhaps the “most popular link between the churches and the wider community.”\textsuperscript{86} Gender divisions were less apparent in the running of Sunday schools. In 1871, for example, the Anglican Sunday school boasted an average attendance of thirteen teachers, seven of whom were women.\textsuperscript{87} During the 1860s over half of the school-age population of Otago and Southland were enrolled in Sunday schools and about 75\% of those enrolled attended on an average Sunday. This indicates that many parents who did not attend church themselves still sent their children to Sunday school, and that claims about “secular New Zealand” have largely disregarded children.\textsuperscript{88} In 1869 the Port Chalmers Wesleyan Sunday school roll boasted eighty-eight scholars, with an average of fifty attending each week. The Anglican Sunday school reported an average of seventy-nine scholars attending each week during 1871. In 1874 the Congregational Sunday school reported an average weekly attendance of eighty to ninety scholars, with more than one hundred on the roll.\textsuperscript{89} Sunday schools provided both

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{ODT}, 23 July 1873, 1; \textit{OW}, 2 August 1873, 16.
\textsuperscript{84} William Johnstone to James Johnstone, 21 June 1862, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland; Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1870-1890, Methodist Church of Otago/Southland: Records (AG-640-052-002/001). Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
\textsuperscript{85} \textit{ODT}, 1 February 1875, 2; Vestry Minute Book, 26 October 1875.
\textsuperscript{86} Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 340.
\textsuperscript{87} Vestry Minute Book, 19 January 1872.
\textsuperscript{88} Clarke, “‘Tinged with Christian Sentiment,’” 107; Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 345.
\textsuperscript{89} Vestry Minute Book, 19 January 1872. The Congregational school also claimed an average of 80 children attending weekly in 1866: \textit{OW}, 17 March 1866, 11; \textit{OW}, 10 January 1874, 7. The Wesleyan school recorded the total number of scholars on its roll for 1863-1869: 80 (1863), 108 (1864), 107 (1865), 98 (1866), 101 (1867), 93 (1868), 88 (1869); and average attendance for 1865-1869: 50 (1865), 57
education and social opportunities for children. Entertainments such as picnics and concerts promoted sociability through leisure. In December 1872 the four denominational Sunday schools combined for a picnic. Having met at their respective churches in the morning, eighty-one Presbyterians, sixty-nine Wesleyans, eighty-one Congregationalists, and 118 Anglicans – 349 children in total, representing 85% of the population between the ages of five and fifteen living at the port in 1874 – marched to the picnic grounds in Sawyers Bay where they were treated to refreshments and an afternoon of enjoyment. Despite a mid-afternoon thunderstorm, the children’s sports and games were “kept up until late in the day.”

Such events required the voluntary assistance of parents and teachers, which helped to entangle them in church nets of sociability. Although the number of children attending this picnic probably represents a very high estimate of the number usually attending Sunday school classes, it nonetheless suggests a remarkably high level of connection with the port’s Sunday schools and associated churches.

The Port Chalmers Wesleyan Sunday school served the educational needs of the wider Wesleyan community through its library. By October 1869 the library allowed congregation members to borrow from a selection of 348 volumes for a monthly subscription of six pence. Children and their parents had made over 620 withdrawals during the previous eighteen months. No records of the titles available remain, but the range would probably have been much narrower than that offered by the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute. David Keen has noted that Sunday school libraries catered at the very least to students and teachers, and that many school libraries initially struggled to find an appropriate catalogue of books that both interested readers and conveyed the desirable moral paradigm. “Light but moral tales” that featured characters and experiences with whom children could identify proved more popular than “improving

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(1866), 52 (1867), 50 (1868), 50 (1869). Teachers’ meeting minutes (Port Chalmers), 26 September 1866, 28 October 1869, Methodist Church of Otago/Southland: Records (AG-640-052-007/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago. Records for Presbyterian Sunday schools do not begin until 1878.

90 ODT, 18 January 1872, 2. For other similar events, see: OW, 26 Feb 1870, 14; OW, 31 December 1870, 14; ODT, 4 December 1871, 2; ODT, 26 February 1875, 2. For the number of children living in the port see: Results of a Census of the Colony of New Zealand… 1874, 149.

91 Ballantyne has noted that Sunday school libraries made important contributions to the development of local intellectual life in Otago, see: “Thinking Local,” 141-142.

92 Teachers’ meeting minutes (Port Chalmers), 28 October 1869. Chapter three contains a more detailed discussion of the relationship between education, knowledge and community formation.
reading” titles such as *Galilee in the Time of Christ*. Through a combination of educational and social opportunities they provided to children and the community service they provided through their libraries, Sunday schools were important community foci.

**Ecumenism, practical Christianity, and interdenominational fluidity**

Cohesion and cooperation characterized church life in Port Chalmers. Distinctions between and within Protestant denominations familiar from Britain seldom manifested in prejudiced actions or attitudes in the port. In 1871 Johnstone wrote of his disappointment about the failure to reunify the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. “They are fighting for nothing,” he lamented:

Their conduct in opposing union we can’t understand out here at all. The Presbyterian Church here is composed of all classes of Presbyterians and they seem to work well. They are merged into one at once on setting foot on our shores.

Clergymen led by example in promoting ecumenical Christian fellowship. Acknowledging the need for all churches to work together in the voluntarist, mobile colonial environment, the ministers of the Port Chalmers churches supported efforts to extend Christianity in the port beyond their own denominations. They frequently attended and addressed meetings of other denominations and emphasized the unity of the Christian church. Before an Anglican gathering in 1870, Johnstone and the Wesleyan Rev. Bull expressed “the hope that unity would ever exist between the several Churches, as all were striving for the same end – the glory of God.” Johnstone added that he “looked forward to the time, which he believed was not far distant, when the services of the Churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland, would be performed in unity on one platform.”

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93 Popular titles at the Pukerau Presbyterian Sunday school library included “light but moral tales” such as *Andy’s Friends, Elsie’s Footprints, and Olive’s Story*. Most Sunday school libraries would also have stocked a selection of Christian periodicals. Keen, 182-184, 186-187.

94 Ibid, 9.

95 William Johnstone to James Johnstone (brother), 4 August 1871, Letters from William Johnstone to his family in Scotland.

96 See, for example: *ODT*, 17 August 1864, 4; *OW*, 17 March 1866, 11; *ODT*, 22 March 1870, 2; *ODT*, 5 January 1871, 3; *ODT*, 7 February 1874, 2; *ODT*, 14 February 1874, 2, 4; *ODT*, 23 February 1875, 2; *ODT*, 10 April 1875, 10.

97 *ODT*, 25 August 1870, 3.
the anniversary soiree of the Congregational Church in 1874. Roseby argued that “by adopting the common basis of love and loyal allegiance to the Lord Christ” the different denominations might overcome the issues that divided them, and that earnest efforts to prosecute Christ’s work would inevitably lead to “harmony and a fusion of interests.”

Separation from the religious politics of home allowed some colonial clergymen to contemplate a more unified Christianity.

Many colonists came to the New World with some desire for a more religiously tolerant society, although it is unlikely that migrants left their homes in Britain solely for religious reasons. The voyage out could nurture ecumenism for Protestant colonists: observing each other’s services generated interest and sometimes respect amongst some Presbyterians and Anglicans. The lack of evidence of overt sectarian or inter-denominational conflict in Port Chalmers during this period supports Stenhouse’s argument that many “ordinary New Zealanders” probably viewed avoiding quarrels over religion as a “practical expression of Christianity,” which allowed their society as a whole to get on with the important business of building cohesive families and communities. Port Chalmers Congregational Church deacons John Joyce and Andrew Thomson articulated similar sentiments in a letter to the ODT in 1866. The deacons expressed admiration for their pastor T.S. Forsaith’s “Christian forbearance” in a dispute over his ministerial training with the Presbyterian Church, and their “desire to emulate his charity and forbearance, and be kindly affectionate to our Christian brethren of other denominations.”

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98 OWT. 10 January 1874, 7. See also: Minutes of Church meetings, 29 January 1875.
99 Pike, 51.
100 Others reacted with bemusement and sometimes even disdain. However, denominational differences amongst varieties of Protestantism seldom evoked prejudice or intolerant behaviour on board ship and most issues flared along the Catholic-Protestant divide. David Hastings has suggested that English migrants considered Irish Catholics “savages” while Irish Catholics despised the English with equal fervour. For Presbyterians and Anglicans, the contrasts between different Protestant denominational services overshadowed variations in beliefs and forms of worship within their denominations. David Hastings, Over the Mountains of the Sea: Life on the Migrant Ships 1870-1885, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006), 112-113, 116-119; McCarthy, Scottishness and Irishness in New Zealand since 1840, 119-125; Angela McCarthy, Irish Migrants in New Zealand, 1840-1937: 'The Desired Haven', (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2005), 111.
101 Stenhouse, “God, the devil and gender,” 341.
102 Forsaith had been a candidate for Presbyterian ministry, but had withdrawn after a misunderstanding over the requirements of his training had left him with the impression that he had been dismissed by the Probationers Committee of the Synod. After withdrawing he took up the position as minister of the Port Chalmers Congregational Church in 1865. His case had been recorded in the Synod proceedings published in the ODT, although the newspaper had not published correspondence between Forsaith and the Probationers Committee that the Synod had considered. In their letter the deacons expressed support for their minister’s actions and highlighted the missing evidence from the published Synod proceedings. ODT, 19 January 1866, 5; ODT, 2 February 1866, 5.
A small population with high religious diversity left little room for religious segregation in colonists’ everyday lives at the port. Men of different denominations socialized together at lodges and the Mechanics’ Institute. Many men worked with others who attended different churches to their own. Robert Borlase, a Roman Catholic, built the Holy Trinity Anglican church in 1874. Borlase also completed the extensions to the Presbyterian church in 1883 in partnership with Congregationalist Robert Bauchop.\textsuperscript{103} Lay people recognized the same need that their ministers did for denominations to work together to provide basic services and simply to survive in a voluntary environment.\textsuperscript{104} The sharing of buildings, mentioned above, continued into the early 1860s, before public facilities such as the Masonic Hall provided a venue for fledgling congregations of Congregationalists and Anglicans. Wesleyans returned to the Presbyterian church for one of their weekly services while their own church was being renovated in 1863.\textsuperscript{105} Ventures such as Sunday schools, temperance organizations, and the mission to seamen also drew on the cooperation of multiple ministers and lay people.\textsuperscript{106} Lay readers and clergymen changed pulpits in order to help out when required throughout the period.\textsuperscript{107} Colonists also displayed ecumenical tendencies at funerals. A “large concourse of people of all denominations” followed the remains of Rev. Stephen Smith to the Port Chalmers cemetery in 1872.\textsuperscript{108}

However, denominational distinctions retained significance in colonial societies. Kaponga colonists embraced a twofold allegiance both to denomination and the wider community, coveting “the reassurance of familiar traditions and old remembered surroundings” at the same time as a desire for “growing bonds of fellowship with neighbours from different backgrounds.”\textsuperscript{109} Rosalind McClean found that early settlers in Otago maintained and formed kinship and neighbourhood ties beyond their own denomination, but religion strengthened ties for those that shared the same denominational affiliation.\textsuperscript{110} David Keen has argued that denominationalism gradually

\textsuperscript{103} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 63-64.

\textsuperscript{104} Matheson, 40-41.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{ODT}, 9 October 1863, 4.

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{ODT}, 18 January 1872, 2; \textit{ODT}, 30 June 1874, 2.

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Diary of William Johnstone 1863, 31 May 1863, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/002), Hocken Collections, University of Otago; Peter Hercus to William Johnstone, 10 August 1871, Letters from others to William Johnstone, mainly relating to religious matters, Rev. William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/013), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.}

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{OW}, 6 April 1872, 14. See chapter three for more examples.


\textsuperscript{110} McClean, 30-31.
Port Chalmers’ Protestant congregations achieved a healthy synthesis between denominationalism and ecumenism during the 1870s. Years of fundraising and dedication to institution-building had reduced their earlier need to share facilities and other services. However, on-going mobility beyond the small core of settled institution builders meant that the port retained a degree of the “pioneering” feel that promoted ecumenism and kept denominational boundaries open and fluid. Ministers continued to preach the unity of the Christian church both in front of their own congregations and others’, and schisms evident in more conservative and isolated settlements such as Glenore and Gore where one denomination presided alone (or with few alternatives) remained virtually non-existent in the port. Yet in spite of ecumenical sentiment, the retention of some distinct denominational characteristics and interests aided community cohesion in Port Chalmers in several ways. Each denomination required its own organizational infrastructure, which promoted opportunities for sociability and enabled more colonists to be directly involved in the running of church affairs. As the next section suggests, the ability to change denomination allowed some parishioners to air

111 Keen, 101.
112 Johnstone’s claim to Presbyterian unity in Otago did not capture the whole story. Mary Stewart describes how conservative Free Church Presbyterian William Macaw, resident of the isolated South Otago parish of Glenore, attacked the increasingly liberal theology of mainstream Free Church Presbyterians in Otago near the end of the nineteenth century. Mary Stewart, “Notes from New Zealand: a window into a settler mind,” (MA Thesis, University of Otago, 2004), 80-85. In 1892 more than fifty people split from the Gore Presbyterian church to found a Congregational Church, following a disagreement over how church extension funds should best be spent. Ballantyne, 151; J.F. McArthur, From the Kirk on the Hill, 1881-1981: a History of the Presbyterian Church in Gore, (Gore: Gore Publishing Co. Ltd, 1981), 39-44. See also: Olssen, 75-76.
113 Some Port Chalmers colonists, particularly Irish Catholics and possibly Scottish Presbyterians, may have found a source of identification and community in strong correlations between denomination and ethnicity. Relatively low numbers of Presbyterian lodge members suggest that church played a more central community role for the Presbyterian congregation than the congregations of the English churches, see chapter three. See also: K.A. Pickens, “Denomination, Nationality and Class in a Nineteenth-Century British Colony: Canterbury, New Zealand,” The Journal of Religious History 15, no.1 (1988): 139-140; Andrew Hinson, “A Hub of Community: The Presbyterian Church in Toronto and its Role Among the City’s Scots,” in Ties of Blood, Kin and Country: Scottish Associational Culture in the Diaspora, ed. Tanja Bueltmann, Andrew Hinson and Graeme Morton. (Guelph: Centre for Scottish Studies, 2009), 120; Arnold, 171.
grievances or dissatisfactions with their own denomination in a way that deferred destructive conflict over moral values.\textsuperscript{114}

**Churches as arbiters of community values: Presbyterian discipline**

Colonial churches performed welfare functions in addition to acting as vehicles for sociability. However, the financial burdens of building congregations from scratch limited their abilities to provide financial relief to the needy.\textsuperscript{115} In lieu of financial assistance, church-driven welfare efforts usually focused on the spiritual and moral welfare of parishioners.\textsuperscript{116} Initiatives such as temperance societies, though fledgling in Port Chalmers during the period 1860-1875, sought to promote the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Both clergy and lay people from different denominations worked together to publicly discourage the types of alcohol consumption that they believed threatened family and community life (discussed in more detail in chapter four). Port Chalmers clergy and lay people also participated in debates about the sanctity of the Sabbath. The running of trains and steamers on Sundays, for example, aroused competing interests in the port.\textsuperscript{117} In the view of ministers and lay leaders in the

\textsuperscript{114} I have not conducted a systematic study of Port Chalmers colonists who moved denominations, but archives reveal evidence of interdenominational fluidity in the port worthy of further investigation and comparison with other colonial settlements. Marriage and burial registers along with local and family histories could help to build a picture of interdenominational fluidity that would provide useful insights into the strength of denominational affiliation and how religion worked in colonial communities like Port Chalmers. Reasons for changing denomination could include: church discipline or the threat of it (see below); marriage (especially due to the port’s large number of Anglican bachelors. See: McClean, 27-28; Pickens, 133-137); and doctrinal reasons (see: Session Minute Book, 47-48, 58-61). Prominent Wesleyan laymen such as magistrate T.A. Mansford and customs officer J.R. Monson played leading roles in the establishment of the Anglican congregation and the erection of Holy Trinity Church. Other former Wesleyans who joined the Anglican congregation after 1870 included storekeeper, freemason and Mechanics’ Institute librarian Thomas Brehner, and storekeeper, freemason, and municipal politician Thomas Tayler. John Wesley had originally formulated Methodism as a movement within the Church of England, albeit an evangelical one, so some colonial Anglicans probably found the transition to Wesleyanism relatively simple. In addition, they probably found Wesleyanism better suited to the voluntary environment, and their voluntarist apprenticeship with the Wesleyans would have helped when they came to set up the Anglican Church. Pike, 15, 249; Pickens, 139-140.


\textsuperscript{116} Tennant, 10, 22, 44; Davidson, 68.

\textsuperscript{117} Crowds packed the Masonic Hall in December 1864 to watch Robert Spence, master of the steamer *Golden Age*, answer the charge of causing work to be done on a Sunday contrary to harbour regulations. The agent for the *Golden Age* offered a special half-price fare to transport people “favourable to religious liberty” from Dunedin to watch the proceedings. The defence railed against “attempts to impose upon one class of the community the opinions and conduct of another” in a religiously plural society. Magistrate T.A. Mansford, then a prominent lay member of the Port Chalmers Wesleyan Church, dismissed the case on the grounds that the regulations had exceeded the powers of the Marine Board Act. See: ODT, 23
Presbyterian Church in particular, along with some supporters in the Wesleyan and Congregational Churches, issues such as intemperate alcohol consumption and Sabbath desecration undercut work, worship and Christian liberality towards others. These practices were not simply challenged because they were seen as anti-social, but because colonists generally believed there were strong links between behaviour and spiritual well-being.

The Presbyterian Church attempted to reform society’s moral character through church discipline. Church discipline targeted individuals for transgressions of certain behavioural boundaries usually relating to alcohol, church attendance, inappropriate Sunday activities and pre-marital sex. Presbyterian discipline sought to define and enforce the Church’s moral values through the manifestation of God’s own “goodness and glory.” While the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand’s “Basis of Union” upheld “liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment,” it also reserved the Church’s “supreme and exclusive jurisdiction in matters spiritual over all her office-bearers, congregations, and people.” “Matters spiritual” could be defined widely: the most documented and bitterly-fought case in the 1860-1875 Session minutes concerned an incident in which John Thomson, a long-serving deacon, removed part of a boundary fence and allowed at least one of his cows to graze in the paddock of neighbour George Wilson (a Wesleyan).

December 1864, 5. The Presbyterian Church was particularly interested in preserving the sanctity of the Sabbath. The debates aroused interest from a wide variety of churchgoers and non-churchgoers. Clarke, “A godly rhythm,” 46-59.

118 Matheson, 36; Clarke, “A godly rhythm,” 57-59; ODT 23 June 1864, 5.
119 I was unable to find evidence of discipline regimes amongst the other Port Chalmers denominations. The other evangelical churches – Wesleyans and Congregationalists – probably sought to direct individual and community values through discipline as well, although they still accepted adherents who left or were cast out of the Presbyterian Church (indicating a general desire to keep people within the church community). Anglicans were less concerned with disciplining adherents, favouring a relaxed, practical and inclusive approach to issues such as temperance that maintained church and community cohesion. For a denomination relatively unaccustomed to the voluntary environment inclusiveness was a pressing desire. Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” 344; Davidson, 69-71. Successful publicans George Dodson and Henry Dench both played active roles in the establishment of the Anglican Church in Port Chalmers during the 1870s alongside other roles in municipal politics and associational life. Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 58-59, 185-187; Extracts from Minutes, 15 June 1870; ODT, 12 August 1870, 2. See also: chapter three.
120 Matheson, 37.
121 Matheson, 113; Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 1862, 14-15, in Davidson and Lineham, 104, 106. Otago and Southland Presbyterians actually stayed out of the union and formed their own Synod in 1866 because of fears about the consequences of upholding the “liberty of conscience.” Davidson and Lineham, 106.
122 Thomson’s case generated much activity, including envoys, letters, and Session hearings with witnesses. The Session suspended Thomson from church privileges and the deaconship in August 1872. At this point Thomson left the Presbyterian Church. He joined the Congregational Church in September 1874 after he declared his innocence and desire to be in full Communion: the Presbyterian Church had
Presbyterian Churches in colonial Otago could not impose disciplinary regimes of equal rigour to those at “home” due to the voluntary nature of church participation and the range of alternative denominations on offer. Ministers and officer bearers did not always actively pursue disciplinary matters, but required transgressors to submit themselves to discipline if they desired “church privileges” such as baptism or communion. Port Chalmers Presbyterian records reveal a variety of cases. Some parishioners confessed sins and submitted to discipline so as to regain privileges while others confessed without specifying a motivation, perhaps more out of a combination of piety and guilt. In other cases, the Church actively pursued reported transgressors. Transgressors had to appear before the Session to have their case tried. Many also received a visit from the minister or one of the elders before their hearing, during which the officials assessed the case and the subject’s general attitude.

In colonial settlements that hosted a variety of Christian denominations transgressors had the option of changing denomination rather than submitting to discipline. Clarke’s work shows that in Tokomairiro, where a Presbyterian minister resided without competition until 1878, numbers of discipline cases were much higher than in Dunedin, Port Chalmers, or Tuapeka where a variety of denominations were represented. The arrival of a Methodist minister at Tokomairiro in 1878 probably led to the decline in cases observed in that parish in the 1880s. Andrew Wilson, a blacksmith, appeared before the Port Chalmers Session in 1863 for working on the Sabbath. Unsatisfied with Wilson’s explanation that he performed the work out of necessity, the Session denied his application for baptism for his child. Some weeks later, the minister told the Session that Wilson had obtained baptism from the Wesleyan minister, Rev. Bunn. His name did not appear in Presbyterian records again. The variety of denominations in Port Chalmers gave colonists agency to control their

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122 Matheson, 37. See also: Church, A Guiding Light,” 6-7; Alison Clarke, “Popular piety, the sacraments and Calvinism in Colonial New Zealand,” Paper presented at Calvin Rediscovered conference, (Dunedin: Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, 24 August 2009 – courtesy of the author), 5-6.
123 Alison Clarke analyses the place of the sacraments of baptism and communion in the religion of Otago’s Presbyterian colonists in: “Popular piety,” 1-23. For more on the significance of communion see: Clarke, “‘Days of Heaven on Earth’,” 274-297.
125 Session Minute Book, 69-75; Clarke, “Popular piety,” 5.
religious lives and still remain part of the larger community.\(^{127}\) Whether or not individual Presbyterians cut ties with Wilson and other transgressors came down to personal choices that left no records in the archives. However, when the likes of Wilson left the Presbyterian Church they were not necessarily cut off from their fellow Presbyterians, for whom socializing and working with members of other denominations was an established characteristic of the port’s ecumenical Protestant community.

Some others who refused to repent left organized religious life altogether. In November 1860 Louis Edwards of Upper Harbour East, for example, was suspended from church privileges for acts “wholly inconsistent with [his] profession as [a Member] of this Church,” the specific details of which were not recorded by the Session. By February 1862 he had still not made good, yet he applied to the Session for baptism of his child. The Session denied Edwards’ application and heard no more from him.\(^{128}\) No evidence remains to indicate whether Edwards sought the baptism from another minister, left the district, or simply ceased involvement with the church and resolved to live without the baptism. The Session struck Donald Murray, the highly respected secretary of the Mechanics’ Institute, and his wife off the Communion Roll in December 1873, after the minister spoke to them in June about their regular absence from church. The Murrays appeared unconcerned and vanished from Port Chalmers religious records.\(^{129}\)

Edwards’ case is noteworthy because of his desire to have his child baptized in spite of his unwillingness to be disciplined for his sins. Edwards was not the only person who displayed what, at least from the Session’s point of view, amounted to an inconsistent attitude to the Church.\(^{130}\) The Session suspended Andrew Millar from church privileges in January 1865 after he had consistently been absent from church and seen drunk by the minister. Millar failed to repent, but applied for his child to be baptized three years later. The Session refused “on account of several acts of drunkenness of which he had recently been guilty… [and] until he should give more satisfactory evidence of repentance.”\(^{131}\) The Session refused to admit George Findlay and his wife as members of the Church in late-1864. Findlay, who had a certificate of membership from Dunedin’s First Church, kept the George Hotel in Port Chalmers. The

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\(^{127}\) For more discussion of this agency and its consequences see: Clarke, “Popular piety,” 10.

\(^{128}\) Session Minute Book, 41-42, 45-47, 52-53.

\(^{129}\) Ibid, 249-256; ODT, 30 May 1872, 2.

\(^{130}\) See also: Session Minute Book, 18-21.

\(^{131}\) Session Minute Book, 104-107, 110-111, 170-172.
Session objected to his keeping a bar and “free dancing room,” his opening the bar on the Sabbath, and his failure to attend church services regularly during eighteen months of residence in Port Chalmers.\textsuperscript{132}

Men like Edwards and Millar may have sought baptisms for their children due to anxiety about the fate of their unbaptized infant’s soul in the afterlife and uncertainty over Christian burials for unbaptized infants.\textsuperscript{133} This suggests that the boundaries of the church community were fluid, and cautions against both representing the church community as a homogenous and exclusive group and representing those who transgressed church norms as lacking religion. As the concept of “popular religion” suggests, individual colonists determined their own religious lives and could pick and choose practices and an intensity of relationship with their church that suited them.

Others accepted the mild disciplinary measures handed down to them and fell back into line. Mrs George Taylor told Johnstone in February 1872 that she had been guilty of ante-nuptial fornication. She was duly called before the Session in March. Taylor confessed her sin and Johnstone vouched for her character based on his private meeting with her. After rebuke and admonition, the Session absolved her of her sin and restored full church privileges.\textsuperscript{134} In some cases the Session adopted a sympathetic stance toward those who it believed did not bear full responsibility for their sins. In 1864, the Session granted Mary Coleman, unmarried, baptism for her children. After Johnstone interviewed Coleman, the Session resolved that “Christian sympathy and help should be extended to this person in every possible way as the influences under which she has been brought up are most unfavourable to religion.”\textsuperscript{135} Once again the Session records are frustratingly vague and do not reveal the exact nature of Coleman’s circumstances. While not always in harmony with the tune of “popular religion,” the Session exercised some flexibility in an attempt to extend its doctrinal boundaries to those it deemed most at risk, and in some cases exhibited compassion. Coleman’s case suggests that these decisions drew on gendered assumptions of women’s vulnerability.

The Session opposed the excessive consumption of alcohol without going as far as to declare a policy of total abstinence. In some cases they also opposed alcohol

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid, 104-107.
\textsuperscript{133} Clarke, “Popular piety,” 1-4.
\textsuperscript{134} Session Minute Book, 220-223. See also: case of Matthew Paterson and Janet Dickson, Session Minute Book, 95-99.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid, 83-94.
sales. Clarke has noted that “with hospitality on tap for visiting sailors, alcohol was a
ready temptation,” yet the Session records do not reveal explicit discussion of a link
between the port and instances of drunkenness. The Session dealt with one to two
cases of drunkenness per year. Interestingly, cases did not noticeably increase during the
gold fever of the early 1860s. Church members caught committing acts of intemperance
were called in front of the Session, where they received admonition and rebuke. The
Session also often imposed a three month suspension from church privileges, which
might be extended if the offender did not adequately reform.

Even the supposedly respectable transgressed. William Murray, a deacon,
confessed that he had attended a public dinner in a state of intoxication in September
1870. Murray expressed sorrow before the Session and tendered his resignation of the
deaconship. The Session accepted the resignation and suspended Murray from church
privileges for three months. In 1874 Murray was elected to the deaconship again,
indicating the congregation’s forgiveness of his behaviour. However he tendered his
resignation a second time in August 1875. Once again, Murray confessed to the sin of
drunkenness. His misdemeanour had also been reported by a member of the
congregation. The Session refrained from suspending Murray this time. After “serious
rebuke and solemn admonition” the minister absolved him of his sin. Murray stated that
he would henceforth endeavour to lead a circumspect life. The fact that another
Presbyterian reported Murray’s behaviour demonstrates that some members of the
congregation actively supported the Church’s disciplinary approach, although it is
difficult to know the extent to which reporting a fellow member stemmed from concern
about that person’s behaviour or fulfilment of a pious duty. The Session suspended
Joseph Closs from church privileges after another parishioner reported that he had seen
Closs drunk, swearing, and behaving in a manner “altogether unworthy of one
professing to be a Christian,” suggesting the former explanation. The easy
transmission of information about people’s activities shows that people in Port
Chalmers kept watch over one another, and indicates the existence of strong social
networks within the Presbyterian community.

136 Session Minute Book, 28-29.
137 Clarke, “Popular piety,” 6.
139 Ibid, 181-184. Five years later in 1874, Closs was added to the Communion Roll for the first time,
p.279.
140 See also: Ibid, 30-31, 104-107, 175, 219.
The Port Chalmers Presbyterian Church’s role as a moral policeman should not be overstated. Most troublemakers who drank intemperately and desecrated the Sabbath were beyond the Session’s reach. The Church could only touch its own members, and even then it could only really influence those members who desired church privileges or those possessing a particularly pious or guilty disposition. A significant number of offences probably went undiscovered. In addition, the Port Chalmers Church did not appear to pursue disciplinary action against members who committed serious criminal offences. I have not found any cases in which Presbyterians were disciplined both by the Session and the Resident Magistrate’s Court. No mention of William Reid’s behaviour is recorded either in the Session Minutes or local histories. Reid, headmaster of Port Chalmers School and Presbyterian elder, was punished in the Resident Magistrate’s Court for severely beating his daughter in 1869. It is possible that the Session deemed the £20 fine imposed by the court, the school committee’s report on the incident to the government, Reid’s resignation from the school, and Reid’s own shame (indicated by his absence from the court hearing) adequate punishment.

Conclusion

Presbyterian discipline in Port Chalmers highlights occasional tensions between the “popular religion” of many colonists and the more conservative values of clergy and lay leaders. However, transgressions of church norms and the variety of responses to church discipline do not necessarily represent the erosion of the church community; rather they represent its evolving and contested nature. Overall the responses to

141 McClean, 29-30.
142 However, the Session encouraged John Dodds, carpenter and deacon, to resign his deaconship in 1865 after an incidence of drunkenness and on-going “attacks of insanity.” Dodds complied. The Session maintained an interest in his case. The police arrested Dodds in April 1866 for threatening to kill his wife, and again in June for being of unsound mind. On the latter occasion a deputation of Sergeant Mallard, Resident Magistrate T.A. Mansford, Dr Drysdale, and John Thomson (representing the Presbyterian Church) went to Dodds’ house for the purpose of seeing if he was sane. Dodds locked himself in the house with wife and child and refused admission. Sergeant Mallard arrested Dodds the following morning, and sent him to the Lunatic Asylum. Session Minute Book, 120-121, 127-128; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870, 14 April 1866 (AAWC/D166/21861/2), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1863-1867, 14 April 1866, 25-26 June 1866 (AAWC/D166/21862/12), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.
143 Reid’s name vanishes from the Session records from the time of the offence with no record of even a resignation. Session Minute Book, 54-56; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 26, 31.
144 OW, 22 May 1869, 13.
145 Ibid; Bowman, 157.
disciplinary action indicate the importance of churches as hubs of community in colonial Port Chalmers. Most colonists subjected to discipline sought to retain involvement in the general church community even if they rejected particular clerical values and attempts to control their behaviour.

As key agents of sociability in the port, churches brought together people of varying religious views and commitments through a vibrant institutional culture that fulfilled desires for spirituality, tradition, and social connection. Strengths lay in the voluntary environment and diversity of denominations. Port Chalmers avoided major sectarian or inter-denominational conflict due to the fluidity of denominational boundaries and the ecumenical commitment to working together which arose from the challenges of voluntarism, a small population, and high mobility, as well as the desire to leave the schisms of the Old World behind. Colonists actively sought to cultivate community building forces such as strong churches and an ecumenical church life that encouraged community bonding in an effort to check centrifugal tendencies.

Migration could sever ties of all kinds – family and church being two of the major ones – but it also provided opportunities to form new ones. With regard to churches, it offered the chance to form new ties both within and between denominations. Voluntarism promoted colonists’ agency to make and break, and to nurture and neglect religious ties. Personal testimonies that might provide clear insights into what the churches meant to individual colonists in the port do not exist. On balance, however, the available sources documenting church-related activities indicate that churches exercised a considerable positive social influence in colonial Port Chalmers, and their fundamental role as a community “glue,” even in a highly mobile place, deserves due recognition.

146 Some testimonies for the mission to seamen exist. See: chapter five.
Chapter Three: Mutual aid, knowledge, and conviviality: producing community through voluntary institutions

Institutions, as chapter two showed, connect people and create social bonds through shared experiences. This chapter examines how Port Chalmers colonists formed other voluntary institutions – run by the community for the community, and located somewhere in-between the state and the household – outside of the churches in order to fulfil needs and desires including sociability, leisure, education, and physical and financial security, and as venues through which to negotiate and reinforce norms and values.¹

Miles Fairburn has argued that “survival” pre-occupied New Zealand colonists almost exclusively up until the 1880s. As noted in chapter two, Fairburn argued that colonial voluntary institutions, including churches, were few and weak, and excluded the bulk of the population.² Yet this interpretation fails to account for the developmental trajectories of specific local environments. The development of voluntary institutions did lag behind settlement in Port Chalmers, but only for a brief period. By the mid-1860s the goldrushes had boosted the population to create a core of families and individuals living and working in the port. A busy network of voluntary institutions and related social events emerged around this population base, driven by men prominent in business, civic life, church, and school.

James Belich has argued that the voluntary institutions established by core colonial communities like that at Port Chalmers failed to extend their influence and merely “tightened residential community among those lucky enough to have it.”³ Settled residents drove the formation and management of voluntary institutions in Port Chalmers and provided a necessary measure of continuity, but the benefits of those institutions extended to a wider range of people and helped to forge community bonds amongst mobile colonists as well. This chapter explores the types of voluntary

institutions and associational machinery that emerged in the port between 1860 and 1875, the extent to which they engaged the port’s population, the ways in which they were shaped by mobility, and how they changed over time.

Voluntary institutions in colonial New Zealand and Port Chalmers

Voluntary institutions in colonial New Zealand drew on models developed within Britain’s expanding urban associational culture from the late-eighteenth century onwards. The concept of mutualism emerged amongst the British working and lower-middle classes during the early nineteenth century. Mutualism emphasized egalitarianism, altruism, self-help, independence from the state, and self-improvement through local, democratic community networks as opposed to centralized state institutions. Jonathan Rose has estimated that the proportion of British working men belonging to some sort of mutual society rose from about 25% in 1830 to between 75 and 80% by 1880 as a part of a “vast popular movement of voluntary collectivism.”

Colonists arrived in Port Chalmers with an attachment to mutualism in their cultural baggage. According to Erik Olssen, the migration experience reinforced the importance of mutualism, particularly through the requirement that migrants work together to perform basic domestic functions in conditions of minimal privacy on board ship. Colonists formed and joined voluntary institutions built around the principles of mutualism and influenced by the specificities of their local environments to serve numerous practical purposes. These included provision of places to share knowledge and debate ideas, systems to share financial burdens and risks, and opportunities to share leisure time. In addition, voluntary institutions helped colonists preserve intellectual ties with home. All of these attributes helped migrants smooth their

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7 Olssen, Building the New World, 158-160.
transition to colonial society, develop a democratic culture and build a community in which they felt a sense of belonging and could be assured of help in times of need.\footnote{Tennant, 21; Olssen, \textit{Building the New World}, 42-43, 158-160.}

The \textit{Otago Daily Times} and \textit{Otago Witness} catalogued developments in Dunedin and Port Chalmers brought about by the goldruses. Reports focused on building and infrastructural developments, but they also noted the development of “public spirit,” equated with the formation of voluntary institutions.\footnote{\textit{ODT}, 7 August 1862, 4; \textit{ODT}, 15 August 1862, 4; \textit{ODT}, 18 August 1862, 2.} Port Chalmers offered a steady, slowly expanding programme of associational and entertainment opportunities throughout the period 1860-1875.\footnote{The port never boasted the same range of organizations as Dunedin due to its small population, and some Port Chalmers residents travelled to Dunedin on occasion to enjoy entertainments or participate in institutions not offered in the port. The 1863 \textit{Southern Almanack} catalogued the following in Dunedin: forty-two hotels and restaurants, two Masonic and three Oddfellows lodges, Garrick club, debating society, chess club, jockey club, mechanics’ institute, building and land society, chamber of commerce, three daily and three weekly newspapers. “Province of Otago. Narrative of Events for 1863,” \textit{The Southern Provinces Almanac, Directory & Year Book for 1864}, (Christchurch, 1863), 53-54, quoted in Erik Olssen, \textit{A History of Otago}, (Dunedin: John McIndoe Limited, 1984), 68.} As chapter two demonstrated, Port Chalmers people were adept at meeting, organizing, fundraising, and socializing in an institutional context. Although the port did not have its own newspaper for most of the period, the organization of gatherings ran smoothly with the aid of the town crier, the Dunedin-based papers, and informal networks of news sharing.\footnote{The town crier also helped when events needed to be cancelled: \textit{ODT}, 24 August 1874, 2. See also: Ian Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1994), 34.} Outside of church, school, and the organs of local government and business, Port Chalmers men bonded and laid down frameworks for community as they planned, executed, and debriefed over matters concerning lodges, the Mechanics’ Institute, the cricket club, the regatta, the Naval Volunteers and brass band, temperance societies, charitable collections, entertainments, and public meetings on various local political issues.\footnote{Caroline Daley, “Taradale Meets the Ideal Society and its Enemies,” \textit{NZIH} 25, no. 2 (1991): 133.} Community events did not emerge from a vacuum, and Caroline Daley reminds us that preparation and post-event activities, less likely to be documented in newspapers or other archival sources, were as important as the main event in creating bonds amongst those who participated in the organization of their community through voluntary institutions. As in the churches, “the ladies” often helped with fundraising efforts. Other voluntary institutions also excluded women from membership of their committees and executive offices, if not from membership and routine activities altogether.

Gender issues aside, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the port’s voluntary institutions engaged the community. Few institutions besides churches, the
school, government organizations, and friendly societies left behind archival records. Newspaper sources provide the core evidence for this chapter, but these provide an incomplete picture: not all voluntary institution activities made it into print. This chapter focuses on the contributions to community formation made by voluntary institutions for which there is at least partial membership information: friendly societies and the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute.

Further institutions are discussed elsewhere in the thesis while others have been omitted altogether. Sporting bodies such as the cricket club, Naval Volunteers, and the regatta provided leisure opportunities and entertainment value for both participants and spectators, and influenced formulations of masculinity in Port Chalmers. I have omitted discussion of these organizations for lack of substantial primary evidence. The history of schooling in Port Chalmers is omitted here due to its large scope. Schools provided key sites of sociability and education for the port’s children, and also pulled parents together through committees. Ian Church’s commemorative history of Port Chalmers school charts how the port’s government school developed alongside a number of small private schools from the 1850s until the early-1870s. Local government bodies and the harbour board are also large topics discussed in detail in other histories of the port, and were not “voluntary” in the sense that they worked within the government framework. I have also omitted these institutions because of constraints of space, in spite of their vital importance to community life in Port Chalmers through the provision of infrastructure and a forum for debate. Other institutions appeared as mere flashes in the archival pan, including the choral society, Garrick Club, and Caithness and Sutherland Society. 

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13 On the cricket club, founded 1863 with and attracting up to 40 members, see: Otago Daily Times, 9 November 1863, 4; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 30. On the Port Chalmers Navals, founded 1864, see: ODT, 4 August 1866, 4; ODT, 7 August 1866, 4; ODT, 9 August 1866, 4; ODT, 31 October 1866, 4; ODT, 22 March 1870, 2; ODT, 13 August 1870, 2; ODT, 20 August 1870, 3; OW, 31 December 1870, 14; OW, 22 July 1871, 14; ODT, 10 November 1873, 2; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 32. On the regatta, see: ODT, 25 May 1866, 4; ODT, 2 May 1873, 2; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 30. For a general discussion of sport in colonial society, see: Charlotte Macdonald, “Ways of belonging: sporting spaces in New Zealand history,” in The New Oxford History of New Zealand, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 269-280.

14 Ian Church, The Port school experience: 150 years of public education in Port Chalmers, (Dunedin: Port Chalmers School 150th Anniversary Committee, 2006), 4-11.

15 OW, 6 December 1873, 17; ODT, 2 August 1875, 2; OW, 25 September 1875, 9.
**Friendly societies: building community through conviviality, universal brotherhood and mutual aid**

Friendly societies arrived in Port Chalmers soon after the first gold seeker.\(^{16}\) By the mid-1860s three British orders had established lodges in the port: the Freemasons in 1862, and the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows (M.U.I.O.O.F.) and Ancient Order of Foresters (A.O.F.) in 1864. A temperance lodge of Good Templars (discussed in chapter four) joined the mix in the 1873.\(^{17}\) Men from varied walks of life joined these societies with enthusiasm.

Friendly societies played important roles in the community formation process in Port Chalmers through combining opportunities for convivial social interaction with the provision of basic welfare for members (known to other members of the same order as "brothers") and their families through mutual aid. In effect they promoted “survival” at the same time as providing fellowship. Their generic membership structures allowed them to withstand the challenges posed by mobility. In particular, Port Chalmers Freemasons exploited mobility to their advantage by swelling their numbers with mobile members, therefore extending the social and mutual aid networks enjoyed by Masons in the port. This in turn helped to minimize the potential destabilizing effects of mobility by fostering a sense of attachment among mobile colonists, providing alternatives to socializing in the pub, and bringing mobile colonists within the lodge’s code of respectable behaviour.

Freemasons established the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge in July 1862. Membership expanded quickly from the thirteen men who attended the inaugural meeting in the Royal Hotel.\(^{18}\) By the end of 1864 the lodge had initiated over one hundred new members from Port Chalmers and elsewhere. Some already held memberships of other lodges, demonstrating that men used lodge membership to

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\(^{16}\) Freemasonry had only gained a toehold in Otago prior to the beginning of the rushes. The first lodge was established in Dunedin in 1860, and adopted the English Constitution. Kim Sullivan, “Lessons of the Lodge,” (BA(Hons) dissertation, University of Otago, 2005), 19.

\(^{17}\) H.O. Bowman, *Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago*, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1948), 197-201. I have employed a broad interpretation of “friendly society” to include Freemasonry. Freemasonry is not usually considered a friendly society in the English usage, as it was not strictly a benefit society in which members paid subscriptions into specific funds for sickness relief, incidents, funerals, and widows and orphans. As I note below, Freemasons only paid subscriptions into a general fund. Jenny Carlyon, “New Zealand Friendly Societies, 1842-1941,” (PhD Thesis, University of Auckland, 2001), 14.

\(^{18}\) Minute Book 1862-1875, 14 July 1862, Port Chalmers Marine Lodge No. 942 E.C. Records 1862-1995 (00-237/1), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
cultivate a network of social bonds as they moved through colonial space.\(^{19}\) About one quarter of the initiates were masters or chief officers of ships. Others ranged from carpenters to clerks, and publicans to police sergeants.\(^{20}\) The founding brothers adopted the English Constitution, reflecting how the goldrushes had changed the port’s hitherto Scottish character.\(^{21}\) Over the years members of the English churches predominantly filled the lodge’s ten offices, for which elections were held annually. Of the nine men who held the office of Worshipful Master of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge between 1863 and 1875, for example, three were Congregationalists, two were Anglicans, two were Presbyterians, one belonged to the Wesleyan Church and one was of unknown religious affiliation.\(^{22}\) Alongside the tendency towards ecumenism in church institutional culture, the lodge provided another means of fulfilling needs for sociability and welfare amongst members of smaller churches that lacked the same level of opportunities for social networking that the larger Presbyterian Church provided.\(^{23}\) In addition, for Nonconformists it facilitated access to important community roles denied to them under the Anglican Establishment in England.\(^{24}\)

Many of the lodge’s officers held important positions in the port’s public life. Mayors, borough councillors, town board members, lawyers and justices of the peace, librarians, and publicans all served terms as officers of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge. John Joyce, for example, served three terms as the Worshipful Master of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge. Joyce dedicated his life to institution building. Originally a Cornish fisherman, he arrived in Port Chalmers in 1863 and joined the Water Police as

\(^{19}\) Attempts to establish accurate membership and attendance figures for the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge, along with details of members’ occupations, religion, and ethnicity, are hampered by the loss of the lodge’s attendance register. The incomplete membership and attendance details provided here have been patched together from the minutes of lodge meetings and newspaper reports. Because the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge initiated many men who did not live in Port Chalmers, the number of men initiated is not an accurate guide to how many men living in the port belonged to the lodge.

\(^{20}\) Minute Book 1862-1875, 14 July 1862 – 15 December 1864.

\(^{21}\) On the different national Masonic constitutions see: Sullivan, 15-17. Lodge Cargill Kilwinning, Scottish Constitution, was established in Port Chalmers in 1878. Bowman, 201.

\(^{22}\) They were: Congregationalists: John Joyce (1864, 1865, 1868), Robert Ritchie (1871), and Robert Bauchop (1873); Anglicans: Daniel Rolfe (1867) and Henry Dench (1872); Presbyterians: John Louden (1866, 1875) and Andrew McKinnon (1870); Wesleyan: George Wilson (1869, 1874); and unknown: M.S. Leers (1863). At the 1874 Census, Presbyterians still made up 30% of the population. See: chapter two, table 2.1. Insufficient data on lodge members and their ethnic and religious backgrounds prevents a rigorous assessment of the actual patterns of religious and ethnic membership of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge.

\(^{23}\) Tom Brooking has argued that many Scots Presbyterian migrants to Otago stuck to the church as their social hub. Tom Brooking, “Weaving the Tartan into the Flax: Networks, Identities, and Scottish migration to Nineteenth-Century Otago, New Zealand,” in A Global Clan: Scottish Migrant Networks and Identities since the Eighteenth Century, ed. Angela McCarthy (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), 190-192.

\(^{24}\) Stenhouse, “Religion and Society,” 327-328. See also: chapter two.
sergeant. In 1864 he became clerk of the Resident Magistrate’s Court and trained in the law. He later worked as both a lawyer and Justice of the Peace at the Court. Joyce was also a committee member and office bearer of the Mechanics’ Institute.  

He moved from the Wesleyan congregation to the Congregational Church and became one of that Church’s first deacons in 1866. Joyce remained a pillar of the Congregational Church, but donated money to the Anglican Church in 1875. The prominence of men of high standing in the Port Chalmers lodge and other lodges throughout Otago, including Provincial Superintendents John Hyde Harris and James Macandrew, attracted other men who sought to elevate their status. While an Old World institution itself, Masons saw the lodge as an effective tool for social connections in the New World context.

The Masonic order (and other friendly societies) embraced an intellectual culture that emphasised mutualism, universalism and brotherhood signified by shared craft skills, life-long learning, and self-improvement. Ceremony and secret rituals helped to foster this intellectual culture and a sense of “community and mutual obligation” based on “a code of conduct and morality that mirrored the Victorian notion of respectability.” The Masonic degree structure and the rituals surrounding it promoted

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25 Ian Church, *Some early people and ships of Port Chalmers: c1830-c1990*, (Dunedin: Ian Church, 1990), 390.

26 Vestry Minute Book 1872-1886, 27 April 1875, Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Port Chalmers): Records (MS-2300/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago. Other institution builders who held offices in the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge included, but were not limited to: Daniel Rolfe WM 1867 (legal clerk, first stationmaster Port Chalmers railway station, mayor 1866-68 and 1869-70, parish officer Anglican congregation 1870, member Anglican church committee, member Port Chalmers school committee, member Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, Justice of the Peace) Andrew McKinnon, WM 1870 (deacon Presbyterian Church, borough councillor 1869-1874, mayor 1874-1878, member Otago Harbour Board 1874, member Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge); Henry Dench, WM 1871 (publican Jerusalem Coffee House, member Anglican church building committee 1870, office bearer Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, office bearer Court Robin Hood, mayor 1871-73); Robert Ritchie, WM 1872 (builder, committee member Mechanics’ Institute 1864, deacon Congregational Church); Robert Bauchop, WM 1874 (builder, office bearer Congregational Church, committee member Mechanics’ Institute 1864); George Dodson (publican Port Chalmers and Provincial Hotels, town board member 1865, member Anglican church building committee 1870, member Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge); John Crickmore (publican Royal Hotel, town board member 1863, member Anglican church building committee 1870, office bearer Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, office bearer Court Robin Hood); William Goldie (waterman, deacon Presbyterian Church, member Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge); Thomas Brebner (storekeeper, librarian Mechanics’ Institute, town board member 1863, member Loyal Prince of Wales lodge, member Wesleyan congregation, later Anglican); Thomas Taylor (storekeeper, town board member 1860, mayor 1868-1869); George Wilson WM 1869 and 1874 (butcher, member Court Robin Hood, office bearer Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, 2nd Lieutenant Port Chalmers Navals 1875). “WM” means Worshipful Master of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge. For more names of local government representatives in Port Chalmers, see: Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, 185-190.


universalism: they could be recognised by other members of the brotherhood anywhere, and enabled a lodge member to fit into a new lodge with at least some degree of familiarity wherever he went. Lodge membership, according to Harland-Jacobs, “offered a passport to convivial society, moral and spiritual refinement, material assistance, and social advancement in all parts of the empire.” In the interest of universal brotherhood, lodge rules prohibited political or religious discussions at meetings. This rule was common to nineteenth century British friendly societies as a measure to ensure the lodge’s universal appeal. While the religious component of this rule may not have been so necessary in Port Chalmers it remained part of colonial Masonic culture. The Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master of New Zealand, Scottish Constitution, declared before a Dunedin audience in 1868 that, “Freemasonry offers the only broad platform wherein all men may unite without regard to the narrow limits of particular institutions, whether civil or religious.” The possession of Masonic degrees and knowledge of lodge rituals linked men regardless of their religious, ethnic, or occupational status, and their political leanings, while the content of the rituals served as a constant reminder of lodge’s respectable moral code. The emphasis on brotherhood and the moral code helped to control the behaviour of lodge members: brethren who offended against the law and/or respectable social norms risked bringing their lodge and “brothers” into disrepute, and their own membership into jeopardy.

The Port Chalmers Marine Lodge met at least once a month, often twice, for meetings that lasted two to three hours. After the ritual business closed for the evening, meetings provided opportunities for members to socialize with men from both within and outside of the immediate local community. As noted above, the Port

& Boys: Gender in Taradale 1886-1930. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 154. Port Chalmers Marine Lodge minute books record that the rituals and ceremonies were performed, but reveal little detail about what they actually involved. For a detailed examination of the rituals of friendly societies, see: Carlyon, 107-128.

29 Members could rise from Entered Apprentice (the initiate) to the degree of Fellow Craft and then to Master Mason relatively soon after initiation. Brother Joseph Tuckwell, a forty-year-old government officer at Port Chalmers, became a Master Mason within two months of being initiated. Minute Book 1862-1875, 25 February 1864, 12 May 1864.

30 Harland-Jacobs, Builders of Empire, 1-4, 13. The same argument applies to the other friendly societies. Carlyon, 2-4, 28, 103-107. See also: Sullivan, 15-17; Tennant, 33; Hirst, 94-95.

31 Membership of the Masons was open to all men who professed belief in one God, referred to as the “Grand Architect of the Universe” by Masons. Harland-Jacobs, Builders of Empire, 4-6, 18; Morton, 353.

32 ODT, 5 June 1868, 6.

33 The Port Chalmers Marine Lodge met 58 times between July 1862 and December 1864, not including public engagements. Minute Book 1862-1875, 14 July 1862 – 15 December 1864.

34 Lodge minutes reveal little about what went on during these meetings aside from the performance of rituals, but we can assume that they functioned as social occasions. Carlyon notes that members of other friendly societies played cards, enjoyed entertainments and talks, and engaged in toasting. Carlyon, 120.
Chalmers Freemasons granted membership of their lodge to many captains and chief officers of visiting vessels in pursuit of global brotherhood and recognition of the craft skills relevant to the port. These men often belonged to other lodges. The members of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge therefore demonstrated a desire to increase their own connections and boost Port Chalmers' reputation around the shipping networks of the colony and empire. The maritime men themselves no doubt enjoyed the “passport” Freemasonry provided to fraternity and conviviality in the port. Reporting on the installation of the Worshipful Master for 1875, the ODT noted that the lodge was "crowded by members of the Lodge and visitors, and of the latter many belonged to that class whose business takes them “down to the sea in ships”." The lodge also granted membership to influential men from Dunedin and beyond. Most years the Port Chalmers Masons hosted visitors from a Dunedin lodge for a meeting and accompanying banquet, and in turn were invited as guests to similar events in Dunedin. These convivial occasions, characterised in the newspaper reports by enthusiastic toasting and speec...
cooperation and trust within the brotherhood. The hall proved a useful public asset. Following its completion in December 1863 it accommodated numerous institutions and public entertainments, including churches, other friendly societies, and the Mechanics’ Institute.

Ritual, conviviality, and universal brotherhood also played important roles in Court Robin Hood (A.O.F.) and the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge (M.U.I.O.O.F.). Aside from regular members-only meetings and visits with sister lodges in Dunedin, both societies held convivial social occasions such as soirees, banquets, dances and picnics. These events, sometimes combined affairs between the two orders or sister lodges in Dunedin, drew together brethren and their families and associates. The ODT reported that Port Chalmers was almost deserted – “hardly a family left in it” – on the day of the Oddfellows’ annual picnic in Portobello, 1870. Following the usual toasts and singing, Foresters and their partners danced until daybreak at the 1874 anniversary soiree and ball held at the port. The Port Chalmers Foresters also built the first Foresters Hall in Otago in 1875, which complemented the Masonic Hall as a useful community resource.

Foresters and Oddfellows, however, placed greater emphasis than Freemasons on mutual financial aid. In this sense their lodges (or “Courts,” in Forester nomenclature) were more strictly “friendly societies” than those of their Masonic brothers. These orders proved popular and many men belonged to the Oddfellows or

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40 Minute Book 1862-1875, 17 April 1873.
41 See, for example: ODT, 29 February 1864, 4; ODT, 20 December 1865, 1. See also: Carlyon, 103-104.
42 Like Masonic meetings, these meetings also featured ceremonies pertaining to the varying degrees of membership. Oddfellows met fortnightly, while newspaper reports suggest that Foresters only met quarterly. ODT, 1 June 1867, 4; ODT, 13 July 1868, 4; ODT, 28 July 1869, 2; ODT, 18 October 1869, 2; ODT, 22 March 1870, 2; ODT, 31 March 1871, 2; ODT, 2 March 1872, 2; ODT, 20 September 1873, 2; ODT, 3 February 1875, 2.
43 Minute Book of Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, No. 5254, MUOOF, Port Chalmers, July 3rd 1867, 4 December 1867, 18 December 1867, 27 January 1868 (MS-1113, collection number – collection not catalogued). Hocken Collections, University of Otago; ODT, 26 December 1868, 2; ODT, 10 November 1869, 2; ODT, 22 March 1870, 2; ODT, 27 December 1871, 2; OW, 8 March 1873, 15; ODT, 14 November 1874, 17; ODT, 10 November 1875, 2.
44 ODT, 27 December 1870, 2.
45 ODT, 18 March 1874, 2.
46 ODT, 10 November 1875, 2; ODT, 1 April 1876, 2.
47 As I outline below, Foresters and Oddfellows paid subscriptions into specific funds for sickness relief, incidents, funerals, and widows and orphans. On the contrary, Port Chalmers Marine Lodge members paid their annual subscriptions into a general fund. Any Master Mason belonging to the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge could present a petition for charitable funds and the by-laws empowered the lodge to grant up to ten pounds in response. However the infrequent use of the fund in the period up to 1875 suggests that the lodge’s primary purpose remained fostering fraternity through ritual and ceremony. In some cases of need the lodge initiated collections amongst its members rather than using the general fund. Money from the general fund not paid out to members was reserved for community charitable projects, although
For the Chalmers, as well as the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge. Several men stood out as members of all three: publicans John Crickmore and Henry Dench both held official positions in the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge, Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, and Court Robin Hood (though neither joined the All Nations Lodge of Good Templars), signifying the centrality of publicans in Port Chalmers’ social life and another potential reason why Presbyterian men appear under-represented in the lodges. Available sources suggest that at least eighty-six men joined the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge from its formation up until July 1873. Court Robin Hood claimed ninety-eight members in 1873 and 130 members in April 1876.

While some Port Chalmers colonists probably hoped to establish a “world without welfare” in their adoptive home, cases of need inevitably arose both within and beyond their community and colonists were torn between rejection and replication of Old World welfare frameworks. During this period neither provincial nor central governments provided financial aid to needy citizens. The demographic upheaval initiated by the goldrushes challenged traditional welfare configurations based around family, neighbours, and church. Efforts to help people in need indicated a degree of affluence in Port Chalmers, an altruistic willingness on behalf of the contributors to see

scant details remain about how these funds were spent. The Port Chalmers brethren discussed establishing a Masonic scholarship in 1872-73, but the lodge’s minutes do not indicate that they instituted this plan by the end of 1875. Bye-laws of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge... June 1863, Port Chalmers Marine Lodge No. 942 E.C. Records 1862-1995 (90-237/13), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, 14; Minute Book 1862-1875, 6 August 1863, 17 November 1864, 23 May 1867, 19 September 1867, 6 July 1871. Sullivan has noted the difficulties lodges experienced in establishing benevolence fund in their early years when membership pools were small and lodges were weighed down by expenses such as mortgage payments. Sullivan, 26-27.

48 Minute Book of Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge. As with the Masonic archive, insufficient evidence remains to establish accurate membership figures and trends for Court Robin Hood and the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge. I have used newspaper reports in conjunction with a minute book covering the period 1867-1873 to piece together information about the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge.

49 OW, 8 March 1873, 15; ODT, 1 April 1876, 2. I have not found any archival sources for Court Robin Hood and have relied solely on newspaper reports where Foresters are concerned.


51 Governments did, however, provide other forms of welfare in colonial Otago, including: a hospital for the physically ill, a lunatic asylum for the mentally ill, and work relief on public works for men in the 1870s. Olssen, A History of Otago, 85-89.

52 Olssen, A History of Otago, 87-88.
that those less fortunate were given opportunities to get on, and an admission that as part of a community colonists’ own fortunes were partly bound up with those of others.

Colonists sometimes organized charitable subscriptions targeting specific families left destitute by the untimely death of a breadwinning father and husband. Colonial discourses of welfare deemed widows and orphans colonial society’s “deserving poor,” a gendered concept that distinguished between men as providers and women and children as the objects of charity.53 The initiators of charitable efforts called public meetings and formed committees for the purpose of organizing the collection or a fundraising event.54 In some cases organizers formed committees to manage the spending of the relief money on behalf of the subjects. Attendees at a public meeting in August 1874 elected a committee of eleven men to manage the fund collected for the widow and nine young children of the late Mr Osborne, wharf labourer, which had exceeded £100 within a week of the man’s death.55 While such an approach might indicate an element of paternalism or social control, Margaret Tennant notes that historians’ interpretations of welfare history have increasingly come to acknowledge “altruism and reciprocity as well as social control, and intra-class as well as across-class transfers” that were “grounded in fundamental community impulses and customs.”56 As well as supporting members of the community in need, the process of forming charitable committees and carrying out the work strengthened community ties in Port Chalmers.

Few men, however, could bank on a public subscription being collected in their honour, and the subscription system’s effectiveness lay at the mercy of the community’s means and prejudices. For men who had the ability to pay regular fees and have their good health certified by a doctor, membership of a friendly society provided a structured and dependable way to ensure they could cover living expenses while unable to work because of illness, had money set aside for medical and funeral expenses, and could provide for their wives and children in the event of their deaths. The practices of both the Oddfellows and Foresters were also informed by British ideals such as self-reliance and independence (from the state). Subscribers paid money into separate funds for sickness relief, incidents, funerals, and widows and orphans. The societies worked on the assumption that not all members would draw on their funds at once.

53 Tennant, 32, 58-59; Thomson, 4.
54 ODT, 1 November 1871, 2; OW, 6 April 1872, 4; ODT, 10 August 1874, 2; ODT, 11 August 1874, 2.
55 ODT, 19 August 1874, 2; ODT, 21 August 1874, 2.
56 Tennant, 14-15.
Friendly societies drew money from these funds to support brothers or families of brothers in need. At the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge meeting on 14 August 1867, for example, Brother John White produced medical certificates for having been unable to work between 2 August and 9 August. He was subsequently reimbursed £1.1.0 by the lodge.\(^57\) Both organizations engaged a local doctor as their in-house surgeon and a local chemist as a supplier of medicine. Each received regular payments for services rendered to brethren.\(^58\) In its first eight years of existence, Court Robin Hood paid out over £1332 to members from its sickness and funeral funds, including over £890 for medicines and doctor’s services, £302 12s 8d for sick pay, and £140 as funeral donations.\(^59\) As mutual aid organizations, these friendly societies played an important role in Port Chalmers’ “mixed economy of welfare.”\(^60\) Their effectiveness increased over time as memberships grew and funds consolidated.

The centrality of friendly society membership to some men’s lives is evidenced by their funerals. Funerals, which might be funded and organised by one or more friendly society, tied the societies’ welfare roles and their role in promoting brotherhood and community together. Shops closed and 160 residents of Port Chalmers braved the rain to accompany the remains of James Stumbles, contractor, Freemason, Forester, Good Templar, and member of the Wesleyan congregation, to the Port Chalmers cemetery on Friday 21 November 1873. Members of the funeral procession included the ministers of the port’s four Protestant churches (Rev. Aldred of the Wesleyan Church officiating), thirty-eight Foresters in regalia, twenty Good Templars in regalia, and a number of Freemasons. The procession indicated not only “the high esteem in which [Stumbles] was held by his fellow townsmen,” but also the degree of social bonding and status that friendly society membership promoted.\(^61\)

Ships’ flags flew at half-mast and 200 to 300 people followed the remains of Alfred Smith, killed while labouring on the railway pier, from Holy Trinity Church to the Port Chalmers cemetery in 1875. Yet during his ten years or so in the port Smith, a thirty-seven-year-old native of Holland who had arrived in Otago via Melbourne, lived humbly as a bachelor in a local boarding house. He had no relations or property in the

\(^57\) Minute Book of Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, 14 August 1867.
\(^58\) See, for example: Minute Book of Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, 28 August 1867, 11 September 1867, 11 March 1868.
\(^59\) ODT, 2 March 1872, 2.
\(^60\) Labrum, “The changing meanings and practices of welfare,” 391.
\(^61\) ODT, 22 November 1873, 2.
colony. Why then did Smith’s passing attract “one of the longest funeral cortege ever seen at the Port”? Smith had been a member of the Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, and served a term as its Grand Master. Members of the lodge turned out in force to farewell their brother. Smith had been a member of the Naval Volunteers since its inception, and was also a member of the Anglican congregation. Smith’s story demonstrates how men lacking blood ties and high social status through occupation could become “liked and respected far and wide” in a colonial community through membership of voluntary institutions such as friendly societies, alongside other aspects of colonial life such as work, church, and pub.

Women constituted a glaring exclusion from the lodges, aside from when they were the objects of their benevolence. Harland-Jacobs has suggested that in settlements without significant gender imbalance, lodges could reinforce societal norms of confining women to the private domestic sphere and function as a kind of masculine refuge where men could escape women’s presence. Caroline Daley has argued that lodges were important sites of masculine leisure, “run by men, for men,” in contrast to the churches. In addition, they helped men to fulfil traditional roles of providing for wife and family from beyond the grave, thus reinforcing women’s dependence. The popularity of lodges in colonial Port Chalmers, therefore, stemmed from their ability to provide opportunities to enjoy homosocial conviviality whilst maintaining respectability at the same time. As sites of masculine leisure they functioned much like a pub (discussed in chapter four), but without the associations with disreputable practices such as drinking and gambling. They also helped men to ensure a secure future for themselves and their wives and children, thus fulfilling their respectable masculine role as a provider.

62 ODT, 4 November 1875, 2; ODT, 5 November 1875, 3; ODT, 8 November 1875, 2.
63 ODT, 8 November 1875, 2.
64 ODT, 4 November 1875, 2.
65 Daley, Girls & Women, Men & Boys, 152.
66 Harland-Jacobs, 15-17.
67 Friendly societies excluded some men as well. Applicants for membership had to succeed at the ballot before they were accepted into any of the Port Chalmers orders. Each society rejected a handful of men during the period, although it is unclear why in each case. The Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge rejected William Fail, waterman and a leading member of the Port Chalmers Foresters, in 1867. Minute Book of Loyal Prince of Wales Lodge, 17 July 1867. Harland-Jacobs has argued that Masonic lodges increasingly became the preserve of white Protestant men by the later nineteenth century in spite of their traditional commitment to universalism, while Jenny Carlyn has suggested that friendly societies were largely cross-class institutions that divided society on the basis of race and gender rather than class. Harland-Jacobs, 6; Carlyn, 16-19. The lack of membership details for each society makes it difficult to discern trends in the memberships and whether or not certain groups were excluded. The Port Chalmers Marine Lodge initiated George Grey Taiaroa, a resident of the Māori kaik at the Heads, in 1874. Minute Book
Debates about the effectiveness of colonial friendly societies remain in New Zealand historiography. David Thomson has argued that nineteenth century friendly societies were financially unsound, lacked long-term vision, and failed to attract significant membership levels across the colony due to mobility and the ideology of independence.\(^\text{68}\) However, as Carlyon argues, Thomson’s emphasis on national aggregates and generalizations obscures the vitality of individual lodges.\(^\text{69}\) Even if colony-wide membership was small and the societies faced the risk of financial collapse if too many members required support at once, most did not collapse. Most provided positive social and financial benefits to members and their families in specific places like Port Chalmers. While their exact membership in Port Chalmers is difficult to pinpoint, other evidence suggests that the port’s friendly societies played an important role in community formation, not least because of their ability to withstand the challenges posed by high mobility. Their activities fostered sociability and leadership amongst men in Port Chalmers and indicate many colonists’ acknowledgement that colonial life had risks that required co-operative solutions.\(^\text{70}\)

**Producing community through the pursuit of knowledge: the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute and Athenaeum**

Founded by some of the port’s leading men at the height of the gold-induced boom in 1864, the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute enjoyed successes throughout the 1860s. However by the early 1870s the Institute had fallen on financial hard times as interest in its services appeared to wane. In this section I discuss how the Mechanics’ Institute promoted community formation through education and sociability, and through an examination of the Institute’s financial struggles in the 1870s explore the challenges high mobility posed to institution building in the colonial port.

Mechanics’ institutes might be described as friendly societies that focused on knowledge.\(^\text{71}\) Originating in Britain in the 1820s and soon spreading around the empire

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\(^{1862-1875,\ 29\ \text{October}\ 1874.\ I\ \text{found}\ \text{no}\ \text{further}\ \text{evidence}\ \text{of}\ \text{non}}-\text{European}\ \text{membership}\ \text{of}\ \text{the}\ \text{Port}\ \text{Chalmers}\ \text{friendly}\ \text{societies.}\ \text{Catholic}\ \text{men}\ \text{would}\ \text{have}\ \text{been}\ \text{unlikely}\ \text{to}\ \text{join}\ \text{the}\ \text{Freemasons,}\ \text{a}\ \text{group}\ \text{the}\ \text{Pope}\ \text{openly}\ \text{opposed.}\ \text{Harland-Jacobs,}\ 4-6.}\)

\(^{68}\) Thomson, 38-39, 46, 50-51; Tennant, 33.

\(^{69}\) Carlyon, 23-24.

\(^{70}\) Tennant, 36.

and America, their founders aimed to facilitate the pursuit of “useful knowledge,” which included science and technology, history and philosophy, and sometimes religion and politics. They also aimed to enable multiple voices to be raised in public discussion, and develop the skills of analysis and argument, both spoken and written, amongst those who typically missed out on more than the most basic education – namely members of the working class. Alongside promoting sociability this was their key contribution to community formation: equipping men (and sometimes women) with the skills to participate in debates about values that shaped communities, as well as training in the democratic management of community affairs.\textsuperscript{72} However, like friendly societies, they also attracted members of the middle classes and men working in white collar jobs often sat on their administrative bodies. In contrast to the friendly societies, some encouraged the participation and membership of women, suggesting that membership of a mechanics’ institute and the pursuit of “useful knowledge” carried a moral connotation less focused on the man’s role as provider than friendly society membership.\textsuperscript{73} The Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute did not admit women members during this period, but women could attend its events at the invitation of a member.

Mechanics’ institutes and the concept of “useful knowledge” embraced the same principles of universalism and mutualism, coupled with independence, self-help, sobriety, and hard work championed by the friendly societies.\textsuperscript{74} For a small annual subscription, members gained access to a lending library stocked with a selection of newspapers, periodicals, and non-fiction books on both technical and philosophical topics, reading and meeting rooms in which to enjoy the works on offer and debate their merits with other members, evening classes, and events such as public lectures. Mechanics’ institutes sometimes functioned as umbrella organizations under which smaller groups dedicated to intellectual pursuits such as chess and debating might function. In the spirit of universalism, some mechanics’ institutes avoided stocking


\textsuperscript{73} On the “moral effects” of self-study, see: Rose, 62.

\textsuperscript{74} Keane, “Useful Knowledge and Morality,” 27.
books or hosting lectures on politically or religiously sensitive topics. Others, however, served as a nursery for the development of political consciousness amongst their members.

Most scholarship on mechanics’ institutes uses the records of the institutes themselves, supplemented with the reminiscences of members where possible, to document their philosophies, memberships, services, library catalogues, and, in some cases, internal struggles between members of the middle class and “mechanics” who sought to retain control of an institution they claimed as their own. Sadly, no such records exist for Port Chalmers. Little is known about the members and their characteristics, the reading material available, and whether or not the Institute offered remedial education classes. This also prevents us from knowing the extent to which religion and politics featured in the Institute’s offerings, although lecture titles (discussed below) suggest an absence of overt and controversial religious and political material. Along with minor details of annual meetings and fundraising events conveyed in the newspapers, newspaper reports about the lectures presented to the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute enable us to form a fragmented picture of the Institute’s workings.

Attendees at a “numerously and respectably attended” meeting held in George Dodson’s Provincial Hotel on Monday 4 May 1864 elected office bearers and a committee to guide their new institute through its first year. T.A. Mansford took the president’s chair and customs officer Joseph Tuckwell was elected vice-president. John Monson filled the treasurer’s role and J. Brownhill of the Port Chalmers branch of the Bank of Otago became secretary. Committee members included Town Board clerk John S. Fleming, chemist Reuben Toms, merchant James C. Mallach, ODT reporter Alexander Reid, John Joyce, and Thomas Tayler. Waterman William Simpson and builders Robert Bauchop and Robert Ritchie represented “mechanics” on the committee. Seven of the thirteen original executive members belonged to the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge in 1864 and one other would join in the future. Joyce was the

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78 An 1865 debate on the separation of the North and South Islands may have been an exception, although we do not have detailed proceedings of the debate: *OW*, 21 July 1865, 11.
79 *ODT*, 6 May 1864, 4.
current Worshipful Master and two others would later hold that office. Tayler would serve as mayor between 1866 and 1869.\textsuperscript{80} Many played prominent roles in their local church congregations. Monson (who later served as president) and the Institute’s first librarian, Thomas Brebner, had arrived in Port Chalmers on the first ships in 1848.\textsuperscript{81}

These men, predominantly non-manual workers, formed part of the settled core that provided the backbone of Port Chalmers’ institutional life. Their extensive connections gave them the influence and pool of support needed to maintain a venture like the Mechanics’ Institute in a small, mobile community. Historians have often blamed the failures of British mechanics’ institutes on the alienation of working class members due to paternalism and social control by middle class executives.\textsuperscript{82} More recent historians have noted how mechanics’ institutes helped to foster co-operation and mutually beneficial relationships between the middle classes and working classes.\textsuperscript{83} Class distinctions probably carried less weight in colonial Port Chalmers than in Britain.\textsuperscript{84} While the educational needs of those in “middle class” occupations might have differed from those who performed manual work, their social needs were similar in the small, new settlement. The Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute was as much about sociability from the outset as it was about education, knowledge, and improvement.\textsuperscript{85} Mechanics’ institutes also played an important moral role equally relevant to the likes of professional men, merchants, and employers as it was to “mechanics.” Superintendent Macandrew articulated this purpose at the laying of the foundation stone for the Dunedin Mechanics’ Institute and Athenaeum, when he implored his hope that the institute would “elevate the tone of public feeling to something beyond thoughts of the mere acquisition of wealth.”\textsuperscript{86}

Having secured a building site and a grant of £300 from the Provincial Government the Mechanics’ Institute opened its library on 3 November 1864. Storekeeper Thomas Brebner worked as the librarian until 1883.\textsuperscript{87} By 1867 the library circulated 1411 books in addition to newspapers, periodicals and reviews. This total

\textsuperscript{80} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 185-190.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Ibid}, 16.
\textsuperscript{82} Royle, “Mechanics’ Institutes and the Working Classes,” 306.
\textsuperscript{83} Iwama, 18.
\textsuperscript{84} Olssen argues that inequalities of wealth in colonial New Zealand were small in comparison with Australia and the United States of America, and virtually non-existent in Caversham: Olssen, \textit{Building the New World}, 158.
\textsuperscript{85} David Verran, “New Zealand Mechanics’ Institutes and their effect on public library development,” \textit{Aplis} 18, no.3 (September 2005): 113.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{ODT}, 10 November 1869, 2.
\textsuperscript{87} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 30.
rose to 2814 the following year.\textsuperscript{88} Books included works of history, biography, poetry, and fiction.\textsuperscript{89} While fiction did not fit with the spirit of the original mechanics’ institutes, it seems that the Port Chalmers Institute observed, like many others, that the public demanded it, and that the availability of fictional literature helped to attract and provide wholesome amusement for sections of the population that might otherwise seek entertainment in pubs and, thus, cause trouble.\textsuperscript{90} The library initially opened every evening except Saturday between 6.30pm and 9.30pm. By 1874 it opened daily between 7pm and 9pm and admitted seamen free of charge.\textsuperscript{91}

The Institute’s lectures proved popular attractions. Major Richardson, Provincial Superintendent and an evangelical Anglican, delivered the inaugural lecture to a crowd of members and the general public in the Masonic Hall on Saturday 21 May 1864. Richardson lauded “the great advantages to be derived from such Institutions,” and offered encouragement to those lacking in formal education through “illustrations of distinguished men who had by dint of pluck and perseverance raised themselves from low estate to occupy proud position of benefactors of their species.” The \textit{ODT} praised Richardson’s ability to entertain his audience with “facetious anecdotes admirably told and skilfully applied” as well as to present carefully researched information of a serious nature.\textsuperscript{92} This aligned with the trend amongst popular intellectual institutions whereby the best lectures combined education and improvement with entertainment.\textsuperscript{93}

The \textit{ODT} and \textit{Otago Witness} recorded that the Mechanics’ Institute offered at least forty-six lectures by thirty-three lecturers up to 1875. All lecturers were men and most came from Dunedin. Six clergymen presented lectures. Topics fell into general categories of travel, science, history, religion, and social commentary, and ranged from the relatively esoteric (such as H.C. Gilbert’s lecture on “Our Estate,” which “compared the physical nature of man to a house of which the mind was a tenant,” and J.S. Webb’s lecture on “Solar Physics”) to the practical and everyday (for example, Rev. James Maxwell’s lecture on “Advertisements,” and the lecture on “Family and School Education” by John Hislop, inspector of schools).\textsuperscript{94} Scientific lectures combined intellectual concepts with explanations and demonstrations based on observable

\textsuperscript{88} \textit{ODT}, 29 May 1868, 4.  
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{ODT}, 13 November 1865, 4.  
\textsuperscript{90} Kraus, 115, 118-119.  
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{ODT}, 31 August 1866, 4.  
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{ODT}, 23 May 1864, 5.  
\textsuperscript{93} Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 143.  
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{ODT}, 19 May 1870, 2; \textit{ODT}, 1 September 1870, 2; \textit{ODT} 9 September 1870, 2; \textit{ODT}, 29 Aug 1871, 2.
phenomena. Dr O’Donoghue’s lecture on “Chemistry” introduced the audience, which included many ladies, to “carbonic acid gas” through reference to aerated water, and to oxygen through the familiar trick of extinguishing a candle by covering it with a jar.95 On almost all occasions, excepting instances of particularly inclement weather, the newspapers reported good attendance, often describing the Institute’s rooms as “crowded.” Members accessed lectures free of charge and membership conveyed the right to introduce another, including masters of vessels and ladies, to the event at no cost. Non-members paid a single shilling to attend.96

Newspapers noted other occasional activities hosted by the Mechanics’ Institute. During the course of fortnightly lectures in 1867 the Institute hosted popular “penny readings” on alternate weeks, at which members of the community read aloud from their favourite volumes.97 In 1865 members founded a debating society and the ODT reported on a spirited debate on the topic of “Separation” of the North and South Islands of New Zealand.98 Events which focused on member participation provided opportunities for members to practice articulating their ideas and highlight, as Ballantyne argues, the importance of speaking skills in the colonial public sphere.99 The Institute also hosted social events to raise funds. Rifle matches were popular.100 In 1865 the executive organized a benefit concert for the Institute featuring the talents of more than thirty amateur performers from amongst the community. The performers rehearsed frequently before the event and, according to the ODT, entertained “a larger assemblage than had met on any similar occasion in the Port,” with a performance that exhibited “musical taste and talent which would have done credit to much more numerous communities.” Performers included prominent community figures such as harbourmaster Captain Thomson, publican George Dodson, builder Robert Bauchop, and chemist William Elder.101

95 ODT, 17 October 1867, 4.
96 ODT, 31 August 1866, 4.
97 ODT, 10 October 1867, 4.
98 OW, 21 July 1865, 11. The group did not last, however. In 1868 lecturer John Bathgate (lecturing on “Our duty as colonists”) urged members of the Institute to form a debating society. ODT, 13 August 1868, 2.
99 Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 149.
100 ODT, 22 April 1867, 1; OW, 15 January 1870, 14.
101 ODT, 13 November 1865, 4. For other entertainments see: ODT, 29 May 1868, 4; ODT, 26 February 1870, 2.
Ballantyne’s recent work on Gore identifies strong links between knowledge, sociability and community formation in colonial societies.\textsuperscript{102} Ballantyne’s work suggests that forging community bonds and a new culture through the pursuit of knowledge was an important accompaniment, and indeed a compliment, to “survival.” The exchange of popular scientific knowledge was especially important to the likes of farmers, for example, whose success depended on coming to terms with growing crops and raising livestock in an unfamiliar environment.\textsuperscript{103} What did the Mechanics’ Institute contribute to the formation of community in colonial Port Chalmers? Firstly, little information exists to tell us about who belonged to the Institute. A membership certificate issued to Dr Urquhart on 6 May 1864 bore the number 43, suggesting membership grew rapidly at the beginning.\textsuperscript{104} The \textit{ODT} noted ninety-five full subscribing members in 1868, with additional – but unquantified – mobile members such as ships’ masters paying half-yearly or quarterly subscriptions.\textsuperscript{105} That figure increased only slightly to 110 by 1874. It is likely, however, that a larger number borrowed books from the library using a family member’s account, a practice undocumented in Port Chalmers but noted elsewhere.\textsuperscript{106} In addition, non-members could attend lectures or the reading room for a small fee and in some cases the Institute waived fees for ladies and captains of vessels introduced by a member.

Secondly, we lack the sources to construct a “history of audiences” for the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute.\textsuperscript{107} As noted above, we know little about how users received the Institute’s offerings: about reading and borrowing habits, responses to lectures, and participation in remedial education classes and/or debates and discussion groups. Did the Mechanics’ Institute provide educational and social elevation for some? Did it empower members and foster democratic principles and practices? It surely did, but it is difficult to quantify the extent, especially with regard to ordinary members.\textsuperscript{108}

As shown above, a high proportion of the men who held official positions in the

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\textsuperscript{104}Bowman, 196.

\textsuperscript{105}\textit{ODT}, 29 May 1868, 4.


\textsuperscript{107}Rose, 2-11.

\textsuperscript{108}Olssen argues that commitment to education, self-improvement, and mutuality helped empower Caversham’s journeymen and masters. Olssen, \textit{Building the New World}, 42.
institutions also held official positions in the churches, lodges and local government.\textsuperscript{109} As the passionate debates over opening the Dunedin Athenaeum on Sundays revealed, advocates of mechanics’ institutes and similar organizations elsewhere believed them to be a useful tool in fighting dangerous idleness amongst certain sectors of the population, especially young single men (predominantly seamen and travellers in Port Chalmers).\textsuperscript{110} The Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute admitted seamen to lectures and the library free of charge, but there is little evidence to reveal how many took advantage of the offer.

However, we might reasonably conclude that the Mechanics’ Institute linked colonists in Port Chalmers, mobile or settled, to the wider world by providing access to international debates and ideas.\textsuperscript{111} The opportunity to debate this knowledge would have helped Port Chalmers people to define themselves and their place in the world.\textsuperscript{112} Learning provided opportunities to escape the arduous rhythms of work and home and to contemplate ideas beyond the everyday experience. Events such as lectures and penny readings also provided opportunities to socialize and make connections. The entertainment aspect of lectures ensured that they were convivial occasions. Furthermore, Donald M. Scott has argued that popular lectures were integral in the construction of a “public.” Lectures, covering topics that “transcended sectarian, partisan and social division,” delivered in neutral public spaces, and drawing audiences from all walks of life, created a shared experience for attendees that promoted a sense of unity. As a ceremony, the lecture “brought the public into self-conscious existence.”\textsuperscript{113} Lectures could provide conversation material that need not be confined within the Mechanics’ Institute’s walls. The experience could be shared across lines of occupation, ethnicity, religious denomination, and gender. Besides the churches, the Mechanics’ Institute provided one of the only formal institutions whose benefits women could enjoy alongside men, although still not as full members. Part of the Mechanics’ Institute’s importance to community life in the port lay in its inclusion of a wider demographic than the friendly societies.

\textsuperscript{109} Iwama argues that Mechanics’ Institutes could help to foster democratic principles of openness and transparency. Iwama, 17.
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{ODT}, 13 February 1874, 2; \textit{ODT}, 20 February 1874, 2; \textit{ODT}, 18 April 1874, 2; Kraus, 115.
\textsuperscript{111} Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 143-144; Traue, “Reading as a ‘necessity of life’ on the Tuapeka goldfields in nineteenth-century New Zealand,” 46-47.
\textsuperscript{112} Ballantyne notes how knowledge and words conveyed in speech and writing could knot communities together, but also break them apart through fashioning “difference and distance” and defining who was in and who was out. Ballantyne, “Talking, Listening, Writing, Reading: Communication and Colonisation,” 30.
In spite the successes of the 1860s, the 1872 annual meeting revealed that the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute faced impending insolvency. Unpaid subscriptions accounted for part of the deficit, but the Institute was also losing members and failing to attract new ones. One correspondent to the editor of the \textit{ODT} chastised the “criminal apathy on the part of the [port’s] inhabitants.”\footnote{\textit{ODT}, 13 April 1872, 3.} The editor of the \textit{ODT} blamed residents for lacking interest in the Institute’s long-term prosperity and treating it as they would any other entertainment venue.\footnote{\textit{ODT}, 25 October 1873, 2.}

The mobile nature of Port Chalmers’ population significantly shaped the Institute’s existence.\footnote{Mobility also affected membership patterns and conditions in other organizations in colonial Otago. The Gore Young Men’s Temperance Mutual Improvement Society, for example, adopted coercive tactics in an effort to maintain attendance and membership rates in a mobile environment. Its rules stipulated that any member who missed two consecutive meetings would be struck off the membership roll. Ballantyne, “Thinking Local,” 150.} While it probably destabilized the membership, the \textit{ODT} observed that towns of Port Chalmers’ size would be unable to sustain such an institution without the boost added by the “floating population.”\footnote{\textit{ODT}, 18 April 1874, 2.} The importance of mobile colonists to the Institute’s survival was not lost on its executive members. In order to remain as inclusive as possible they had kept fees low and offered concessions to mobile individuals by way of short-term subscriptions and free-admittance to seamen. Yet this entailed a significant cut in revenue for maintaining full services. While the settled core could ably look after the running of the Institute, it needed to maintain a certain level of regular subscribers and funds in order to maintain the Institute. The Institute had run into trouble by trying to stretch its resources too thinly.

For the executive body of the Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute, the crisis exposed a tension between accommodating the mobile population and consolidating the settled core. The Provincial Government offered the Institute funding through a general tax under the Public Libraries Act, in exchange for the Institute offering a universal free service.\footnote{The Public Libraries Act 1869 enabled local authorities to set up free admission public libraries. Verran, “New Zealand Mechanics’ Institutes and their effect on public library development,” 118.} The executive rejected the offer, citing fear that the tax would generate insufficient income to maintain satisfactory services. This rejection reflected the tightness of the settled core and a dedication to mutualism and small-scale, local democracy. It showed that the executive were reluctant to relinquish the autonomy of the institution they had lovingly built up over the years to the Government, even if it
came at a cost to universalism. This revealed that the Institute meant more to the community than the provision of books, lectures, and reading space. As an organization run by the community for the community it was a source of community pride.

The editor of the ODT maligned the executive’s decision, arguing that the tax would re-ignite interest in the Mechanics’ Institute and avoid a collapse that would leave recently arrived migrants without a venue in which to “renew… old associations of ideas by a glance over the home papers, the Magazines, &c.” However the Institute sought to rebuild itself and the public responded positively to an appeal for funds and new members launched in the ODT. The floating population also contributed, with a minstrel troupe composed of crew members from a visiting vessel staging a public performed to raise funds. Mayor and publican Henry Dench made a generous donation of five guineas in addition to his personal and family subscriptions. The campaign was a success: the appeal revived the Institute and it lived on into the twentieth century.

Conclusion

The Port Chalmers Mechanics’ Institute’s financial struggles reveal the fragility of voluntary institutions in a highly mobile colonial environment. However, I have shown that for the most part colonial Port Chalmers’ core group of institution builders made successful efforts to extend the benefits of the port’s voluntary institutions beyond the settled core to mobile colonists, and that the involvement of the mobile population generally helped to vitalize institutions. Rather than relentlessly chasing independence, colonists in Port Chalmers formed and joined voluntary institutions enthusiastically as a means to preserve what they believed to be useful Old World community mechanisms. Port Chalmers’ friendly societies and the Mechanics’ Institute built community in several ways. They provided both settled and mobile people with tangible benefits in terms of financial welfare, education, and sociability, thereby promoting social improvement and the development of bonds of friendship and mutual obligation. They

119 ODT, 25 October 1873, 2.
120 ODT, 13 April 1872, 3; ODT, 16 April 1872, 1.
121 ODT, 17 April 1872, 2. Dench was elected president of the Mechanics’ Institute soon after. ODT, 30 May 1872, 2.
122 ODT, 30 May 1872, 2; ODT, 22 April 1874, 2; Bowman, 196-197.
attempted to check disruptive potential amongst the mobile population by welcoming mobile colonists into their communities of sociability where possible. As small-scale democracies they provided opportunities to negotiate shared values and develop useful organizational and communication skills that could be applied both within and without institutions. As organizations run by the community for the community they acted as focal points that fostered a shared sense of ownership, responsibility, purpose and identification amongst their members.
Chapter Four: Alcohol, crime and community in colonial Port Chalmers

The Glaswegian ship *Jessie Readman* docked at Port Chalmers on Friday 11 March 1870 after eighty-seven days at sea. Her passengers had enjoyed a relatively uneventful passage until hail squalls and mountainous swells battered their vessel and almost swept the Captain to his death a mere five days before reaching their destination.¹ The twenty-one year-old Walter Scott numbered amongst the eighty-two passengers that disembarked at Port Chalmers at noon that Friday. Upon reaching dry land Scott, a butcher, un-married, and an adherent of the Presbyterian Church, did what countless others did in his situation: he sought comfort and refreshment at the public house.

Scott’s first hours in the colony were far more eventful than he might have ever imagined. After drinking his fill, he and a shipmate took a walk about Port Chalmers town. As they larked together on the corner of George and Mount Streets at about 5pm, Constable Joseph Erridge approached the men and an altercation occurred. Scott later awoke in the lock-up to find himself bruised about the head and legs. On Monday he appeared before the Resident Magistrate’s Court on charges of being drunk and using profane language, and assaulting Constable Erridge on the head with a police baton.² Scott, however, proceeded to lay assault charges of his own against Sergeant Frederick Mallard and Constables Erridge, Michael Sullivan and Samuel Hughes. Scott had little recollection of the events himself, but a witness had advised him of what had happened. This witness and others had raised funds to help Scott – a new arrival completely unknown to the people of Port Chalmers – to prosecute the police for assault.³

The exact facts of Scott’s case are difficult to determine: twenty witnesses (not including the claimant and the defendants) all gave the court slightly different versions of events. The prosecution argued that Constable Erridge wrestled Scott to the ground and hit him with a baton after Scott refused to obey orders to get off the street. Sergeant Mallard entered the fray, the account continued, and delivered blows to Scott’s head and legs with the baton as another officer knelt on his chest. Constables Hughes and Sullivan further assaulted Scott as they assisted Mallard and Erridge to convey Scott to the lock-up.

¹ *ODT*, 9 March 1870, 2; *ODT*, 22 March 1870, 3.
² Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870, 11 March 1870 (AAWC/D166/21861/2), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.
³ *ODT*, 16 March 1870, 2-3.
The prosecution called ten eye-witnesses and the doctor who examined Scott’s injuries, most of whom were residents of Port Chalmers and previously un-acquainted with Scott. George Leyon Asher, town clerk, temperance advocate, Forester, and member of the Wesleyan Church, testified for the prosecution. Mr B.C. Haggit, Provincial Solicitor, called five eye-witnesses for the defence, at least four of whom were residents. A further four witnesses attested to the general good character and conduct of the defendants. T.A. Mansford, Justice of the Peace and former Resident Magistrate, testified that he had never known Sergeant Mallard to use excessive force in the handling of drunkards. John Louden, Chief Pilot, commended Mallard’s characteristically calm handling of shipboard disturbances.⁴

The Bench ultimately upheld the prosecution’s argument that the police had used excessive force. The charges against Erridge and Hughes were dropped, but the Bench sentenced Constable Sullivan to a fine of forty shillings or seven days’ imprisonment for his part. They reprimanded Sergeant Mallard for using excessive violence, but softened his penalty because of his good character. He was sentenced to a fine of £5 or fourteen days’ imprisonment, demoted as Sergeant at Port Chalmers, and later transferred to Tokomairiro, thus ending what had been a successful career in the port.⁵ While this represented some justice for Scott, he still received a sentence of a fine of ten shillings or twenty-four hours’ imprisonment for being drunk and using profane language, and a fine of twenty shillings or forty-eight hours’ imprisonment for assaulting Constable Erridge.⁶

Scott’s case indicates competing values concerning conduct in colonial Port Chalmers. That some residents raised money and testified in court to prosecute the police on behalf of a complete stranger, and a drunken one at that, suggests that Port Chalmers people took an active interest in justice, and were not afraid to challenge police authority when they believed the police had abused their power. Those such as the ex-Resident Magistrate who testified in favour of the police demonstrated that others valued order and the word of those whose reputation they trusted above other considerations, and exhibited little leniency towards those who made the slightest disturbance of the peace. People who arrived in the port would have had different concepts of what constituted lawful and unlawful behaviour, and no doubt some fell

⁴ ODT, 16 March 1870, 2-3; ODT, 17 March 1870, 3.
⁵ ODT, 17 March 1870, 3; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1867-1870, 16 March 1870, 24 March 1870 (AAWC/D166/21862/13), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.
⁶ ODT, 17 March 1870, 3.
foul of the law as a result of misunderstanding. But few shared Scott’s experience with the police baton.

In this chapter I consider the crime-related issues in the port raised by Scott’s case, including: alcohol, violence, the nature of police authority, community perceptions of crime and disorder, and mobility. I discuss the extent of crime in the port, and the factors influencing the rate of crime and the sorts of crimes committed. I demonstrate that in spite of high mobility and alcohol use, widespread disorder, “rowdyism,” and serious offending did not characterize colonial Port Chalmers’ social pattern. I also outline how alcohol acted as a central agent of sociability in the port, and how popular responses to problem drinking created opportunities for sociability in Port Chalmers. These helped to mitigate criminal behaviour and galvanise community formation processes such as the identification of common values and social boundaries.

Crime, community, and colonial societies

Crime, as defined in this chapter, consists of particular acts that legislators and the agents of law enforcement – the police and judiciary – deem to transgress social norms and disturb society’s peace and security. These acts have been legislated against by specific laws and/or subjected to repeated condemnation in the courts. As a result, they have been made the business of the police and courts to control through detection, apprehension, and punishment of offenders. I examined the Port Chalmers police force’s “Watch-House Charge Book” and “Diary of Duty and Occurrences” for 1862, 1866, 1870 and 1874 to gather data about arrests made, punishments served, and the demographic characteristics of those arrested. I used the Diary and newspaper reports

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7 Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1861-1863, (AAWC/D166/2861/1), Archives NZ Dunedin; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870, (AAWC/D166/21861/2), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1870-1877, (AAWC D166 21861 3), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1861-1863, (AAWC/D166/21862/11), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1863-1867, (AAWC/D166/21862/12), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1867-1870, (AAWC/D166/21862/13), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1870-1873, (AAWC/D166/21862/14), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1873-1875, (AAWC/D166/21862/15), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin. Subsequent references to the Watch-House Charge Book take the form: “Charge Book [years], [date of entry].” Subsequent references to the Diary of Duty and Occurrences take the form: “Diary [years], [date of entry].” Commissioner St. John Branigan introduced the “Watch-House Charge Book” to Otago police stations in late-1861 as part of reforms based on the policing system imported from the Australian colony of Victoria. The police recorded information about all arrested persons in the
of court proceedings to add qualitative insights about offences committed and policing methods. In this chapter rates of “crime” refer to the rate of arrests made. The courts dismissed some cases without conviction, but the police recorded punishments with less precision. As Scott’s case shows, there could be a gap between the law enforcer’s perceptions of crime and the views held by the wider community. I have focused on the law enforcer’s perspective due to the sources available, although I have tried to illustrate values expressed by the wider community wherever possible. A fuller account of the limitations of my methodology can be found in appendix one, in which I discuss post-structuralist approaches to the history of crime and the difficulties of teasing out the values that shaped attitudes to conduct in Port Chalmers. The bold stance adopted by members of the community in support of Scott, however, appears to have been unusual. Overt challenges to police authority in the port were infrequent, and restricted to attempts to resist arrest or rescue a mate from custody by men who were usually intoxicated. While more investigation is needed, it seems that law enforcement values broadly reflected the values of the wider port community.

Crime forms a major part of the evidentiary foundation of Miles Fairburn’s thesis of an “atomized” New Zealand. Fairburn (in conjunction with Stephen Haslett)

Charge Book, details of the offence committed, and the disciplinary measures taken (although the latter were recorded more haphazardly). By 1866 the police recorded the offender’s age, occupation, country of origin, religious affiliation and level of education in addition to their name and offence in the Charge Book. In the “Diary of Duty and Occurrences,” another measure introduced by Branigan in late-1861, the Sergeant recorded the daily activities of all the officers. The Diary played a role in the disciplining of the force along Victorian lines. Branigan, according to Richard Hill, believed that “[s]urveillance by police over population could best be secured through panoptic surveillance by superior police ranks over their subordinates.” Richard S. Hill, Policing the Colonial Frontier: The Theory and Practice of Coercive Social and Racial Control in New Zealand, 1767-1867, part 2 (Wellington: Historical Publications Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1986), 560-567.

8 The post-structural interpretation of crime deems it to be purely a social construct, and therefore views the measurement and qualitative assessment of crime based on official sources (such as police and court records, and, to an extent, newspapers) as misleading, given that it reveals little about the values behind the laws, law enforcement, and the criminals themselves. The scope of this chapter prevented me from conducting a wider study of sources that would allow a deeper understanding of the values and contexts that shaped law-making, law-enforcement and crime. On aspects of the post-structuralist reading of crime, see: Christopher Waldrep, Roots of Disorder: Criminal Justice in the American South, 1817-80, (USA: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 4; Fairburn and Haslett, “Violent Crime in Old and New Societies,” 93-94; Miles Fairburn and Stephen Haslett, “Did Wellington Province from the 1850s to 1930 Have a Distinctive Social Pattern?” in The Making of Wellington 1800-1914, ed. David Hamer and Roberta Nicholls (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1990, 255-283), 266.


10 Fairburn’s interpretation is also based on official crime statistics, although his analysis deals with rates of convictions rather than arrests. Miles Fairburn, The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1989), 206-225; Miles
argued that the colonists’ separation from kin, coupled with colonial New Zealand’s poor communications infrastructure, highly mobile population, and relatively undeveloped associational culture led to heavy drinking, which in turn led to violence. In lieu of informal social measures with which to resolve disputes and the pressure to conform to particular social norms, colonial society tolerated high levels of violence. It follows that where there were a high number of “outsiders” – or highly transient and therefore atomized individuals, in Fairburn’s terms – the crime rate should have been high, and that where the crime rate was high there was a high proportion of “outsiders.” Given the availability of alcohol for mobile seamen and travellers, looking at alcohol, mobility and crime in Port Chalmers helps to “place” debates about colonial crime and community. This chapter challenges Fairburn’s suggestion that crime was rife in colonial society and the circular argument that labels crime both a product of and contributor to a lack of community marked by mobility.

Scott’s case demonstrates how the correlation of “outsider” with mobile individual could be complicated in a colonial port town. Upon his arrest Scott was an unattached new arrival, an “outsider” by common sense definition. But members of the Port Chalmers community supported him as his case provided them with a vehicle through which to articulate a particular set of values – including the right to be treated fairly and without violence by the police – that they felt had been undermined by police actions. We need to look harder at the sorts of crimes committed, and who committed crimes and why. The definition of who was “in” and who was “out,” negotiated in part through the experience of crime, conflict and shame, was a complex and important part of the community formation process. Scott’s case and evidence presented in the previous chapters suggest that in a mobile place like Port Chalmers, settled residents

12 See also: Sandra Walklate, “Crime and Community: Fear or Trust?” _The British Journal of Sociology_ 49, no. 4 (Dec 1998): 555-557, 563-564. Authorities and the press also blamed crime in colonial Otago on “outsiders”: beginning with the Australian “criminal classes” around the time of the gold discoveries; followed by Chinese labourers; and, in the 1870s, working class migrants from the poor suburbs of Britain’s industrial cities. Hill, _Policing the Colonial Frontier_, part 2, 492, 562-563, 592-594, 617, 625; _ODT_, 9 June 1870, 3; _OW_, 4 July 1874, 17-18.
13 Fairburn also noted, however, that mobility could help to restrain crime by stopping disputes from elevating and making organized crime untenable. _The Ideal Society and its Enemies_, 236-240.
accepted mobile colonists readily. The explanatory power of the correlation between mobility and the definition of “outsiders” is therefore weakened in this context.

**Crimes and their perpetrators in colonial Port Chalmers**

Local police, Justices of the Peace and Resident Magistrates were kept busy surveilling, apprehending, trying, and punishing people who transgressed the law at the port. Yet the rate of arrests must be interpreted with the large mobile population in mind (recall tables 1.2 and 1.3 from the chapter one). For example, the Port Chalmers police made 372 arrests in 1862. The nearest available population figures for Port Chalmers town were 390 people in December 1861 and 939 in December 1864, which make the crime rate appear extremely high. However, accounting for the passengers and crew of the 385 vessels that arrived in the port from overseas, the passengers and crew that arrived on coasting vessels, and the people who boarded ships bound for other ports during the year results in a figure of about 50,000 people who passed through the port. The movement of such high volumes of people in a small space makes the figure of 372 arrests seem much more modest.

The extent of crime in Port Chalmers fluctuated during the period in question (see table 4.1). The 1862 figures reflect the heady days of the Otago goldrushes, while the high numbers of arrests in 1874 partially reflect the new wave of immigration into Otago. Both years saw increased movement of people in and out of the port and increased fear of the social ills these flows of people might bring, which probably led to a rise in police surveillance. Relative quiet reigned in the intervening years of 1866 and 1870. Arrests for alcohol-related offences and offences specific to seamen dominated the Port Chalmers figures each year (see tables 4.1 and 4.2). Aside from drunkenness, other offences identified by Fairburn as being particularly symptomatic of “atomization” – violence, theft and vagrancy – constituted only a small proportion of the charges laid. There was a very low incidence of serious violent crimes. The sole murder trial in the port during the period related to an assault at sea and resulted in a

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16 See: table 1.2, chapter one.
verdict of manslaughter. Drunken behaviour was by far the most common offence committed by seamen and non-seamen alike, accounting for 43% of the total arrests during the period. The police often arrested seamen, who on average committed about half of the drunkenness offences. However many of the offences committed by seamen happened on board ship and caused little disruption in the town (see chapter five). Table 4.3 illustrates the proportion of crimes committed by seamen in comparison with non-seamen. On average, arrests on seamen constituted 64% of the arrests made at Port Chalmers, in contrast to a colony-wide prison population whose proportion of seamen dropped from 21% in 1862 to 13% in 1870, and a colony-wide workforce of which seamen made up only 2.6% in 1874.

Table 4.1. Total arrests made by offence for four years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>Offence total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness and violence</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness and seamen's offences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence at sea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen's offences</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year total</strong></td>
<td>372</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>1090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Charge Book 1870-1877, 3 October 1874.
18 For prison populations, see: Statistics of New Zealand 1862, table 60; Statistics of New Zealand 1866, table 60; Statistics of New Zealand 1870, table 69. For seamen as proportion of the colony-wide workforce, see: Results of a Census of New Zealand: taken for the night of the 1st of March, 1874, (Wellington: George Didsbury, 1875), Table VII, 151-152; Table IX, 157. I subtracted those classified as non-workers (including wives and widows, children, persons of property or rank, and persons supported by the community, including criminals) out of the total population of the colony to get the total figure for the colony-wide workforce (124,354). I arrived at the number of seamen by adding together the figures for “Ship master, officer, sailor (merchant service),” “Engineer, stoker, &c, of steamer,” and “Ship servant, steward, stewardess” (3221).
19 These figures are for arrests made, not for individual persons arrested. For example I counted those who were arrested on two different occasions twice. The “crimes” listed in the table are classified by their common names, not by the legislation they were prosecuted under. Therefore crimes such as indecent exposure and obscene language (prosecuted under the Vagrancy Act) are categorized as “other.” Prosecutions of habitual drunkards under the Vagrancy Act are categorized as “drunkenness” and “alcohol-related.” “Drunkenness” includes: drunk, drunk and disorderly behaviour, and drunk and incapable of looking after one’s self. “Other” includes (but not limited to): obscene language, indecent exposure, allowing stock to wander in the public street, mental illness, no visible lawful means of support, vagrancy, and stowing away on a vessel. “Seamen’s offences” refer to offences against the Merchant Shipping Act, discussed in chapter five. Source: Charge Book 1861-1863; Charge Book 1863-1870; Charge Book 1870-1877.
Table 4.2. Arrests by proportion according to type of offence\textsuperscript{20}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol-related</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen's offences</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence-related</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3. Arrests made on seamen and non-seamen according to offence\textsuperscript{21}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness and violence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness and seamen's offences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence at sea</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen's offences</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seamen</th>
<th>Non-s</th>
<th>Seamen</th>
<th>Non-s</th>
<th>Seamen</th>
<th>Non-s</th>
<th>Seamen</th>
<th>Non-s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 illustrate some of the characteristics of non-seamen and seamen arrested. The two groups differed in age, ethnicity and religious affiliation. Most arrests on seamen involved men aged in their twenties whereas non-seamen offenders tended to be spread more evenly between the ages of twenty and fifty. Given that men did not tend to marry until their late-twenties or early-thirties, this indicates that a significant proportion of offenders were bachelors, as Fairburn’s work would suggest.\textsuperscript{22} The proportion of arrests made on Irish people was higher among non-seamen than among seamen, and correspondingly the number of arrests made on Catholics was higher.\textsuperscript{23} The 31% average proportion of arrests made of Catholic non-

\textsuperscript{20} These percentages total in excess of 100% because in deriving the percentages from the figures provided in table 4.1 I counted arrests for “drunkenness and violence” as both “alcohol-related” and “violence-related.” Source: \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{21} Figures for 1862 are missing because the 1862 Charge Book did not record occupations. Source: \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{22} Fairburn, \textit{The Ideal Society and its Enemies}, 131.

\textsuperscript{23} Not all Irish were Catholics and not all Catholics were Irish. However, the two were very closely correlated. While we lack precise figures it is safe to say that the majority of Irish were Catholics and the majority of Catholics were Irish. \textit{Results of a Census of New Zealand… 1874}, 72, 96.
seamen meant they were over-represented in Port Chalmers crime statistics, given that they only constituted 7% of the Port Chalmers town population at the 1874 Census. However, as I noted above, using figures for the settled population of Port Chalmers town alone as a reference is problematic due to the high number of individuals flowing in and out of the port at all times: there is no straightforward way of determining the proportion of non-seamen (or seamen, for that matter) arrested who were actually long-term residents of the town. We also have no way of reconstructing the ethnic and religious composition of the floating population. The education levels of seamen and non-seamen arrested were relatively similar, with 79% and 78% respectively professing to be capable of both reading and writing. However this fell below the levels for Otago (95% fully literate), Dunedin (96% fully literate), and Port Chalmers itself (93% fully literate) recorded at the 1874 Census. The only stand-out occupational designation amongst non-seamen was “labourer,” although this was unsurprising due to that term’s

24 Ibid, 72. Further research is needed to determine which of the following possible factors (or combination of factors) caused the disproportionately high rate of arrests on Irish and Catholics in Port Chalmers: a higher proportion of Irish colonists amongst the mobile population; a predisposition towards drunkenness amongst the Irish; a lack of social bonds amongst Irish colonists; or prejudices against Irish/Catholics as a minority (including stereotypes of Irish as drunkards) that may have made Irish colonists targets for police. What does seem likely is that police targeted recidivist offenders such as Irish Catholics Thomas Griffen Green and Bridget Penny. Whether or not their ethnicity was a major influence on their offending, their multiple arrests helped to drive up the proportions of arrests on Irish and Catholics at the port. Given the small size of the Port Chalmers data sample, it is possible that the disproportionate number of arrests on Irish/Catholics can be explained by the criminality of a few individuals. On Irish drinking patterns, see: Richard Stivers, *Hair of the Dog: Irish Drinking and its American Stereotype*, Revised ed. (New York: Continuum, 2000), 10, 30, 60–69, 78–94; Elizabeth Malcolm, “The catholic church and the Irish temperance movement, 1838–1901,” *Irish Historical Studies* 23, no. 89 (1982): 9. On the idea that the Irish were the most “atomized” ethnic group in colonial New Zealand, see: Fairburn and Haslett, “Violent Crime in Old and New Societies,” 104–105; Fairburn, *Ideal Society and its Enemies*, 211. Insufficient evidence exists to test the extent to which Fairburn and Haslett’s findings apply to Irish men at Port Chalmers, and therefore the extent to which we can attribute arrests for Irish drinking to an atomized condition that exacerbated ingrained drinking habits. Irish females actually outnumbered Irish males in the port at the 1874 Census, but we do not know the extent to which this indicates that they were married to each other. *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 96. On anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment in Otago, see: Olsson, *A History of Otago*, 74–75. However, as noted below, there is little evidence to suggest this prejudice operated on policemen at the port. On stereotypes of Irish drinking expressed by Irish colonists in New Zealand, see: Angela McCarthy, *Irish Migrants in New Zealand, 1840-1937: ‘The Desired Haven’*, (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2005), 10, 30–31; Cathy O’Shea-Miles, “Irishtown Hamilton East 1864–1940,” in *The Irish in New Zealand: Historical Contexts and Perspectives*, ed. Brad Patterson (Wellington: Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies, 2002), 141–142; Greg Ryan, “An undertaking worthy only of fanatics: Catholic opinion on temperance and prohibition in New Zealand, c.1870-1910,” *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies* 10, (2010): 20. On American stereotypes of Irish drinking, see: Stivers, *Hair of the Dog*, 136-137. 25 *Results of a Census of New Zealand... 1874*, 195, 199. These figures excluded Māori and Chinese, and children below the age of 15.
applicability to a variety of work situations. Of the myriad “other” occupations of arrested non-seamen, almost all involved manual work.

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26 Ian Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” in Work ’n’ Pastimes: 150 years of pain and pleasure, labour and leisure, ed. Norma J. Bethune (Proceedings of the 1998 Conference of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists held at the University of Otago, Dunedin, 10th-13th April 1998), 211.
Table 4.4. Characteristics of non-seamen offenders (including women)\textsuperscript{27}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>Average total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teens</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20s</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30s</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40s</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50s</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>37.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31.00%</td>
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\textsuperscript{27} The police changed their method of recording religious affiliation in 1874 and so I have not included it to avoid confusion. However I would be happy to supply details of religious affiliation for 1874 to anybody who is interested. I can also supply more specific information on the ethnicities of those categorized as “North American,” “Other European” and “Other,” and on the occupations of those categorized as “Other.” Source: Charge Book 1861-1863; Charge Book 1863-1870; Charge Book 1870-1877.
Ninety-seven per cent of those arrested in Port Chalmers during the four sample years were men. The small proportion of arrests made on women, amounting to thirty-six arrests in total, was made on an even smaller proportion of the female population.

Source: Ibid.
due to a substantial rate of recidivism amongst women offenders. Beyond suggesting that offending by females was rare, such a small sample size renders it difficult to generalize about women’s crime and female offenders in colonial Port Chalmers. Police also recorded women’s marital status and occupations inconsistently. Where occupations were listed they were usually domestic service roles. Women offenders were less likely to be fully literate and more likely to be Irish Catholics than male offenders. The majority of arrests were made for alcohol-related offences, followed by offences relating to destitution and mental illness. The number of arrests of women as a proportion of the total arrests made in the port increased over the sample period, peaking at 5% in 1874. However, it remained well below the proportion of women imprisoned throughout the colony (20% of the prison population in 1870), suggesting either that the rate of women’s crime in the port was relatively low in Port Chalmers, or perhaps that the behaviour of seamen and the largely male floating population (recall table 1.3 from chapter one) occupied the attention of the Port Chalmers police.

Little evidence of prostitution at Port Chalmers emerged during my research. Charlotte Macdonald and Heather Lucas have both noted that colonial police often used vagrancy or alcohol-related charges to suppress women engaged in prostitution. Prostitution itself was not a crime, which creates difficulties for deducing the prevalence of prostitution from crime statistics. The 1874 Watch-House Charge Book recorded the occupations of four drunk and disorderly women as “prostitute.” Three were fully literate and one could read but not write. Two were Irish Catholics and two were English Protestants. Three of the women appeared to be regular residents of Dunedin rather than Port Chalmers, and Lucas has suggested that prostitutes who fell foul of the law in Dunedin often took refuge in the port. Lucas’ work on prostitution in 1880s Dunedin argued that police often acted as protectors or supervisors of prostitutes until


30 Statistics of New Zealand 1862, table 60; Statistics of New Zealand 1866, table 60; Statistics of New Zealand 1870, table 69.

31 “Soliciting, indecent exposure, living off the proceeds [of prostitution], and having insufficient means of support” were illegal, however. Macdonald, “Crime and Punishment in New Zealand,” 13; Lucas, “Square Girls,” 95. Lucas explains that: “The women convicted under the Vagrant Act were probably actually soliciting, but an act of solicitation was difficult to prove, and few people were prepared to come forward with the evidence.”

32 Charge Book 1870-1877, 9 April 1874, 18 May 1874, 14 October 1874; ODT, 14 April 1874, 3; ODT, 15 April 1874, 2; ODT, 22 May 1875, 2; ODT, 23 October 1875, 5; Lucas, 46.
they became disorderly. In the port context, with its floating population largely composed of unattached men, it is possible that the police, if not simply too busy with other matters, exercised even greater leniency in their dealings was prostitutes in the hope that their services would help to minimize disorderly behaviour amongst the men.

Broadly speaking then, “criminals” at Port Chalmers were generally young men, mostly English and Anglican but with a significant minority of Irish Catholics out of proportion to the population of the port itself, predominantly manual workers, and possessing below average levels of literacy. Having established this portrait of the offences committed at Port Chalmers and the people who committed them I will explore the issues surrounding drunkenness, the crime most commonly committed at the port, and the community responses to what some began to conceive of as an important social problem.

Alcohol-related crimes in Port Chalmers

Out of 1,090 arrests made in Port Chalmers during the four sample years 501 (46%) were for alcohol-related offences. Greg Ryan has estimated a rate of 25-30% for the colony during the final third of the nineteenth century, which makes the Port Chalmers rate relatively high. Alcohol, its relationship to crime, and its relationship to social organization as a whole, has stimulated considerable discussion amongst New Zealand historians. Fairburn and Jock Phillips have both portrayed alcohol and the pub as agents of much-desired social connection in a frontier society lacking social bonds, but couple this with a negative portrayal of drink and drinking culture as a force of disorder. Excessive drinking and violence flourished, Fairburn argued, in a society where few informal social obligations acted to restrain men’s excesses. Phillips’ work examined colonial drinking practices – particularly the “spree” and “shouting” – in

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33 Lucas, 92, 97-99.
34 Greg Ryan, “Drink and the Historians: Sober reflections on alcohol in New Zealand, 1840-1914,” NZIH 44, no. 1 (2010): 35. Ryan’s figure is for convictions for drunkenness while my figure is for arrests for all alcohol-related offences. Although the vast majority of alcohol-related arrests in Port Chalmers were simply for “drunkenness” and the conviction rate was high, the two figures are not directly comparable. See other figures in: Jock Phillips, A Man’s Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History, (Auckland: Penguin, 1987), 59; R.P. Hargreaves, Barmaids, Billiards, Nobblers and Rat-Pits: Pub Life in Goldrush Dunedin, 1861-65, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1992), 28-29; ODT, 13 April 1867, 4.
detail.\textsuperscript{36} Both accounts expressed the idea that alcohol constituted a “psychological prop” in a tough frontier environment, and focused largely on one type of drinker: the young, unattached male.\textsuperscript{37}

Greg Ryan has recently argued for a reassessment of the role of alcohol consumption as a “long-established component of sociability” in colonial New Zealand society and culture.\textsuperscript{38} He has called for historians to distinguish between those who drank to excess, those who drank moderately, and those who abstained, both quietly and noisily. New histories, he has argued, need to examine alcohol consumption in its own right, explore the drinker’s perspective (including that of the middle class), and note the influences of both environmental factors and imported practices in shaping colonial drinking cultures.\textsuperscript{39} Ryan’s directions are useful but such a project is not easy. The drinker’s perspective is difficult to uncover. Alcohol mainly appeared in the archive when it was implicated in bad behaviour.

Furthermore, Ryan’s approach differs little from Fairburn’s and Phillips’ in that it is nationally-framed. All three authors attempt to explain characteristics of “New Zealanders” in relation to drink. However, it is more helpful to think about colonial drinking in terms of how people drank in specific localities rather than how “New Zealanders” drank. People arrived in the colonies from different places bringing a variety of tastes and drinking practices. Different environments entailed diverse behaviour in light of variables such as gender imbalance, work practices and the presence or absence of alternative forms of entertainment and sociability. The behaviour of seamen, who accounted for an average of 48% of the alcohol-related arrests made in Port Chalmers, reveals little about the drinking habits of “New Zealanders” or even Port Chalmers people. Their behaviour, however, does help to illuminate the sorts of drinking practices that went on in this specific place.

Alcohol-related arrests in Port Chalmers were almost always for “drunk and disorderly” behaviour.\textsuperscript{40} Each year only a small proportion of the alcohol-related arrests

\textsuperscript{36} Phillips, \textit{A Man’s Country}? 34-36, 56-59, 61.
\textsuperscript{38} Ryan, “Drink and the Historians,” 48.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid, 35-53.
\textsuperscript{40} In 1862 and 1866 records distinguished between “drunk and disorderly” and “drunk and incapable of looking after oneself.” Each offence accounted for about half of the total alcohol-related offences.
were for drunkenness and violence, and the police only occasionally booked a
disobedient seaman for being intoxicated. In addition, the police made a handful of
arrests for licensing matters during the period, including several “sly-grog” charges. During this period it was an offence simply to be “drunk” in public, but “drunkenness”
is a largely subjective matter. Because of the frequency of similar cases passing
through the courts, newspapers seldom provided detailed accounts of trials for alcohol-
related offences. Aside from cases in which an intoxicated person used bad language or
violence it largely remains a mystery what exactly constituted the “disorderly” part of
the charge. Much depended on police interpretation.

The behaviour of people who appeared in the Port Chalmers Resident
Magistrate’s Court on alcohol-related charges varied considerably. One-off offenders
whose appearance and attitude pleased the Bench received light treatment. Elizabeth
Best, a thirty-four year-old English woman travelling to Auckland on a warm January
afternoon, was arrested for being “drunk and disorderly” near the police barracks. In her
defence Best pleaded that she had been “overcome by the heat of the day.” Given her
quiet and respectable appearance, she was discharged with a caution. In December
1874 W. Davidson, “a man of respectable appearance,” pleaded guilty to being drunk on
the Railway platform. Davidson claimed he had “taken a little, and was quite
overcome.” He apologized for his actions and was dismissed with the option of a fine of
five shillings or twenty-four hours’ imprisonment.

Two main types of offender occupied the opposite end of the spectrum: the
violent drunk and the habitual drunkard. Drunken violence manifested itself most often
in the form of resisting police, and the act of resistance constituted a separate indictable
offence. Policemen endured spitting, swearing, kicking, punching, and having their
uniforms torn. Many violent drunks were seamen, acting in cohort with their
shipmates. In December 1874 Alexander Cameron, an articulated seaman from the ship
Auckland, was apprehended by Constable Coffey for being drunk and disorderly on the
Railway Pier. Cameron “made the most determined resistance, kicking and striking, and

However by 1870 this distinction had disappeared and all excessive drinkers were branded “drunk and
disorderly.”

41 OW, 19 October 1861, 10; OW, 9 November 1861, 5; ODT, 12 April 1867, 4; Diary 1873-1875, 30
January 1874; Charge Book 1870-1877, 7 February 1874.
42 Ryan, “Drink and the Historians,” 39, 44.
43 ODT, 10 January 1874, 2; Charge Book 1870-1877, 8 January 1874.
44 ODT, 3 December 1874, 3.
45 On alcohol, seamen and crime in another colonial context, see: C.I. Hamilton, “Seamen and Crime at
used the most revolting language the while.” The affair attracted a crowd and police
arrested another seaman for inciting Cameron to resist. The excitement was such that
the Constable feared that onlookers might have attempted to rescue Cameron from
custody. The Bench sentenced Cameron to two months’ imprisonment with hard labour
as a warning to others inclined towards such behaviour and a show of support to the
police in the execution of their duty.46

Habitual drunkards created a nuisance because their drinking often greased the
gears of serious offending. Thomas Griffen Green, an Irish Catholic labourer, long-term
Port Chalmers resident, and perhaps Port Chalmers’ most persistent habitual drunkard,
accumulated a handful of convictions for drunk and disorderly behaviour over the
years.47 Prison was almost a second home for Green. Indeed he felt so comfortable there
that after one instance of intemperance he imprisoned himself in one of the cells at the
Port Chalmers lock-up. Agreeing that his actions were probably for the best, the Bench
discharged him with a caution on that occasion.48 However Green’s actions usually
brought trouble, and offences linked to his problems with alcohol peppered his record.
In 1868 he served two months in prison with hard labour for vagrancy.49 In 1870 the
Bench put him away for six months for stealing groceries.50 Following this stint Green’s
freedom lasted several months before he was imprisoned again for vagrancy, this time
for six months.51 Green eventually wound up in the dock at the Supreme Court in
Dunedin in 1875, charged with assault with intent to rob. By this stage he was fifty-
seven years old. He had targeted a recent arrival to the port; more established residents
of Port Chalmers were probably wary of Green. In spite of a defence speech that the
ODT remarked upon as being “most elaborately prepared,” Chief Justice Prendergast
served Green with a sentence of twelve months’ imprisonment with hard labour.52

Bridget Penny’s habitual drunkenness and associated offending not only brought
her into conflict with the law but also strained her marriage. The Port Chalmers Charge
Book indicates that on the third occasion the thirty-two year-old Irish Catholic was
processed for “drunk and disorderly” behaviour in 1870, her husband Charles handed

46 ODT, 3 December 1874, 3. For other cases of seamen’s violence against police officers, see: OW, 28
July 1860, 5; Charge Book 1870-1877, 27 July 1874.
47 Charge Book 1863-1870, December 1866; 7 January 1870; 11 February 1870; Charge Book, 1870-
1877, 26 November 1870.
48 ODT, 24 July 1869, 3.
49 ODT, 25 July 1868, 4.
50 Charge Book 1863-1870, 3 April 1870.
51 Charge Book, 1870-1877, 5 December 1870.
52 ODT, 14 April 1875, 2.
her into the police and conducted the prosecution. In October 1876 the ODT reported that Penny had been found guilty in the Port Chalmers Resident Magistrate’s Court for soliciting. In 1878 Mr Penny came before the same court for assaulting his wife. The bench dismissed the case. Penny served several prison sentences and paid numerous fines for her behaviour over the years. In 1874 Penny served a lengthy sentence for “drunk and disorderly” behaviour and using obscene language: seven days’ imprisonment with hard labour for the former and three months’ imprisonment with hard labour for the latter.

Other instances of these sorts of drunken behaviours varied in degree. Sandra Quick has noted how the more regular rhythms of work in colonial towns engendered regular and less-destructive drinking patterns than the “spree.” Due to the mobile nature of much of the population Port Chalmers witnessed a variety. Usually associated with groups of transient, rural, male labourers “drinking down” their pay checks on occasional visits to town, sprees at Port Chalmers sometimes involved migrants celebrating landfall after weeks at sea. On Sunday 6 September 1874 the migrant ship Tweed arrived at Port Chalmers from London, having been at sea for two and a half months. Many migrants, including women and children, came ashore and set about celebrating their arrival. Having consumed their fill at several pubs a group of eight to ten people overpowered a waterman, took charge of his boat, and made for their ship, nearly capsizing the vessel in the process. Sergeant Neil had the boat brought ashore and locked up most of the offenders, who were tried the following day for drunk and disorderly behaviour. Sergeant Neil went further, however, and charged the publicans of the George, Provincial and Railway Hotels with selling liquor on a Sunday to men

53 Charge Book 1870-1877, 17 August 1870.
54 ODT, 18 October 1876, 3.
55 ODT, 9 February 1878, 2.
56 Charge Book, 1863-1870, 26 January, 9 February 1870; ODT, 11 December 1873, 5; ODT, 14 August 1875, 2; ODT, 31 May 1876, 3; ODT, 6 January 1877, 1.
57 ODT, 3 December 1874, 3; Charge Book 1870-1877, 1 December 1874. John “Simple Johnny” Gillison was another notorious character in the vein of Green and Penny. He was arrested at least four times for vagrancy, at least four times for drunk and disorderly behaviour, and once for larceny during period 1868-1876. ODT, 25 July 1868, 4; ODT, 3 November 1868, 2; ODT, 10 August 1870, 3; Charge Book, 1870-1877, 9 November 1870; OW, 25 March 1871, 15; OW, 17 July 1875, 10; OW, 5 February 1876, 5; ODT, 3 June 1876, 3.
59 Phillips, 34, 58, 61.
60 ODT, 5 September 1874, 2. The Tweed carried 639 migrants, about two-thirds of whom were English and one-third of whom were Irish.
61 Diary 1873-1875, 6 September 1874.
not being “bona fide travellers.” Otago licensing laws forbade the sale of liquor on Sundays, except to people deemed to fit this description. Nicholas Stanley deposed that he and up to twelve others from the Tweed had shared two bottles of brandy at the Provincial, and had been served with glasses of beer at the Railway and glasses of brandy at the George. Needless to say, Stanley could not remember the period between leaving the George and waking up in the lock-up. Mr Mansford argued for the defence that the public house was a natural place to go for people who had come from across the sea and had no home on the shore. The Bench dismissed Sergeant Neill’s case and declared that the restriction on Sunday sales only applied to those who were resident in a place and therefore well known to the publican.

Reporting on the “disgraceful scene that was enacted at the Port on Sunday afternoon,” the ODT observed that “the great majority of them were bent on procuring drink.” Such behaviour was not unprecedented when ships arrived in harbour. Seamen also engaged in the spree, and it was usually in these circumstances – when groups of seamen fuelled by alcohol banded together – that violence occurred, as in Cameron’s case. On occasion the spree claimed lives. Alexander Noales, a seaman from the ship Caroline, died after falling overboard while attempting to re-board his vessel. Prior to the accident Noales had indulged in a “heavy spree” with fellow seamen and passengers. Prudent ships’ captains sometimes called on police to mitigate this kind of behaviour by stationing a Constable on board an anchored ship, although the effectiveness of the procedure was questionable. Some, like the passengers of the Tweed, simply took their drinking and disorderly behaviour into town.

**Explaining drinking practices and alcohol-related arrests**

On occasions such as this spree, Stevan Eldred-Grigg’s assertion that “[d]runks were everywhere in early colonial New Zealand” may not have been far from the

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62 Diary 1873-1875, 8 September 1874.
63 Licensing Ordinance 1864, Otago Ordinances 1864, (Central Library, University of Otago), 908.
64 Diary 1873-1875, 11 September 1874; ODT, 12 September 1874, 2.
65 ODT, 12 September 1874, 2.
66 Diary 1873-1875, 11 September 1874; ODT, 12 September 1874, 2.
67 ODT, 8 September 1874, 2.
68 ODT, 2 July 1874, 3.
69 ODT, 16 July 1874, 3.
70 Diary 1873-1875, 12 July 1875.
truth. However the *ODT*’s report on the *Tweed* passengers’ spree referred to Port Chalmers as a “usually quiet locality.” How can we explain patterns of drinking and arrests for drunkenness in Port Chalmers? A lack of personal reminiscences makes it difficult to access the drinker’s perspective from these cases. However we can consider the contextual factors that shaped the drinking behaviours illustrated in the sketch above. Moreover, the secondary literature raises a number of important considerations relating to colonial drinking tastes and practices and different ethnic drinking cultures that suggest avenues for further research.

Drinking in Port Chalmers often occurred in public because of the mobile nature of the population. The port’s pubs catered to the needs of travellers and seamen for refreshment, entertainment, sociability, and accommodation, as well as the needs of Port Chalmers residents themselves. Public drinking would have helped to raise the rate of arrests for drunkenness: police were unlikely to be aware of private drinking unless it became disorderly to the point that somebody laid a complaint. Port Chalmers provided ample opportunities to purchase alcohol and its hotels were of major economic importance to the town. Pubs came and went during the period but enduring establishments included the Anchor Hotel, the Commercial Hotel, the George Hotel, the Jerusalem Coffee House, the Port Chalmers Hotel, the Provincial Hotel, the Royal Hotel, and, later, the Railway Hotel. Ten licensed houses operated in the port at one

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72 ODT, 8 September 1874, 2.
73 Historians have noted that alcohol, particularly beer, acted as a cheap and safe beverage in lieu of clean water and milk in nineteenth century urban environments. Hargreaves, 6-7, 17-19, 24; James L. Sturgis, “‘Whisky detectives’ in town: the enforcement of the liquor laws in Hamilton, Ontario, c. 1870-1900,” in *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority and Control, 1830-1940*, ed. David M. Anderson and David Killingray (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 205. Yet consumption statistics suggest that up until the 1880s New Zealand colonists drank more spirits and less beer than their English and Welsh contemporaries. Ryan, “Drink and the Historians,” 39-43. Questions remain about the manner in which colonists consumed these spirits. Fairburn and Haslett observed strong correlations between the rate of spirits consumption and rates of drunkenness, violence and civil suits. On the contrary, beer consumption rates had far weaker correlations with drunkenness, violence and civil suits. Fairburn and Haslett, “Did Wellington Province from the 1850s to 1930 Have a Distinctive Social Pattern?” 103-104. Phillips argued that colonial men consumed spirits in the manner of a binge, resulting in the rapid deterioration of their behaviour during a drinking session. Phillips, 57-58. However, outside of the spree we know little about the day-to-day patterns in which colonists consumed alcohol, particularly town dwellers and others who enjoyed regular access. Ryan noted that a man could make up his quota of per capita alcohol consumption by way of a “healthy and habitual pint after work and a whisky at bed time.” Ryan also argued that Scots and Irish drinkers were accustomed to drinking spirits and would not have consumed them in the same quantities as beer. Ryan, “Drink and the Historians,” 43-44. Other historians have argued that spirits drinking formed an integral part of the “hard drinking” practices intertwined with the customs of pre-industrial manual work in each British ethnic group. Sivers, 10-15, 18-30; Brian Harrison, *Drink & the Victorians: the temperance question on England 1815-1872*, 2nd ed. (Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1994), 38-62. Variations between different ethnic drinking cultures might help to explain the disproportionately high number of arrests made on Irish and Catholic colonists, as noted above.
time or another between 1861 and 1865.\textsuperscript{74} By 1875 Port Chalmers boasted seven pubs: roughly one for every 214 members of the permanent population, a relatively high figure by colonial standards in the late-1870s but little higher than the English and Welsh figure for 1881.\textsuperscript{75} Most pubs were located about the wharf area and the main street. An 1866 directory listed seven hotels: four on George Street, two on Mount Street, and Dodson’s Port Chalmers Hotel on Beach Street.\textsuperscript{76} This clustering together assisted police in patrolling drinking behaviour, but the grouping of drinkers together may also have exacerbated disorderly behaviour in some circumstances.

Liquor flowed relatively freely in the port.\textsuperscript{77} Publicans could obtain a “General Night License” which extended opening hours from 10pm until midnight and some pubs possessed “Bottle Licenses” that allowed them to sell liquor for consumption off the premises.\textsuperscript{78} People could also steel themselves against the inclement coastal weather conditions by purchasing alcoholic refreshments on the water. Captains of passenger vessels plying the harbour and coast could obtain a “Packet License,” although Mr Justice Richmond noted in the Supreme Court in Dunedin that serving alcohol on the popular harbour steamer \textit{Golden Age} had led to such disorder amongst passengers as to render the vessel “unfit for ladies to travel on.”\textsuperscript{79} Licensing Commissioners held regular meetings at which publicans applied to have their licenses renewed.\textsuperscript{80} Licensing Meetings were popular local events and a source of entertainment in themselves. The Commissioners used their powers to shape hotels into wholesome and respectable places of accommodation for travellers rather than “drinking saloons,” and to minimize bottle licenses so as to keep drinking out of the home where it could be controlled.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{74} Hargreaves, 45-46.
\textsuperscript{75} ODT, 8 September 1875, 3. This puts Port Chalmers below Dunedin’s one hotel for every 174 people at its goldrush peak in 1864 (Hargreaves, 6) but above the 1879 colony-wide figure of one hotel for every 287 quoted in Phillips, 34-36, 55-57. In England and Wales there was one licensee for every 243 people in 1881: K. Theodore Hoppen, \textit{The Mid-Victorian Generation}, 1846-1886, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 354. Recall that in 1874 Port Chalmers had one church for every 384 residents (see chapter two).
\textsuperscript{76} Harnett and Co’s Dunedin Directory 1866, (Dunedin: Harnett & Co, 1866), 155-159.
\textsuperscript{77} Here I refer to the licit liquor trade. Further research is needed into the extent of illegal alcohol production and distribution in the port.
\textsuperscript{78} Licensing Ordinance 1864, 899, 916-918.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid, 899-900, 917, 920; \textit{OW}, 5 December 1863, 4. See also: Edward Barton, Reminiscences of early days in Port Chalmers, Turnbull, Norman S.: Papers (Misc-MS-111/002), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, 2.
\textsuperscript{80} The frequency changed over the period as the Licensing Ordinance was often amended. From 1873 the Licensing Act “stipulated that licensing courts were no longer obliged to grant licences merely on the basis of the applicant’s character and accommodation facilities, but had also to be satisfied that the licence was necessary for the district.” Quick, “ ‘The Colonial Helpmeet Takes a Dram’,” 39-40
\textsuperscript{81} The Bench of Commissioners, composed of Justices of the Peace and Resident Magistrates, heard evidence from publicans (or a lawyer on their behalf) and the Sergeant of Police, who inspected the local
However access to alcohol remained liberal. The failure of the police case against the publicans who served the Tweed passengers on a Sunday, for example, showed that the mobile nature of the population meant that liquor was available every day of the week to many in the port.

While pubs and the alcohol they served provided the ingredients for alcohol-related crime, they must not be viewed entirely negatively as forces of disorder. Pubs embodied the colonial tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces as sites that could either promote community or ignite disorder. Although colonial pubs could be very basic, historians have argued that part of a pub’s attraction was that it sold a particular “atmosphere and social experience” in addition to alcohol. As well as a place of immediate sociability, the nineteenth-century pub provided warmth, light, entertainment, a place to do business, a place to learn and share the news, and – in the colonies – a place where men (but rarely women) of all classes mixed freely. Pubs in ports provided master mariners with a place to seek able-bodied seamen. Games and entertainments were important features of Port Chalmers’ pubs. The billiard room was one of the main attractions of the Provincial Hotel. John Crickmore erected new stables at his Royal Hotel in 1867, and turned the old stables into a skittle alley for the edification of his patrons. Crickmore’s “Royal Assembly Rooms” also hosted a number of travelling entertainments, while other pubs held sing songs with public participation.

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pubs regularly. Before a crowded Resident Magistrate’s Court in April 1874, for example, the Bench renewed Crickmore’s Royal Hotel license on the condition that one of the hotel’s two bars be closed. They deliberated over renewing the license for the Provincial Hotel because publican Thomas Dodson (son of George Dodson) failed to meet one of the qualities of a publican that the Bench considered essential to his respectability and the respectability of his house: marriage. Dodson’s license was renewed only after the Bench were assured that the publican’s brother and sister resided there, the presence of family bringing his house up to the desired standard. William McLoughlin of the George Hotel received a warning for allowing singing and dancing in his bar, contrary to the law. Sergeant Neil vouched for the George, however, stating that it was a popular haunt for seamen and that they needed a place to go. The Bench rejected Thomas McGuire’s application for a license for his boarding house as they did not wish to increase the number of licensed houses. McGuire, the Bench declared, would better serve society by keeping his boarding house. They also refused four applications for “Bottle Licenses,” citing fear that they would encourage secret drinking. ODT, 24 April 1874, 3.

82 Quick, 10.
84 Wilson, 37.
85 ODT, 9 December 1863, 5.
86 Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 40.
87 See, for example: ODT, 28 August 1867, 4; ODT, 29 August 1870, 2; ODT, 3 December 1873, 2; ODT, 21 February 1874, 3. On the sing songs see: Frank T. Bullen, With Christ at Sea: a Religious Autobiography, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1900), 86.
Pubs could also function as important community centres in emerging settlements lacking other venues. Crickmore’s Royal Assembly Rooms vied with the Masonic Hall and Dodson’s Bond (a bonded store on the waterfront owned by publican George Dodson) for position as the port’s most popular venue. Crickmore’s rooms hosted numerous events including dinners and dances for friendly societies, drill meetings for the Navals, and coroners’ inquests on deaths occurring in or about the port. The Royal Assembly Rooms even served as a temporary venue for Presbyterian worship during the construction of the stone church in 1871-1872, although Rev. Johnstone refused to perform baptisms there. Publicans could also be important community figures: Quick argued that many goldfields hotelkeepers played active roles in community development as a means towards building healthy businesses. Chapters two and three note that some Port Chalmers publicans were local politicians and active members and supporters of the Anglican Church, friendly societies, the Mechanics’ Institute and other voluntary associations. Although Crickmore did not follow fellow hoteliers George Dodson and Henry Dench into politics, he used his resources and standing in the community in other ways. In 1874, for example, Crickmore hosted a public meeting in his Assembly Rooms to consider the management of funds subscribed for the benefit of the widow and children of a deceased local labourer. The meeting (which included temperance advocate G.L. Asher, showing that liquor and temperance interests could set aside their differences for a good cause) elected Crickmore both a member of the governing committee and a trustee of the funds.

Policing practices do not seem to have unduly inflated numbers of arrests for drunkenness in the port. Richard Hill has characterized the development of policing in colonial New Zealand as marked by the increasing coerciveness of the state. However evidence from Port Chalmers suggests that the rates of arrests for drunkenness were not due to a “control wave” and that the Port Chalmers police seldom exercised their full

89 ODT, 22 March 1870, 2; OW, 31 December 1870, 14; ODT, 2 May 1873, 2; Bowman, 80.
91 Quick, 27, 44.
92 ODT, 21 August 1874, 2. On Dodson and Dench’s roles in local politics see: Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 58-59, 185-187. See also chapters two and three on their roles in the Anglican Church and friendly societies.
93 Appendix 2 outlines the development and particularities of policing in Port Chalmers.
94 Hill, part 1, 11-12.
coercive capacity. The level of overt coercion displayed in Scott’s case was an anomaly.\textsuperscript{95} The volume and variety of work required of policemen in the port limited the force’s coercive potential.\textsuperscript{96} The policing regime in the port was probably similar to that which other historians have described on the goldfields and in dealings with prostitutes in Dunedin, in which the police excused many illegal but seemingly victimless acts such as public drunkenness unless they received a complaint or the act led to public disorder.\textsuperscript{97} Given their almost exclusive use of the designation “drunk and disorderly” for dealing with intoxicated people, it seems likely that the Port Chalmers police treated peaceful drunks leniently and focused their attention on those who were actually disturbing the peace. As the \textit{ODT} editor put it in 1867: “[t]he outrageous drunkards mostly, and the friendless drunkards come before the Bench.”\textsuperscript{98} Ryan has noted that the spree probably meant that convictions occurred in waves and public drunkenness was not always ubiquitous. As noted above, the \textit{ODT} remarked on the usually quiet nature of the port in its commentary on the \textit{Tweed} passengers’ spree.\textsuperscript{99} The Port Chalmers police were most likely to be coercive during a wave of drinking such as a spree, enforcing the law more rigidly in order to clear the streets in the area in which the hotels were clustered and prevent trouble arising. However even in these situations the size of the force, consisting of four or five men from the mid-1860s onwards, as well as the small size of the lock-up and its distance uphill from the centre of town limited the number of arrests the police could reasonably make.\textsuperscript{100}

Furthermore, the nineteenth century policeman’s position was highly ambiguous. Usually drawn from the working classes himself, he was tasked with enforcing middle class values upon others whose values were probably closer to his own. Police hierarchies therefore tended to promote separation between policemen and

\textsuperscript{95} In addition, the Resident Magistrate’s Court seldom imposed maximum prison sentences or fines, indicating a lack of overt coercion on the judiciary’s part, see: appendix three. Fairburn has cited the close correlation between figures for spirits consumption and crime rates to reject the notion that high rates of colonial crime could be explained by a “control wave.” However, there are no specific spirits consumption statistics for the port to allow an identical test. Fairburn and Haslett, “Did Wellington Province from the 1850s to 1930 Have a Distinctive Social Pattern?” 266-270; Fairburn, \textit{Ideal Society and its Enemies}, 209.

\textsuperscript{96} Appendix two, 178-179.

\textsuperscript{97} Hill, part 2, 571; Lucas, 92, 97-99. See also: Wayne R. Angus, “Queenstown 1862-64: the genesis of a goldfields community,” (BA(hons) diss., University of Otago, 1987), 20-21. We must remember, however, that apparently victimless crimes such as drunkenness could have significant impacts on the home and family which went undocumented. Temperance movements, discussed in more detail below, were partly based on the idea that one person’s drinking created victims of others.

\textsuperscript{98} \textit{ODT}, 13 April 1867, 4.


\textsuperscript{100} Appendix two.
the rest of their communities, and a distinct police occupational subculture. Police subjectivity, however, may not necessarily have driven up numbers of arrests. James L. Sturgis observed that because colonial policemen worked and socialized in a “twilight world” they often empathized with others who operated on the fringes of society. Water policemen in Port Chalmers needed to be experienced in seafaring which may have contributed to sympathy for seamen and associated tastes for alcohol. No information emerged suggesting police prejudices against Irish and/or Catholic colonists that might help to explain the disproportionately high number of arrests on Irish/Catholics noted above, but further research in this area would be useful.

Temperance: alcohol, crime and community response

The effects of alcohol concerned members of the Port Chalmers community outside of the police and justice system. Some colonists lobbied for cultural change and law reform. Chapter two discussed how the Presbyterian Kirk Session disciplined members of its congregation for what it deemed problem drinking. Presbyterians and others concerned about drinking behaviour and its social and moral effects also began to establish a temperance movement in the port during the 1860s and 1870s. Temperance efforts in response to alcohol and crime represented another example of how centrifugal, atomizing forces co-existed in a symbiotic relationship with centripetal, bonding forces in the port. Indeed these forces may have been in intimate contact in the port: Edward Barton reminisced that many members of the port’s All Nations Lodge of Good Templars had “suffered silently for the transgressions of their weaker relatives.” The temperance movement, though small during this period, fostered

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101 Hill, part 1, 15-16, 18, 23-24; part 2, 571-572. See also: OW, 1 March 1873, 14.  
102 Sturgis, 210-211.  
103 Policemen at the port experienced occasional trouble with alcohol themselves. In January 1870 Constable Erridge, who had been cautioned for drinking on several previous occasions, was explicitly warned by the Commissioner to avoid spirits. Diary 1867-1870, 3 January 1870. Several Port Chalmers officers had backgrounds in the Royal Navy, Ian Church, Some early people and ships of Port Chalmers: c1830-c1990, (Dunedin: Ian Church, 1990), 131, 464. See also: Hill, part 2, 559-560.  
104 Further research could engage in a fuller search through the Diary of Duty and Occurrences for qualitative evidence, deeper investigation into the ethnic and religious backgrounds of policemen at the port, and further consideration of the issues relating to varied ethnic drinking cultures, anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment in the colony, and stereotypes of the Irish as drunkards mentioned above.  
105 Barton, 5.
sociability and the definition of community boundaries and values amongst its adherents in direct response to the perceived disorderly effects of too much drink.

Communities around the English-speaking world formed organizations for the promotion of temperance during the nineteenth century as an accompaniment to the transformations of society ushered in by urbanization, industrialization, and the increasing commercialization of farming. Drinking appeared to cause disorder and decay amongst Britain’s new, visible, urban working classes. The industrial work ethic excluded workplace drinking practices as a threat to productivity. Temperance organizations, often closely related to evangelical churches, blamed alcohol for a plethora of social ills, and consequently prescribed temperance as a cure-all measure for problems such as poverty, violence, and other moral failures. According to Ian Tyrrell, temperance in antebellum America aimed to achieve the moral and material progression of a society grappling with the challenges of modernity through an ethic of self-improvement, which equated sobriety with respectability. Phillips has characterized the temperance movement in colonial New Zealand as an attempt to reform male culture and to make men respectable. Temperance organizations played a key role in debates about what constituted acceptable forms of leisure and whether alcohol should retain its long-held role in social occasions such as weddings and funerals.

Debates about temperance in Otago began soon after settlement. Port Chalmers’ Rev. Johnstone participated in discussions about the proposed Licensing Ordinance in 1860 and helped found the Dunedin Total Abstinence Society that same year. Different temperance campaigners promoted a spectrum of solutions to the drink question, ranging between temperate drinking and regulation on the one hand and

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107 Stivers, 47-48; Ryan, “An undertaking worthy only of fanatics,” 17.


109 Tyrrell, 4-13. See also: Stivers, 47-49.

110 Phillips, 55-65.

111 Harrison, *Drink & the Victorians*, 34. At the Dunedin Total Abstinence Society soiree in March 1861, Rev. D.M. Stuart of Knox Church dismissed the view that not drinking to mark occasions such as weddings and funerals represented a lack of respectability. *OW*, 30 March 1861, 5.

112 Ollsen, *A History of Otago*, 141; *OW*, 10 February 1855, 2; *OW*, 7 April 1860, 4; *OW*, 28 April 1860, 3.

113 *OW*, 25 August 1860, 5; *OW*, 27 October 1860, 9; *OW*, 15 December 1860, 3.
total abstinence and prohibition on the other. 114 Few participants in the debates contested the desirability of responsible, moderate drinking, but the emphasis some temperance campaigners placed on government intervention in private leisure through legal prohibitions against alcohol and the places in which it was sold pitted others against the cause. The opponents of temperance and total abstinence often grouped the two together even though they were not the same. 115

Temperance advocates agreed that alcohol caused serious disruption to many families in colonial Otago. 116 Barton, a temperance advocate himself, observed that “[v]ery few households [in the port] escaped realizing that one or more members of a family were debasing themselves.” 117 In 1867 the ODT editor claimed that “[f]ully two thirds of the crime of the Colonies owes its origin or inspiration, directly or indirectly, to drunkenness and intemperance.” The editor summarized the views of many temperance advocates when he described the perceived links between alcohol and social problems:

The criminal may be addicted to drink himself; he may be goaded to crime by the intemperance of members of his family, or, as not unfrequently happens, the provocation to the crime may be given by someone under the influence of intoxication. Poverty, too, the great inspirer of crime, is not infrequently produced by habits of intemperance.... The father and the husband, otherwise blessed with every quality calculated to enlist the affections of the members of his family, gradually becomes an object of dread, of pity, or of contempt. Day by day the evil increases; peace is banished from the house, the happy home is broken up. 118

By emphasizing the drinker’s irresponsibility and the risks it placed on others, particularly women, children and the home, temperance advocates worked to attach a connotation of shame to the intemperate consumption of alcohol. Barbara Brookes has noted how shame can work to both “patrol the borders of normality” and “manage

114 ODT, 23 June 1864, 5; ODT, 13 April 1867, 4.
115 Stivers, 32.
116 On the middle class nature of the movement, see: Stivers, 48-49; Brown, 107. Catholics and Anglicans embraced temperance less enthusiastically, being much more wary of the link between temperance (which they largely agreed with) and total abstinence and prohibition (with which most disagreed). Amongst other reasons both theological and practical, some Catholics and Anglicans in colonial New Zealand felt alienated by the evangelical Protestant flavour of the temperance movement. On Catholics, see: Ryan, “An undertaking worthy only of fanatics,” 16-22; Malcolm, “The Catholic Church and the Irish temperance movement,” 1-16. On Anglicans, see: John Stenhouse, “Religion and society,” in The New Oxford History of New Zealand, ed. Giselle Byrnes (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 344.
117 Barton, 5.
118 ODT, 13 April 1867, 4.
antisocial behaviour.” The construction of intemperance as shameful channeled emerging concepts of masculinity that emphasized men’s responsibility to provide for their families and be a more visible presence in the home. Temperance advocates construed sobriety as crucial to both. The shame of intemperance became equated with the shame of not being able to provide, and therefore not being an adequate man.

The examples of both Thomas Griffen Green and Bridget Penny show how intemperate drinking had the potential to induce poverty and strain families. Several fledgling temperance organizations appeared in Port Chalmers during the 1860s and 1870s, demonstrating the desire of some to actively model the values of their community and define those within it through the temperance pledge. While Dunedin struggled to sustain a Temperance Society, Port Chalmers residents founded a Band of Hope in late-1865. An organization primarily for children, the group attracted 170 members in its first four months. Under the direction of H.L. Gilbert, missionary to seamen, the group’s membership swelled to 292 children by late-1867. Along with anniversary picnics and entertainments, the Band of Hope held fortnightly meetings. Children sang songs, listened to talks, and read temperance literature. The focus of such groups centred on personal reform during this period: “moral suasion” trumped legal

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120 For a discussion of how a gendered notion of shame was attached to the failure to be breadwinning man in twentieth century New Zealand, see: Brookes, “Shame and its Histories in the Twentieth Century,” 42-46. An analysis of shame in relation to other colonial crimes, particularly vagrancy (including indecent exposure) and domestic violence, could help to illuminate the evolving norms and boundaries of colonial communities. Vagrancy cases shamed both men and women unable to support themselves and/or their dependents. Port Chalmers cases to explore could include: violence against women and children (Charge Book 1861-1863, 21 April 1862; Diary 1861-1863, 7 November 1862); the case against William Reid, schoolmaster and Presbyterian elder, for physically abusing his daughter (*OW*, 22 May 1869, 13; Church, *Port Chalmers and its people*, 26, 31; Port Chalmers Parish, P19016, Session Minute Book, 1857-1880, held at the Presbyterian Archives and Research Centre, Dunedin, 54-56); indecent exposure in front of children (Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1861-1863, 7 November 1862, 11 November 1870 (AAWC/D166/21862/11), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; *ODT*, 14 November 1870, 2); vagrancy, destitution and insanity (Diary 1861-1863, 9 August 1862, 8 February 1862, 9 September 1862; Charge Book 1863-1870, 27-28 March 1866, 14 December 1866; Charge Book 1870-1877, 11 July 1870, 4 August 1870, 9-10 August 1870, 24 September 1870, 28 January 1874, 18 February 1874, 14 July 1874, 3 December 1874; *ODT*, 6 August 1870, 2; *ODT*, 14 March 1871, 2; *ODT*, 6 May 1871, 3).

121 See also: William Johnstone to Margaret King, 13 July 1858, Letters from William Johnstone to Margaret Johnstone, Rev William Johnstone Papers (MS-0993/006), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.

122 In addition to the Band of Hope and All Nations Lodge of Good Templars profiled here, a branch of the Sons and Daughters of Temperance was formed with five members at the port in 1870. At its first anniversary in 1871 the group recorded thirty-two members. I was unable to find further information on the group. *ODT*, 10 February 1871, 2; *ODT*, 25 March 1871, 2.

123 *ODT*, 20 September 1866, 10; *OW*, 3 March 1866, 11.

124 *OW*, 3 March 1866, 11; *ODT*, 22 November 1867, 4.
change. Groups collected pledges of total abstinence, and circulated petitions and pamphlets.\textsuperscript{125} The \textit{Otago Witness} lauded the Band as “a considerable source of interest and of innocent entertainment” for the port’s children.\textsuperscript{126}

G.L. Asher, a key figure in the Band of Hope and a Wesleyan and Forester, established the All Nations Lodge of Good Templars in August 1873 with twelve inaugural members.\textsuperscript{127} Similarly to other friendly societies the Good Templars met weekly in the Masonic Hall and promoted mutual aid and sociability, but also advocated temperance and total abstinence amongst the population.\textsuperscript{128} Good Templarism proved popular at the port. By the first anniversary in 1874 the All Nations Lodge’s membership numbered no less than 104, and the \textit{ODT} suggested that the movement was winning converts:

Perhaps in not part of the Colony has Good Templarism made a greater stride during the past half-year than at the once “drouthy” Port Chalmers. Its principles appear to have made a most favourable impression upon the enquiring minds of the Port people, and, as a result, men who once, and not so long ago either, were noted as belonging to the two and three-bottle class have now at last “eschewed sack, and now live cleanly”.... The reformation (whether temporary or not remains to be seen) effected in the social habits of not a few of the good old sort is really startling, and may be regarded as a sort of temperance epidemic or revival.\textsuperscript{129}

The Lodge’s membership included women, whose influence, the \textit{ODT} remarked, steered the movement towards total abstinence. However the speaker at the Lodge’s first anniversary soiree indicated that their chief objective was to affect the Permissive Liquor Law, which sought tighter control of the drink trade through the licensing process.\textsuperscript{130}

Some historians have noted the importance of understanding societal drinking habits in order to understand temperance movements.\textsuperscript{131} Likewise, temperance movements can be read as indicators of the nature and extent of drinking problems in a community, although Ryan has urged caution on interpreting drinking patterns in colonial New Zealand based on a temperance discourse largely imported from

\textsuperscript{125} \textit{OW}, 3 March 1866, 11; \textit{ODT}, 22 November 1867, 4; \textit{OW}, 12 December 1868, 3; \textit{ODT}, 9 March 1869, 3; \textit{ODT}, 26 October 1871, 2.

\textsuperscript{126} \textit{OW}, 3 March 1866, 11. The Band of Hope’s own records have not survived. See also: Barton, 5.

\textsuperscript{127} \textit{ODT}, 28 August 1874, 2.

\textsuperscript{128} Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 65.

\textsuperscript{129} \textit{ODT}, 14 August 1874, 2.

\textsuperscript{130} \textit{ODT}, 28 August 1874, 2. Like those of the Band of Hope, the All Nations Lodge of Good Templars’ own records are no longer extant.

America. The Witness’ assessment of the Band of Hope as a diversion for children suggests the group had little effect on the port’s drinking culture, yet both major Otago newspapers saw fit to report on some of their activities in detail (in keeping with their increasingly pro-temperance editorial lines). Yet the sheer existence and extent of membership of the Band and the All Nations Lodge indicate that temperance consciousness and concern about drinking had spread beyond the formal church establishment. The fledgling nature of the movement in Port Chalmers during the 1860s and 1870s – still, to a large extent, the heyday of the single male mobile worker and before industrial work practices became widespread – was consistent with the rest of the colony. The New Zealand Women’s Christian Temperance Union – the forerunner of the colony-wide temperance campaign after its foundation in 1885 – had not yet appeared in Port Chalmers by the end of the period in question, nor had any entrepreneurs ventured to establish a “temperance hotel.” The temperance movement across the colony accelerated during the late-1880s as the initial boom cycle of colonization waned and economic depression revealed the harsher characteristics of modernity, but acceptance of the movement varied between different sectors of society due to its fundamental reworking of certain social ideas and remained contested into the twentieth century.

The Band of Hope’s use of children as the temperance movement’s advance guard suggests a perceptive tactical move on behalf of temperance advocates. Given the centrality of pubs and publicans in Port Chalmers’ social, cultural, economic and political life, and the widely-recognised need for a port town to provide some sort of hospitality for sailors and other travellers, many adults probably found it difficult to publicly support temperance in the mid-1860s. In addition, the gendered concept of shame attached to intemperance radically challenged entrenched masculine values that celebrated hard drinking. Targeting children with temperance education not only attempted to create temperate future generations, but also complemented the construction in temperance discourse of intemperate drinking as a source of shame. This

132 Stivers, 31; Ryan, “Drink and the Historians,” 45.
133 ODT, 13 April 1867, 4.
135 In Port Chalmers the introduction of the evangelical Salvation Army in the 1880s boosted the temperance efforts of the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Seamen’s Mission, and other temperance groups. Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 66. By the 1890s the temperance issue stood at the heart of New Zealand politics. Phillips, 55.
paved the way for the introduction of groups with law reform agendas such as the Good Templars in later years. Pitting children against alcohol and the Band of Hope’s emphasis on moral suasion rather than legal reform constituted a subtle way of influencing drinkers and transforming cultural attitudes to drink without creating conflict between adult community members who supported temperance but also shared interests in other aspects of community institutional life with the publicans and their supporters.

Conclusion

Commenting on drinking in Otago in 1867, the *ODT* ventured that “[d]runkenness, as we have seen, much prevails, but not to the extent of involving the majority of the population.”\(^{136}\) While the likes of Thomas Griffen Green, Bridget Penny and the rowdy residents of the Mussel Bay immigrants’ barracks in 1874-1875 represented a small cluster of resident, alcohol-fuelled colonists who frequently broke the law – perhaps more a nuisance than a threat to society – other “criminals” included sojourners in the port, be they migrants, travellers or seamen.\(^{137}\) Reporting on the crime statistics published in *Statistics of New Zealand* in mid-1861, the *Otago Witness* remarked that:

> It will probably be found that in each place there exists a small but devoted band of topers, whose business it is to get drunk as often as possible, and whose repeated exploits, thus becoming matter of official record, detract from the character of a whole community.\(^{138}\)

\(^{136}\) *ODT*, 13 April 1867, 4.

\(^{137}\) Fabia Fox discussed these sorts of offenders as “nuisances” rather than “threats to society” in: “Outcast Ann in Outcast Dunedin: A Case Study of Crime in Nineteenth Century Dunedin,” Research paper presented at the Workshop on History and Gender, (University of Otago, 18 April 2012). During 1874-1875 the residents of the Mussel Bay immigration barracks, located on the reclaimed land at the southern end of Port Chalmers town, gained a reputation for “rowdyism.” The barracks housed migrants from Britain’s industrial cities brought to the colony to work on the extension of the railway north of Port Chalmers. Over several months a number of migrants, often women, came before the court for alcohol and vagrancy-related offences. The Mussel Bay phenomenon represents the closest Port Chalmers came to having a distinct resident criminal class or criminal residential zone during the period 1860-1875. The Provincial Government moved quickly to quell the problem by dismantling the barracks in 1875. Charge Book 1870-1877, 7 December 1874; *ODT*, 24 February 1875, 3; *ODT*, 27 April 1875, 2; *ODT*, 15 May 1875, 2.

\(^{138}\) *OW*, 6 July 1861, 4.
A “small band” might not be the right term for the large mobile population in Port Chalmers, but the sentiment that alcohol-related crime – and indeed crime in general – was limited rather than out of control rings true for the port.

The notion that alcohol acted as a “psychological prop” that masked the pain of social isolation is not an adequate explanation for most of the drinking behaviour witnessed in the port, and the port experience challenges national approaches to issues of alcohol, crime and community. Port Chalmers hosted the celebratory rituals usually associated with arriving and departing. The excitement of the end of a long sea voyage and prospects in a new land induced many to celebration. For seamen, time in port meant a respite from arduous work. Alcohol was a typical ingredient in colonists’ recipes for rest and relaxation. Their public, and sometimes excessive, drinking habits attracted the attention of police, and they have endured in the historical record rather than private, moderate drinking practices. Port Chalmers witnessed extensive disorderly behaviour during a spree, but serious “rowdyism” does not appear to have been a constant feature of life in the town. Nor did drinking necessarily mark atomization. For the most part, alcohol was a lubricant for sociability and pubs and publicans played important roles in the community. Recognising this, fledgling efforts to create a temperance movement – themselves a vehicle for sociability and defining community norms – minimized attacks on the liquor trade and tried to change the drinking culture, largely through the construction of intemperate drinking as a source of shame.
Chapter Five: “Men of many Nations, kindred, and tongues”: a separate community of seamen at Port Chalmers?

According to James Belich, itinerant workers such as seamen were “in [colonial] New Zealand but not of it.” Belich suggests that seamen and others who worked in “crews” experienced little engagement with the “core culture” of land-based society and its community life. While they shared the geographical confines of certain places with “core culture” at times, seamen existed outside of it because of their high mobility and the self-contained subculture of their “crew.” This interpretation, however, suggests a narrow conception of place and community that focuses on a group of less mobile “settlers” and their efforts to build institutions. In looking at seamen’s contributions to community in colonial Port Chalmers, this chapter ventures beyond an institution-focused conception of place and accounts for the importance of mobility in producing colonial places and communities. This approach connects the characteristics of place with networks of transport and developments in transport and communications technology.

Colonial Port Chalmers existed largely because of and for seamen. The port, as outlined in chapter one, was a maritime society. Its economy revolved around the shipping industry. The activity generated by seamen and their work breathed life into the town. While seamen were not necessarily of the Port Chalmers community and its

1 A.R. Falconer, The Harbour Reached: a report of Port Chalmers Sailors’ Rest and some memories of Christian work, 1903, 21 (MS-0985-055/001), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
5 This chapter concerns merchant seamen who served on coastal and ocean-going vessels. Many other people in colonial Port Chalmers worked on the water or in occupations that served the shipping industry. Watermen, lightermen, fishermen, ferrymen, ship-builders and repairers, and others lived among the settled population. The various histories of Port Chalmers and the port of Otago – referred to in this chapter and elsewhere – contain much detail about these people, and their lives have informed the rest of this thesis. For a detailed discussion of the local shipbuilding and repairing industry, see: M.A. Chapman, “Golden Years of Shipping Industry: A Study of Shipbuilding and Repairing Work in Port Chalmers, 1862-1864,” (BA(Hons) diss., University of Otago, 1975). For general information on other maritime occupations in colonial Port Chalmers, see: Ian Church, Port Chalmers and its people, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1994), 32-41, 52-56, 84-86; Ian Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” in Work ‘n’ Pastimes: 150 years of pain and pleasure, labour and leisure, ed. Norma J. Bethune. (Proceedings of the 1998 Conference of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists held at the University of Otago, Dunedin, 10th-13th April 1998), 203-217; H.O. Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1948), 38-54.
institutions, this study of community formation would be incomplete without a discussion of seamen’s contribution, as varied and complex as it was.

This chapter explores tensions between the notion that seamen essentially made Port Chalmers and, yet, that they existed largely outside of its settled institutional life and community because of their mobility. I demonstrate that while seamen possessed a distinctive and somewhat self-contained culture and community, their community overlapped with the land-based community at Port Chalmers in significant ways. This demonstrates how taking mobility seriously enriches our understandings of colonial places and communities. Seamen’s experiences at Port Chalmers reveal that economic and cultural interdependencies connected seamen into some of the conventions of the land-based community: through shipping-related industries, pubs, the law, and, via the mission to seamen, the churches. This chapter examines seamen’s crime and the mission to seamen in detail. The relatively low incidence of disruption resulting from seamen’s shore-based activities challenges both Belich’s idea that “crew culture” and “core culture” necessarily clashed when they came into contact, and Miles Fairburn’s equation of transience with social dislocation and disruption. The story of the mission demonstrates another instance in which perceived centrifugal forces helped to generate centripetal, community-building activity in the port. The mission fostered sociability and the negotiation of values amongst members of the land-based community at the same time as it tried to improve the seamen’s community and build stronger ties between the two.

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6 Due to the scope of this chapter I have not probed the literature on seamen’s shipboard lives and communities very deeply. Instead I have focused predominantly on seamen’s influence on community formation in Port Chalmers itself. While I have made some tentative claims in this chapter, further research is needed on seamen’s shipboard lives and the ways in which they influenced their lives on shore – this is reflected by the question mark in this chapter’s title. On seamen’s shipboard lives and communities see, for example: Markus Rediker, Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Frances Steel, “Oceania Under Steam: Maritime Cultures, Colonial Histories: 1870s-1910s,” (PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 2007), especially 101-138.

7 As noted in chapter three but not elaborated upon further here, many master mariners became members of the Port Chalmers Marine Lodge, and the Mechanics’ Institute also opened its library to seamen.

Shipping and seamen in colonial Port Chalmers

The presence of large numbers of seamen became a feature of Port Chalmers life due to the high volume of shipping activity the port experienced from the goldrushes onwards. Thousands of seamen passed through the port every year. Most slept aboard their ships, while some lodged in hotels and boarding houses on shore. Visiting seamen stayed for varying lengths of time: some vessels departed the port on the day of arrival while others stayed for up to several months while seamen and land-based workers carried out repairs and transferred cargo. Vessels stayed at the Bowen Pier for an average of eight days between August 1872 and the end of 1875. During the period 1860-1875 most ocean-going seamen who called at Port Chalmers worked out of British ports on a voyage-to-voyage basis, rather than in the stable employment of shipping companies. But some seamen called Port Chalmers home and lived amongst the settled population with their families during their time in port. These men may have travelled widely before settling down around the Otago Harbour and taking up work in the coastal trade. James Marks, for example, sailed out of British ports to Quebec, Bombay, Mauritius and Calcutta between 1854 and 1861, before taking up coasting work out of Port Chalmers. With a resident population not exceeding 2000 people during the period 1860-1875 and a tightly enclosed physical geography, Port Chalmers was simply not large enough for a “sailortown” to develop. Sailortowns, or residential enclaves in which seamen lived separately from the rest of the population, were

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9 See: table 1.1, chapter one.
10 Precise numbers are difficult to determine, due firstly to the difficulty of knowing how many vessels went directly to Dunedin (see note in chapter one), and secondly to the limited evidence detailing the sizes of coasting crews. If ocean-going crews alone are considered, the numbers are in the thousands every year. Table A4.1, appendix four. While coasting crews were slightly smaller on average (table A4.2, appendix four), the number of coasting vessels arriving annually (table 1.1, chapter one) would certainly have added further thousands to the total number of seamen visiting the port. Table A4.1, appendix four.
11 Average calculated based on a survey of four months: February 1873, August 1873, February 1875, and August 1875; Vessels at Railway Pier, Aug 1872-Dec 1877, AG-200-12/02/22. Otago Harbour Board: Records (ARC-0014). Hocken Collections, University of Otago, Dunedin.
12 Church, “People from a Maritime Society,” 208.
13 I have found it impossible to determine even a rough figure of seamen living in the port during this period. Electoral rolls and street directories did not provide sufficient detail to determine an occupational picture of the port’s population. The 1874 Census only broke down the occupational composition of society to provincial level, leaving out figures for the electoral districts and towns. The figures for crew assigned to vessels registered in Dunedin (table A4.3, appendix four) could be read as an extreme upper limit. These figures do not record where the crew resided or whether the vessel was actually based in Port Chalmers or Dunedin, as the “Dunedin” figures appear to represent all of Otago (although for some years the statistics also specified the number of ships registered at Invercargill).
14 Marks, James: Seaman’s Papers, (Misc-MS-0191), Hocken Collections, University of Otago.
common in larger metropolitan ports and often carried reputations as hotbeds of vice and crime.15

As workers of low economic status widely and historically regarded as “others” – people apart from “landlubber” society, separated by the transient nature of their work and their residential seclusion in sailortowns – the lives of individual seamen have proved difficult for historians to track. Neill Atkinson has observed that “[c]enturies of romantic poetry, Boys’ Own adventure, and music hall yo-ho-ho-ery have created a powerful popular image of the sea and seafarers.”16 Historians and other writers have developed a generalized, if not somewhat romanticized, narrative of seafaring life. Nineteenth century merchant seamen lived a “pre-industrial” lifestyle, the story goes, enduring long periods of hard work and discipline without money. During their leave in port many seamen simply drank until their pay ran out and poverty forced them to sign on to another voyage.17 A seaman’s casual attitude to life or money represented a response to a world that offered him little – social isolation on land and extreme physical hardship and an unforgiving hierarchy at sea – and fed understandings of seamen as intemperate and characterized by a “recklessness and sensualism of character, ignorance and depravity” popularized by maritime authors such as Herman Melville and Frank T. Bullen.18

Histories of Port Chalmers and the Otago Harbour are coloured with anecdotes about the exploits of seafarers that draw on these clichéd, romantic understandings of


16 Atkinson, Crew Culture, ix.

17 Daunton, “Jack Ashore,” 177-188.

seamen’s lives. H.O. Bowman emphasized the unsettling influence of visiting seamen in his description of Port Chalmers in the mid-1870s:

Life was wild, especially when the American sailors were in Port. They wore knives, looked ferocious, and, when in drink would become threatening on the slightest provocation. Language and behaviour were lurid and even frightening. 19

Edward Barton reminisced about how closing time at the pubs “was a nightmare to the police,” who battled to control drunken sailors “raving mad with drink.” 20 W.D. Bidmead wrote that seamen had both positive and negative attributes: while often intemperate, many seamen displayed courage, hardiness, tenacity and kindness. 21 These and other local histories, however, feature little sustained analysis of the social and cultural worlds of those who worked on the water, and how they shaped lives on shore. 22

Belich’s concept of “crew culture” – referring to the male subculture of labourers who worked collectively in the “progress industries”: miners, shearers, harvesters, bushmen, gumdiggers, and more – takes seamen’s lives as its leading archetype and probes deeper into their experiences. 23 Crews worked seasonally: in the case of seamen, their service usually ended with the conclusion of a voyage. Crews, then, “were constantly reshuffled, a floating pool of floating labour.” 24 However, given that all crews shared a common subculture made up of “manners, customs, slang, prejudices, dress, leisure habits, virtues and vices,” they worked as “prefabricated communities into which new members could easily slot.” 25 Crew life, Belich writes, featured dangerous work, rough living, and a decent dose of “bingeing and hitting” in between periods of work. Besides prostitutes, it also lacked women. 26 People outside of crew culture viewed crew members with a “two-faced” attitude. To non-seamen, sailors

19 Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, 24.
20 Edward Barton, Reminiscences of early days in Port Chalmers, Turnbull, Norman S. Papers (Misc-MS-111/002), Hocken Collections, University of Otago, 1, 4.
24 Belich, 428.
25 Ibid. Emphasis in the original.
represented at once the “lifeblood of British trade” but also ill-disciplined villains: “British savages” or “sailor-sinners.” According to Belich, “[c]ontemporaries were in little doubt that it was off-duty crewmen who did most bingeing, hitting and whoring, and... it was soldiers and sailors who led the way.” Belich and Atkinson offer useful ideas about the distinctive qualities and collective nature of seamen’s shipboard social and cultural worlds, but their focus on the clashes between core culture and crew culture in port – particularly seamen’s “bingeing, hitting whoring” – obscures the potential for analysis of how shipboard cultures and communities interacted with and influenced the development of their shore-based counterparts. However, their focus is not unwarranted. As the previous chapter and the next section show, seamen were far more likely to be arrested than men of any other particular occupation at the port. Other evidence about seamen’s lives ashore is elusive and, where possible, further research needs to track details of what and where seamen ate and drank in town, who they talked to, what they bought, how they entertained themselves, and who they slept with.

Seamen who braved the southern oceans and called at Port Chalmers undoubtedly endured difficult and dangerous lives at sea. Furthermore, hard work continued in port: seamen spent their days stripping down sails and rigging, and scrubbing, painting and polishing their ships. Seamen tended to stick together during their limited leisure time in Port Chalmers for several reasons. Firstly, as the “crew culture” thesis suggests, the particularities of seamen’s shipboard lives fostered a largely self-contained community. While life at sea was hierarchical, it required a collective existence, particularly among those of similar rank. Seamen lived and worked closely with one another. Loading, sailing and unloading all required co-operative labour practices. The “watch” provided membership of a basic work and social unit. Although shipboard communities were usually short-lived due to the seafaring custom of signing off at the end of each voyage, “crew culture” meant that similar social patterns re-established themselves quickly on new voyages. Secondly, many seamen, particularly those who worked on ocean-going vessels, were fundamentally different from landsmen because of their extreme mobility. The two might share a drink in the pub as momentary mates, but at the end of the night they were different. Landsmen

27 Belich, 431-433.
28 Atkinson, 135.
29 Bullen, With Christ at Sea, 85-86, 106.
often had homes and perhaps families to return to, while seamen went back to their ships and, ultimately, to sea and their next destination.

Seamen’s irregular schedules and brief stays in port limited their abilities to partake in the shore-based community life discussed in the previous chapters. Instead they engaged in more immediate and detached recreational opportunities during their stays in the small port. Some fished together from boats borrowed from local watermen or lightermen.32 Others sat in on lectures: “about sixty ‘salts’” took advantage of Rev. Isitt’s discounted admittance fees for seamen and listened to a lecture on “Old Times in Scotland” at the Wesleyan Church in August 1874.33 Many sought entertainment in hotels, where, of course, they drank. Some pubs provided entertainment targeted at seamen, such as the “free and easy” sing-along attended regularly by Frank T. Bullen and his shipmates.34 No doubt others met prostitutes in the hotels. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, evidence of prostitution in Port Chalmers is scant, perhaps because the police (and also the churches and mission to seamen, whose records also lack evidence of debate about prostitution) exercised leniency in recognition that meeting seamen’s sexual desires helped to preserve the peace. As a result of alcohol consumption, some seamen became entangled in the net of the Port Chalmers justice system.35 Port Chalmers police records and newspaper court reports are the two major sources of information on seamen’s activities in Port Chalmers.36 They highlight one of the key instances in which the threads of “crew culture” and “core culture,” or the land-based community and the seamen’s communities, were laced together.

**Seamen and crime**37

Seamen accounted for an average of 64% of arrests at Port Chalmers during the survey years 1866, 1870 and 1874.38 The criminals were predominantly aged in their twenties, literate, English, and members of the Church of England.39 Seamen’s crime

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33 *ODT*, 8 August 1874, 2.
34 Bullen, *With Christ at Sea*, 86-87; Barton, 2, 4.
35 See: table 4.3, chapter four.
36 Substantial evidence relating to other aspects of the culture of the ship in port has proved elusive.
37 The definition of crime employed in this chapter is the same as that in chapter four. The discussions of crime in this chapter are based on the same four year sample of primary source materials as chapter four.
38 Table 4.3, chapter four. Police records from 1862 did not specify the arrested person’s occupation.
39 Table 4.5, chapter four.
requires careful interpretation. Historians should be wary of explaining seamen’s crime with reference to their mobility and “outsider” status. As noted in the chapter four, Miles Fairburn and Stephen Haslett emphasized the role of “outsiders” – defined as transient individuals lacking social bonds – in colonial violent crime. At first glance seamen seem to fit the outsider designation because of their mobility, yet they were not necessarily outsiders in any general sense. They belonged to their own shipboard communities. Given the hierarchical nature of shipboard societies, common seamen did not lack the “local protectors” and “social superiors” that Fairburn and Haslett’s outsiders did.

Differences between coastal shipping and ocean-going shipping also influenced seamen’s crime at the port. Atkinson argues that coasting vessels encouraged stronger shipboard communities: smaller crews and shorter journeys fostered better living and working conditions, and therefore more fraternal workplace relations and more community. C.I. Hamilton’s work challenges the idea seamen’s crime resulted from a lack of familiarity with certain places due to transience. Hamilton’s comparison of seamen’s crime in colonial Cape Town and nearby Simon’s Town suggests that seamen were more likely to commit offences against the person and property where they: “knew more about the place, more about how it worked, where they could get what they wanted, who was who, who owned what and where they kept it.” Such knowledge of Port Chalmers – including knowledge of the police force – was more likely to be possessed by coasting seamen. The Port Chalmers police would also be more likely to know coasting seamen, and be able to keep a close watch on known trouble makers. The difficulty of distinguishing between ocean-going and coasting seamen in their crime records prohibits drawing strong conclusions on how shipboard conditions or familiarity with Port Chalmers influenced the criminal potential of visiting seamen. However, this cautions against simplistically attributing seamen’s crime to their status as “outsiders” defined by extreme transience, a lack of community, and a lack of familiarity with the local context.

The number of seamen arrested in Port Chalmers as a proportion of the total number that visited was low. In 1874, for example, Port Chalmers police arrested 265

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42 See: table 4.1, chapter four; tables A4.1 and A4.2, appendix four.
43 Atkinson, 107.
44 Hamilton, 28.
seamen out of a maximum 11,442 who passed through the port.\textsuperscript{45} The particularities of shore leave, especially access to money and alcohol, and the absence of the captain’s discipline, at least partially influenced offences such as drunkenness and violence that contravened local laws and had a direct impact on order in the town.\textsuperscript{46} The Port Chalmers police arrested similar numbers of seamen and non-seamen for drunkenness.\textsuperscript{47} On average seamen were more violent and more prone to theft than non-seamen, although the small numbers arrested for each offence weaken the comparison.\textsuperscript{48} Non-seamen made up a larger proportion of arrests for “other” offences.\textsuperscript{49}

In addition, 50% of crimes committed by seamen were committed on board ship, either at sea or while anchored at Port Chalmers.\textsuperscript{50} 93% of these shipboard offences concerned contraventions of the 1854 Merchant Shipping Act, including refusing duty, wilful disobedience of lawful commands, insubordination, embezzling goods or stores, and desertion (the remaining 7% involved violence).\textsuperscript{51} If reported by their captain upon arrival in Port Chalmers, seamen who committed offences against the Act on board ships registered in Britain or British colonies were tried in the Resident Magistrate’s Court.\textsuperscript{52}

Shipboard offences had little direct impact on community life in Port Chalmers itself, but they could entail indirect consequences. In 1861 the steamer \textit{Victory} ran aground at Wickliffe Bay soon after leaving the Heads. Captain Toogood charged the Chief Officer, George Hand, with contravening section 239 of the Merchant Shipping Act by being drunk while in charge of the vessel, thereby deserting his charge and

\textsuperscript{45} Tables A4.1 and A4.2, appendix four. Note that 8287 of these men were coasting seamen, and some would have gone directly to Dunedin on their vessels.

\textsuperscript{46} As discussed in chapter four. Other times, of course, seamen fought each other, for example: Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1870-1877, 15 July 1874, 21 December 1874 (AAWC D166 21861 3), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.

\textsuperscript{47} Similar numbers in real terms. In proportional terms, alcohol-related crimes accounted for 34% of arrests on seamen during 1866, 1870 and 1874, compared with 68% of arrests on non-seamen.

\textsuperscript{48} Note, however, that 32% of violent offences by seamen occurred on board ship, either at sea or at anchor in the harbour. Table 4.3, chapter four; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1861-1863, 20 July, 27 July 1862 (AAWC/D166/21862/11), Archives NZ, Dunedin; ODT, 19 August 1869, 3; Charge Book 1870-1877, 3 October, 15 October, 30 December 1874; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1873-1875, 27 September, 29 September, 2-3 October, 15 October 1874 (AAWC/D166/21862/15), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.

\textsuperscript{49} Table 4.3, chapter four.

\textsuperscript{50} While not technically committed on board ship, I have included desertion in this figure. Table 4.3, chapter four. C.F. seamen’s crime in Cape Town, July 1871-June 1872: Hamilton, 5.

\textsuperscript{51} See, for example: Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1861-1863, 6 June, 20 July, 27 July 1862 (AAWC/D166/2861/1), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Diary 1861-1863, 6 June, 10-11 July 1862; Charge Book 1870-1877, 30 December 1874. This small figure suggests that violence was not such a regular part of seamen’s lives as Belich implies, although it is possible that many instances of violence at sea went unreported. Belich, 432.

\textsuperscript{52} Hamilton, 7.
causing the wreck. The incident delayed the passage of English mails from Port Chalmers to Melbourne and severed several passengers’ journeys. Some passengers and crew who settled in Port Chalmers served as witnesses in trials for shipboard crimes. George Chick, second steward on the Challenger, put his new life as a small farmer in the port on hold to testify against two of his former officers for assaulting sail maker James Wilson at sea. Unruly seamen may have had an unsettling effect on passengers bound for Port Chalmers. The near-mutinous behaviour of the Tweed’s crew may have influenced the chaotic actions of its passengers. Captain Stuart complained that the majority of his crew “gave a great deal of trouble,” including feigning illness, encouraging passengers to come into the forecastle at all hours, and general “skulking.” The crew had staged a “go-slow” in their work after Stuart withheld their tobacco rations as punishment for theft of cargo.

Port Chalmers authorities clearly wanted potentially troublesome seamen kept out of town and seldom issued fines as punishments. On average 64% of seamen arrested for crimes specific to their trade were imprisoned with sentences of hard labour. Most others were discharged with orders to return to their ships immediately. Prison sentences varied markedly from days to weeks, and sometimes months. Thomas Chambers and Charles Burke of the Tweed both received one month’s imprisonment with hard labour for “continuous and wilful neglect of duty” and two months’ imprisonment with hard labour for embezzling cargo. H.M. Gunderson, also of the Tweed, received one months’ imprisonment with hard labour for wilful neglect of duty. Chambers’ contemptuous behaviour in the courthouse earned him a further fourteen days in prison.

53 The Bench found Hand guilty but reduced his sentence from the maximum penalty of six months’ imprisonment with hard labour to three months’ on the grounds that the Captain and Chief Engineer both acted negligently. In particular, the Bench admonished Captain Toogood for allowing officers and crew to purchase spirits from the vessel’s providore at the providore’s discretion. The providore collected all profits from the sale of spirits. OW, 27 July 1861, 3.
54 ODT, 19 August 1869, 3.
55 David Hastings, Over the Mountains of the Sea: Life on the Migrant Ships 1870-1885, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2006), 149-150. See also: chapter four.
56 ODT, 12 September 1874, 2.
57 Hastings, 150.
58 It may have also been possible that seamen, when given the option, preferred taking prison sentences over paying fines because they could not afford to pay and/or prison provided a change from their shipboard work. The records provide insufficient evidence to know with certainty.
59 The imprisonment rate fell over time: from 76% in 1866, to 63% in 1870, to 55% in 1874. Derived from: Charge Book 1861-1863; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870; (AAWC/D166/21861/2), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Charge Book 1870-1877.
60 ODT, 12 September 1874, 2. John Chiddle received seven days’ imprisonment with hard labour for willful disobedience on board the ship England’s Glory on 11 October 1870. Two weeks later he received
The laws prescribed by the Merchant Shipping Act tended to favour captains and ship owners over seamen.\textsuperscript{61} Magistrates and the police neither wanted to encourage disobedience and desertion nor alienate merchants and ships’ captains.\textsuperscript{62} Few seamen had the surplus funds required to sue their superiors in court.\textsuperscript{63} The Act, therefore, could encourage negative views of the shore and its inhabitants, particularly the police, amongst seamen. Those who transgressed the laws at sea arrived expecting punishment.\textsuperscript{64} However not all seamen charged with offences against the Merchant Shipping Act were scoundrels. Evidence of life at sea suggests that it could be unfair, harsh, and sometimes brutal. Captains and superior officers could be unjust. Seamen, according to Markus Rediker, were caught “between the devil and the deep blue sea”: between a captain who possessed “near-dictatorial” powers and the danger of the ocean.\textsuperscript{65} Offences such as refusing duty could be legitimate protests against unfavourable conditions in some cases.\textsuperscript{66} Seamen could exploit the lack of replacement workers at sea and use the withdrawal of their labour as a powerful weapon against their superiors.\textsuperscript{67} Seamen often defied the Act in groups, further demonstrating the collective nature of their existence. In 1862, for example, the Port Chalmers police received twenty-four complaints about desertion. However, these twenty-four instances of desertion involved seventy-five individual seamen.\textsuperscript{68}

Some seamen sought legal redress against their superiors upon reaching port. Any successes were usually partial.\textsuperscript{69} Most cases involved complaints about violence or inadequate provisions. In an unusual 1863 civil case, the Bench ordered the Captain of the Electric to pay half of the damages requested by a seaman plaintiff for false imprisonment. The seaman, named Morrice, had been locked in the water closet and charged with disobeying lawful commands for refusing to unload a bullock. The Bench dismissed the Captain’s case on the grounds that cattle were not included as cargo in the

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\textsuperscript{61} Hamilton, 17.
\textsuperscript{62} Atkinson, 102.
\textsuperscript{63} In 1862 a summons cost 5 shillings at the Port Chalmers Resident Magistrate’s Court. Each witness called incurred a further charge of two shillings and six pence: \textit{ODT}, 27 June 1862, 5.
\textsuperscript{64} Hamilton, 7-9.
\textsuperscript{65} Rediker, 5; Steel, 109.
\textsuperscript{66} Hamilton, 18; Marian Hutchinson, “Bound for New Zealand: Seamen under sail and steam in the nineteenth century,” (MA Thesis, University of Auckland, 1995), 12, 113-114.
\textsuperscript{67} Atkinson, 96-102. See also: Hastings, \textit{Over the Mountains of the Sea}, 144-156.
\textsuperscript{68} Table A.4.4, appendix four. See also: \textit{OW}, 12 October 1861, 9; Diary 1861-1863, 20 November 1862; Charge Book 1870-1877, 17 April 1874.
\textsuperscript{69} Hamilton, 7-10; Diary 1861-1863, 12 June 1862; \textit{ODT}, 12 August 1862, 4; \textit{ODT}, 6 February 1866, 4; Atkinson, 96.
ship’s articles. Morrice then brought a case against the Captain for false imprisonment. The Bench accepted the defence’s argument that Morrice was bound by the articles to obey his superiors’ orders, but they deemed the punishment “un-English” and awarded Morrice £10. Shore leave offered potential informal ways of achieving redress, such as assaulting a superior in a darkened alley, yet a lack of evidence suggests that any instances of this sort went unreported and undetected by the Port Chalmers police.

The shore also offered the chance to escape poor wages and harsh discipline, and the opportunity to begin a new life: both push and pull factors were at play. In the early years gold provided an irresistible lure to desert. Desertion could cost captains dearly in time and money, due both to the loss of business and the inflating effect that scarce labour had on wages. Colonist George O’Halloran described how seamen at Port Chalmers deserted in such high numbers during the early phase of the goldrush that ships could not be unloaded and dispatched for their next voyage. O’Halloran himself spent three weeks helping to unload a cargo of timber in hope of securing work on that vessel’s next assignment, however the captain could not find enough hands once the job was complete and O’Halloran was forced to find work elsewhere. Some captains attempted to combat the problem by imposing strict curfews on seamen. Failure to turn up in time could result in arrest for desertion or absence without leave.

Desertion made up an average of about one fifth of the arrests made on seamen in Port Chalmers. Many deserters, however, evaded capture. In 1862 the police apprehended a mere six deserters out of a total of seventy-five reported. More most likely went unreported and some captains instructed the police not to bother looking for deserters. Having reported four deserters one night, the captain of the Sorata granted his entire crew leave to go ashore the following day, effectively offering them the opportunity to run away. The captain told police he would not punish those who sought

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70 OW, 28 November 1863, 5.
71 Hamilton, 18-19.
72 OW, 10 August 1861, 4; H.O. Bowman, Port Chalmers: Gateway to Otago, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1948), 59.
73 Steel, 135.
74 George O’Halloran autobiography, (ATL Ms-Papers-1345/1), 12.
75 Atkinson, 109.
76 19% on average for the 1862, 1866, 1870, 1874 sample. Though low in 1862, arrests for desertion as a proportion of arrests on seamen rose in the latter three years: 7% in 1862, 27% in 1866, to 24% in 1870, to 22% in 1874. Table A4.4, appendix four.
77 Charge Book, 1861-1863.
to desert. The Bench either imprisoned deserters or discharged them with orders to return to their ships. Many left Port Chalmers as quickly as possible. Others used the opportunity to lay low for a while before signing on to another ship for a higher wage. Local anecdotes suggest that Port Chalmers residents treated deserting seamen with kindness rather than viewing them as a threat and reporting them to police. Many deserters escaped in boats while others swam ashore. Some bids for freedom ended in tragedy. On numerous occasions death brought members of both communities together as the coroner held inquests over the bodies of seamen drowned in the Otago Harbour.

Overall, investigation into the crimes behind the statistics reveals that seamen’s crime at Port Chalmers was of a specific nature. Seamen committed the same offences as members of the land-based community discussed in the previous chapter in relatively similar numbers, but a significant proportion of seamen were arrested for shipboard transgressions that had limited impact on life in the port. The solidarity amongst seamen often evidenced in offences against the Merchant Shipping Act demonstrates how the tough discipline of shipboard life generated responses that were both centripetal and centrifugal, depending on the observer’s point of view. Shipboard conditions helped to generate a seamen’s community, but seamen’s methods of release in port, often focused around drinking, represented a visible centrifugal influence for some members of the land-based community. As discussed in chapter four, a penchant for drink suggested a moral failing to some. The Otago Seamen’s Mission began as an attempt to reform seamen’s moral condition through evangelical Christianity. By 1875 this goal remained alongside a more practical emphasis on providing respectable leisure alternatives for seamen in the port. Like temperance movements, the mission’s aims were designed to

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78 Diary 1861-1863, 24 August 1862. See also: Diary 1861-1863, 23 August, 23 September, 5 November 1862. Other Captains, however, offered rewards for the apprehension of deserters. Diary 1861-1863, 23 August 1862.
79 Table A4.4, appendix four. The imprisonment rate fluctuated: 90% in 1866, 36% in 1870, and 80% in 1874.
80 Bowman claimed that some deserters became “leading citizens” of the town in later years. Bowman, 59.
81 Colonial wages for seamen were much higher than those paid out from metropolitan ports. Seamen who signed on at Port Chalmers could command a monthly wage of £20-£25, while seamen who shipped out of metropolitan ports might be paid as low as £4 10s per month. Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 41; Steel, 135.
82 Bowman, 193; Church, Port Chalmers and its people, 26.
83 See, for example: OW, 3 August 1861, 5; Diary 1861-1863, 18 February, 20-21 February 1862; Otago Police Gazette, no. 10, (3 March 1862).
improve the moral and economic wellbeing of the port and wider colony as well as the wellbeing of individual seamen.\textsuperscript{84}

The Otago Seamen’s Mission

Members of the settled Port Chalmers community attempted to foster social links with the seamen’s community through the Otago Seamen’s Mission. However the port’s lack of wharf facilities initially forced missionary H.L Gilbert to carry out most of his work off shore. This helped to maintain a separation between the two communities. The mission entered a new phase following the completion of the Bowen Pier and Gilbert’s retirement in 1873. Its focus shifted from shipboard services to services on land, and the provision of space on shore for sailors to congregate, read, and write letters. This shift led to greater integration of seamen with the general population of the town. Although maligned by Belich as a manifestation of the core culture’s “two-faced” approach to seamen, “a specialist maritime branch of evangelism, seeking to save savage sailor-sinners,” missions to seamen can be situated in the context of the original British “home missions” that aimed to revitalize Christianity in poor urban communities where industrialization and urbanization had disrupted patterns of religious life.\textsuperscript{85}

On 2 July 1863, Captain William Thomson gathered “a number of gentlemen connected with shipping and having an interest in the welfare of sailors” together in the Port Chalmers schoolhouse to discuss establishing a mariners’ church at the port.\textsuperscript{86} Thomson and Captain Hedger of the Helena addressed the meeting on their experiences with seamen and the successes of missions to seamen in other ports.\textsuperscript{87} The meeting founded the “Port of Otago Bethel Union Society,” with the object of caring for the “moral and religious welfare” of visiting seamen. The attendees elected a committee of fourteen men, including Rev. Johnstone and the Wesleyan Rev. Bunn, along with some

\textsuperscript{84} Burton, “Boundaries and identities in the nineteenth-century English port,” 138.
\textsuperscript{85} Belich, 431; Callum Brown, Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 102-103. The tradition of missions to the urban poor continued in some places in colonial New Zealand: Atkinson, 149.
\textsuperscript{86} OW, 4 July 1863, 4; OW, 24 December 1864, 15.
\textsuperscript{87} On other missions to seamen, see: Dutchie, 155-173; Roald Kverndal, “The Origin and Nature of Nordic Missions to Seamen,” Sjøfartshistorisk Arbok – Norwegian Yearbook of Maritime History, (1977): 103-134; Russell-Wood, 41-42.
Dunedin merchants. The meeting decided that the mission would be an inter-denominational effort with a non-denominational orientation in practice. The Society would be “open to all denominations holding the essential doctrines of Protestant faith,” and any Protestant minister would be able to attend meetings.\(^{88}\) The mission’s first service, led by Rev. Harding, took place on board the *Helena* at 3pm on Sunday 5 July.\(^{89}\)

Gilbert, appointed seamen’s missionary in late-1863, carried out the bulk of the mission’s work for the best part of ten years. Gilbert possessed excellent credentials for the job. Born in Cornwall, he had gone to sea at the age of twelve and worked his way up from boy to first mate by the time he was nineteen. Gilbert migrated to Otago with his wife and family in 1860 after a period of mine work in Cornwall. He joined the diggings in 1861 and met with some success. During this period he earned the nickname “Holy Joe” for holding Sunday services for miners. According to Ian Church, Gilbert acquired his “fervent, fluent and forceful” preaching style through self-education. He returned to Dunedin to carry out missionary work on behalf of Knox Church in May 1862, before the Synod transferred him to the Bethel Union Mission at Port Chalmers the following year.\(^{90}\)

As seaman’s missionary Gilbert laboured tirelessly “among the floating and ever-changing population who flow and ebb like the tides on our shores... who, but for the efforts of this mission, would be without the means of grace.”\(^{91}\) The society aimed to establish a mariners’ church on land, yet funds were short and such a facility was not founded until after Gilbert vacated the missionary role.\(^{92}\) The missionary, therefore, performed the majority of his tasks on the water with the aid of the Society’s boat. He regularly visited the shipping while the crews worked during the day, seeking the captains’ permission to hold services aboard their vessels. He held prayer and conversation meetings in the cabins or forecastles of ships on weeknights, and held two or three services on different ships on the Sabbath. He addressed immigrants before they disembarked in Port Chalmers and crews of out-going vessels on the night before

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\(^{88}\) Non-denominationalism characterized most British and American missions, while Nordic missions were usually organized by the state and therefore followed the national church. Kverndal, “The Origin and Nature of Nordic Missions to Seamen,” 103-134.

\(^{89}\) *OW*, 4 July 1863, 4; Bowman, 151.


\(^{91}\) *ODT*, 10 February 1870, 3.

\(^{92}\) *OW*, 4 July 1863, 4.
their departure. He held Sabbath evening services at a store on the shore for watermen and others who did not attend other places of worship. He also ministered to the isolated outlying populations around Port Chalmers: once a month to the pilots, signalmen and others at the Heads; once a month to the population at Portobello; and occasionally to the scattered lower harbour population. Gilbert distributed tracts and Bibles to any who required them.93

Behind the missionary’s front-line labour, two committees, one for Dunedin and one for Port Chalmers, managed the mission’s affairs and sought funding to maintain its efforts. The mission drew funds from a variety of sources: community involvement in the Bethel Union Mission lay primarily in its provision of financial support. The port’s Protestant congregations and Presbyterian congregations from around the province provided a significant proportion of funding, and men with shipping-related business interests in Dunedin and Port Chalmers contributed subscriptions.94 The missionary himself made small collections from amongst the shipping. Gilbert also made four lengthy journeys around the province to collect funds. In 1872, for example, he toured the goldfields for ten weeks, travelling over 1000 miles, preaching and lecturing sixty-seven times, and raising £104.95 The sums gathered paid for the missionary’s salary (£209 in 1868),96 maintenance of the Society’s boat, the missionary’s travel expenses, and the purchase of Bibles and hymn books (tracts were usually donated).

However, the mission endured periods of financial hardship.97 The committee temporarily dismissed Gilbert in 1866 when funds dried up. In spite of petitions in support of the mission signed by residents of Port Chalmers, residents of the Heads and masters of vessels, and a letter of support from Rev. Johnstone, the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland declined to adopt the mission as one of its own, preferring instead to initiate a collection in its aid.98 While this helped to keep the mission afloat, Gilbert continued to struggle. His provincial tours, largely efforts to help fill the mission’s coffers, added to his already demanding workload and left seamen without the

93 OW, 4 July 1863, 4; OW, 24 December 1864, 15; OW, 5 August 1865, 11; ODT, 31 January 1866, 4; ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5; OW, 13 February 1869, 17; ODT, 17 November 1869, 2; ODT, 10 February 1870, 3; ODT, 4 July 1872, 2.
94 According to Bowman, “the Superintendent of the Province, members of the Provincial Council and leading business men of Dunedin were among the best supporters of the Mission.” Bowman, 151.
95 ODT, 4 July 1872, 2. See also: ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5; OW, 13 February 1869, 17; ODT, 10 February 1870, 3.
96 ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5.
97 One Aberdeen mission also experienced financial hardship: Duthie, 156-157. On the Otago Mission's financial difficulties, see: OW, 5 August 1865, 11; ODT, 20 August 1866, 6.
98 ODT, 10 January 1867, 5.
services of a missionary for long periods of time. Gilbert worked under these demanding conditions until he tendered his resignation in June 1873.  

As Gilbert’s ministry ended, a new missionary effort emerged. While in principle an inter-denominational effort and non-denominational in practice, Gilbert’s appointment as missionary, the close reliance on the financial support of Presbyterian congregations, the appeal to the Synod, and the involvement of figures such as Johnstone and Thomson in the committee’s executive rendered the mission a Presbyterian-flavoured affair. Following Gilbert’s resignation, A.R. Falconer, an evangelical Christian, took up the cause of the mission. What records remain suggest that he took this on largely as a personal crusade without the support of the Bethel Union Mission Society committee, which ceased activity after Gilbert’s resignation.

Falconer, like Gilbert, had first evangelized among goldminers, running a successful “Diggers’ Rest” in Hokitika. He arrived in Port Chalmers in 1871 to set up business as a hairdresser, and noted the need for active evangelising amongst the seamen. Wharf developments meant that an increasing number of seamen were able to spend time on shore, but the lack of a train service before 1873 confined them to Port Chalmers. Falconer focused on developing facilities for seamen’s religious instruction and leisure on shore. In this sense his mission was more passive than Gilbert’s, for it required seamen to seek it out themselves rather than being brought directly to their ship. He instituted a Sunday evening service and sing-along, initially held in the Court House with the permission of the Resident Magistrate and devout Anglican A.C. Strode, and later in Dodson’s Bond on the waterfront. Falconer also opened a room in his George Street premises as a “Sailors’ Rest,” thus fulfilling the long-term objective of the prior mission to provide a shore-based facility in which seamen could congregate outside of the pub. Falconer worked steadily to raise funds for...

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99 ODT, 18 June 1873, 2.
101 Falconer, The Harbour Reached, 19; Bowman, 151-152.
102 Frank T. Bullen, for example, had socialized exclusively with other sailors at Port Chalmers before he accidentally discovered Falconer’s services at “Dodson’s Bond”. Bullen, With Christ at Sea, 86-88.
103 Bullen, “The Change in the Starboard Watch,” 18; Falconer, The Harbour Reached, 19, 23; Bowman, 151-152.
a purpose-built facility and in 1881 the Port Chalmers Sailors’ Rest building, with seating for 150 people, opened on George Street.\textsuperscript{104}

Evidence left by the evangelists themselves suggests that both missions enjoyed positive results. Gilbert reported to the committee at the Society’s annual meetings, which were sometimes accompanied by soirees and musical performances. Over the years he told of modest successes: welcoming attitudes from masters and crew alike, attentive ears, and decreasing numbers of seamen requiring Bibles.\textsuperscript{105} Like the rest of the committee, he lamented the lack of a mariner’s church on land. But while this compromised the mission’s efficiency, Gilbert acknowledged that the smaller meetings on board ships enabled him to converse with sailors face to face. He valued his weeknight meetings in the forecastle, which he likened to pastoral visits, because of the opportunity for imparting religious instruction afforded by conversation and question and answer sessions.\textsuperscript{106} During these visits, Gilbert discovered that “the men were more impressionable and well-disposed towards the cause... than their outward demeanour might evince.”\textsuperscript{107} Gilbert’s findings indicate that some seamen willingly engaged with Christianity on an individual level in spite of crew group dynamics that could engender apathetic and occasionally hostile attitudes.\textsuperscript{108} This lends support to arguments advanced by historians such as John Stenhouse that working class men were often interested in religion and could be actively involved in churches.\textsuperscript{109} In his final report in 1872, Gilbert admitted that although he could not report many conversions for the past year, “like the husbandman who had sown in hope, he must patiently wait for the harvest, knowing it was the Lord’s prerogative to give the increase.”\textsuperscript{110} However, like most missionaries, Gilbert’s work involved more than spiritual education, and he “became a social worker in a real sense, being frequently employed in helping the men out of their moral and material difficulties.”\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{104} Falconer, \textit{The Harbour Reached}, 26; Bowman, 154.
\textsuperscript{105} OW, 24 December 1864, 15; OW, 5 August 1865, 11; ODT, 31 January 1866, 4; ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5; OW, 13 February 1869, 17; ODT, 17 November 1869, 2; ODT, 10 February 1870, 3; ODT, 4 July 1872, 2.
\textsuperscript{106} ODT, 10 February 1870, 3.
\textsuperscript{107} OW, 5 August 1865, 11. See also: ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5.
\textsuperscript{108} According to Frank T. Bullen, a “Holy Joe,” or Christian evangelist, was “seldom welcome in a ship’s forecastle.” Bullen, “The Change in the Starboard Watch,” 9.
\textsuperscript{110} ODT, 4 July 1872, 2.
\textsuperscript{111} Bowman, 151.
No doubt based on his understanding of seafaring life from personal experience, Gilbert perceived his work as serving a wider purpose than only caring for the spiritual welfare of seamen. Gilbert believed that in ministering to seamen – a “noble class of men who have been the bulwark of the British nation, and whose energies in connection with commerce are adding so much to our colonial greatness and domestic comfort” – he also served the people of the empire in general, especially those in the settler colonies. It is likely that many benefactors of the mission shared this view, not least the merchants who paid subscriptions to the Society and sat on its committee and whose businesses depended on seamen. The committee frequently heard from ships’ captains and others about the efficacy of similar missionary work in other ports worldwide. However, the mission’s difficulty in securing financial support might indicate that the wider community’s commitment to seafarers was partial. Falconer’s success in raising funds for the Sailors’ Rest in the late-1870s calls this notion into question. Falconer may simply have been a better fundraiser, but it may also have been that sufficient expendable wealth to maintain such a charitable cause only became commonplace as Port Chalmers society matured through the 1870s. On the other hand, the increase in funding might have indicated a growing concern with the threat seamen’s behaviour posed to the respectability of the Port Chalmers community: a heightened expression of the way in which perceived centrifugal influences generated centripetal, community-building activity. With so many variables at work it is unclear as to exactly why the second phase of the mission experienced more financial success than the first.

As noted above, Falconer’s style of mission differed from Gilbert’s. Falconer was not a preacher himself, but styled himself as a “social worker,” leaving local

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112 _ODT_, 10 February 1870, 3.
113 In Aberdeen, individuals such as ship owners, shipbuilders, captains, shore-based maritime manufacturers, and others with shipping interests supported missions to seamen for the dual purposes of affirming their position in the harbour side community and emergent middle class, and satisfying a philanthropic and paternalistic urge to assist the labourers upon whom their businesses depended and whose working conditions were far from ideal. It became particularly important to reinforce this paternalistic presence during industrial conflict, and when middle-class individuals with shipping interests began moving their residences from the harbour side area to wealthier areas of the city. Duthie, 157-158, 164-165.
114 _OW_, 4 July 1863, 4; _ODT_, 31 January 1866, 4; _OW_, 13 February 1869, 17; _ODT_, 17 November 1869, 2.
115 Other variables include the fact that Falconer raised money for a building, rather than a salary, and that Falconer’s mission promoted other ways in which the community could be involved without contributing financially, such as by taking seamen into local homes.
ministers to perform divine services. Falconer also encouraged others in the community to welcome seamen into their homes, discuss Christianity with them, and to provide friendship and comfort while in port, thus fostering more direct links between local Christians and visiting seamen. Andrew Thomson, Congregationalist, ships’ chandler and member of the Bethel Society committee since its inception, provided such hospitality enthusiastically in his family home. In contrast to Gilbert, Falconer reported more spiritual successes. Sabbath services in Dodson’s Bond, he later wrote, frequently filled the store to its capacity of 500-600 people. Inside, “[m]en of many Nations, kindred, and tongues, quietly [listened] to the Gospel of the grace of God. Scarcely ever a meeting was held without professed conversions.”

The Bond, kindly loaned by publican George Dodson, represented another key site in which the threads of both communities were laced together. Members of the land-based community, such as Brethren evangelist Alfred Brunton and his choir of Port Chalmers men and women, assisted with the service. Both the atmosphere of the Bond and the importance of Christian friends in the port feature prominently in the narrative of Frank T. Bullen, a notable convert of Falconer’s mission.

Converted to Christianity at Port Chalmers in 1875, Bullen described his experiences with Falconer’s mission in his “religious autobiography” *With Christ at Sea.* Later an author of maritime literature, Bullen arrived at the port from London as an ordinary seaman aboard the *Rangitikei.* He described himself as viewing religion with antipathy, a position he attributed to the majority of seamen. One Sunday night the sound of singing enticed Bullen and a companion into Dodson’s Bond. A man handed them Bibles and ushered them to a seat, where Brunton’s choir entertained them. The service moved Bullen:

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119 Bullen, *With Christ at Sea,* 87-89; Church, *Port Chalmers and its people,* 92.
120 Bullen, *With Christ at Sea.* See also: Bullen, “The Change in the Starboard Watch.”
122 Bullen, *With Christ at Sea,* 87-89.
There were no tricks of oratory, no declamation, no attempt to frighten; indeed, it was a tender appeal from a heart overflowing with loving desire to help a fellow wayfarer out of the darkness into the Lightened Way of Life.123

At the conclusion of the service a member of the choir invited Bullen and his companion to a local home for refreshments. The people made the pair feel at home, and remarked that “we felt that we had made quite a large circle of friends, each one of whom would be glad to see us at any reasonable time.”124 The “gentle, cultured people” of Port Chalmers continued to provide Bullen with warm hospitality and an education in manners on subsequent visits.125 He later praised the cooperation and tolerance of the Protestant denominations in Port Chalmers, and expressed his pleasure at never having felt forced to join any particular one.126 Falconer published a pamphlet of other seamen’s similar testimonies of life-changing experiences in 1901.127 For these men, the mission provided integration into a new community as well as spiritual fulfilment.

In the absence of primary sources beyond those left by evangelists and others interested in promoting their mission’s achievements, we simply do not know how influential their work was amongst seamen at Port Chalmers. Questions also remain about how Catholic seamen experienced the “non-denominational” yet exclusively Protestant missions.128 While the archive lacks seamen’s individual voices and figures for their involvement, there are indicators of seamen’s gratitude and willingness to engage with the land-based population. The petitions presented to the Synod in support of Gilbert’s mission, the money donated, the boat gifted to the Society by a group of seafarers, and the letters to the missionary from grateful seamen show that many appreciated Gilbert’s work.129 The “salts” that turned up to the lecture in the Wesleyan Church mentioned above demonstrated that seamen were interested in the ideas and community experiences that the land-based community had to offer.

Whether or not we accept the accounts provided by Gilbert, Falconer and Bullen without question, evidence relating to both missions challenges Belich’s strict dichotomy between “crew” and “core” cultures. Although separate in a number of ways, there were significant overlaps between the two in Port Chalmers, and fewer clashes

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123 Ibid, 94.
124 Bullen, With Christ at Sea, 103.
125 Ibid, 114.
126 Ibid, 110-111.
127 Falconer, “On the Fo’c’s’le Head.”
128 In addition to the mission’s stated Protestant orientation, Bullen remarked that the Catholic Church “could not allow any of her sons to work with heretics.” With Christ at Sea, 111.
129 OW, 5 August 1865, 11; ODT, 8 January 1868, 4-5.
than Belich’s argument suggest. Men like Gilbert, an ex-“salt” working amongst seamen on behalf of the land-based community, straddled both communities. Furthermore, the supporters of the Port Chalmers mission had all experienced a long sea journey as first generation migrants. This experience could either unsettle or entrench preconceived ideas about seamen, but all colonists arrived with some understanding of shipboard lives. Although research on shipboard relations between migrants and seamen to date has tended to echo the “crew culture” thesis and emphasize clashes between seamen and migrants, Angela McCarthy has noted instances in which passengers struck up congenial relations with crew. Future research into colonial missions to seamen could explore the extent to which empathy with seamen’s lives born out of the migrant shipboard experience shaped these sorts of initiatives.

Conclusion

While the mission to seamen fostered important links between seamen and the shore-based community, it also provided an object that the shore-based community could work together for and thus strengthen their own community life. In this way it was as much another indirect impact of seamen’s presence at Port Chalmers as a direct interchange between the sea and land, and demonstrates the role mobility played in making place and community. Seamen and non-seamen experienced limited shore-based interaction in Port Chalmers, due in particular to the small size of the port and its lack of a distinct sailortown. Historiography and romantic local history accounts have been unkind to seamen: my analysis of seamen’s crime at the port shows they created fewer disturbances in Port Chalmers than their prominence in crime statistics initially suggests, in spite of their high mobility and the obstacles it presented to integrating into the networks of social bonds enjoyed by the land-based community. The lack of financial support for Gilbert’s mission may suggest that Port Chalmers’ land-based community simply did not perceive seamen as a nuisance. Disregarding crimes committed on board ship, the Port Chalmers police arrested seamen at similar rates to 130 Angela McCarthy, Irish Migrants in New Zealand, 1840-1937: ‘The Desired Haven’, (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2005), 109-110. Colonial newspapers often featured letters from groups of colonists expressing thanks for their ship’s safe and comfortable passage. These, however, were usually addressed the captain and officers rather than the crew, but further research into these sources may provide more evidence of migrant impressions of seamen. See, for example: OW, 12 October 1861, 4.
non-seamen. Arrests for shipboard crimes must be interpreted carefully, with the biases of the Merchant Shipping Act taken into consideration. Furthermore, evidence from Port Chalmers and elsewhere suggests that seamen were not necessarily “atoms” or “outsiders” and that they enjoyed ship-based community bonds of their own. Although constantly on the move, they took their community with them. These bonds endured on land and helped to maintain a degree of separation between seamen and non-seamen, which, if not entirely peaceful, worked to minimize tensions in colonial Port Chalmers.
Conclusions

Strong community formation processes played out in colonial Port Chalmers. The port’s patterns of social organization do not fit Miles Fairburn’s atomization model. Colonists forged tight social bonds throughout the port’s pioneering phase of high population growth and mobility during the 1860s and 1870s. In the introduction to this thesis I outlined a definition of community that included shared values, ideologies, assumptions, interactions and interdependencies. At a fundamental level, colonists in Port Chalmers demonstrated that they valued associational culture and mutualism by establishing and participating in churches, Sunday schools, lodges, a mechanics’ institute, temperance organizations and a mission to seamen amongst other things. They pooled resources, interacted, and depended on each other’s help and cooperation to fulfil needs and desires including sociability, spirituality, fraternity, financial security, education and entertainment. Far from seeking minimal social bonds and individualism, colonists enthusiastically rebuilt and participated in Old World associational frameworks that migration had interrupted.

Yet colonists came from varied cultural backgrounds and brought different and sometimes competing values. They belonged to different religious denominations. Some went to church every week while others reserved their attendance for special occasions. Some favoured Sunday as a quiet day of rest while others saw it as a day for extra work or recreation. Some enjoyed a drink in the pub while others considered drinking socially disruptive and perhaps immoral. These divergences did contribute to the development of distinct groups and sub-groups within the town. The port’s numerous interest groups represented communities with their own social boundaries: the Presbyterians, the Freemasons, the regular churchgoers, and the community of men who sought sociability in the pub, for example. Significant social boundaries along gender lines also differentiated women’s and men’s experiences of aspects of community in the port: women were excluded from executive positions in all of the port’s voluntary institutions and from membership altogether in others.

Linda Colley, however, has argued that identity is not like a hat: people can “wear” multiple identities concurrently and interchange them according to context.¹ Community in Port Chalmers operated in much the same way. Individual colonists

belonged to numerous small, tightly bonded, and overlapping communities that enjoyed links of varying strengths to one another. Presbyterians, for example, enjoyed stronger links with the Methodist congregation than the patrons of the George Hotel. But an overarching community enveloped the smaller divisions. Gender considerations aside, the most significant divide in the port was between the community of seamen, rooted in the culture of the ship and maritime work, and the community of non-seamen. However even these communities overlapped and their interactions produced some positive results.

Port Chalmers’ particular characteristics as a place help to explain how colonists produced an overarching community out of their differences. The port’s small size, its nature as a busy shipping port, and especially the constant ebb and flow of a mobile population shaped community formation. Recognising that mobility was the lifeblood of the port’s existence, colonists mitigated its inherent unsettling influences by developing associations with flexible boundaries. This extended the benefits of community to both settled colonists and those who were in motion, albeit unevenly between men and women. Community networks of sociability and shared endeavour, and the institutional and emotional mechanisms of social control that went with them, helped to transform “outsiders” into “insiders” and thus check potential atomizing tendencies towards drunkenness, violence and loneliness usually associated with a mobile population.

Port Chalmers was significantly more established in 1875 than the early-1860s, but on-going high mobility helped to maintain the pioneering mind-set that fostered a need to work together for the greater good. Colonists downplayed the divisive potential of their different values in the interests of mutualism, sociability and cohesion. By 1875, for example, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Congregationalist and Anglican congregations existed within a wider ecumenical Protestant community that socialized together and worked together on issues of common interest such as the mission to seamen and temperance (although with less support from Anglicans on the latter). Pubs remained important centres of sociability while fledgling temperance organizations and the Presbyterian Church largely focused on changing the drinking culture by moral suasion, rather than targeting the publicans that performed positive roles in the community inside and outside of their businesses. It seems likely that the police force treated a cohort of prostitutes leniently in recognition that allowing for the needs of sailors and other men to be met helped to maintain order amongst those populations that had the potential to be unruly. Port Chalmers demonstrates that paying attention to mobility as a defining
feature of colonial places, and to mobility’s influence not only as a destabilizing force but also as a stimulant to community building, could reshape understandings of colonial community formation.

Community did not signify the complete absence of atomizing forces and their symptoms in Port Chalmers. Some Presbyterians transgressed their Church’s accepted norms of behaviour, and severed ties with religion as defined by the minister and elders in response to the Session’s attempts to discipline them. Institutions like the Mechanics’ Institute and mission to seamen faced financial hardship. Seamen and non-seamen drank to excess and sometimes hit each other or committed other anti-social crimes. Widespread disorder, however, did not characterize life in the port. Histories of colonial community formation need to address both community building and atomizing forces rather than conceiving of the debate as an either/or question.

Colonists actually built community by negotiating a balance between centrifugal and centripetal forces. Temperance organizations and the mission to seamen, for example, were in part manifestations of imported social movements from Britain and America, but they also emerged as direct responses to visible social issues in the port. Similarly, histories of colonial community formation need to examine the characteristics of both settled and mobile colonists as well as the features of their interactions. The low rate of violent crime and the successes of ventures such as the mission to seamen in knitting mobile and settled populations together challenge assumptions that the two necessarily clashed when they came into contact.

In the introduction I posited the importance of place-centred local studies to understanding how colonialism played out on the ground by accounting for local particularities. Focusing on Port Chalmers has highlighted the role of mobility in defining place and revealed new insights into the ways in which mobility shaped colonial community formation. However looking almost solely at Port Chalmers primary sources narrowed the body of primary material for my study. Focusing on an early period lacking detailed Census data, electoral rolls, and street directories prevented the construction of a Caversham-style database in which ethnicity, gender, occupation and religious affiliation could all be correlated.² If the volume of primary

sources available for colonial Port Chalmers is indicative of the size of the archive for other similar local contexts, future researchers exploring colonial community formation in places like Port Chalmers prior to the 1880s may need to look at wider contexts – perhaps the provincial level – in order to find sufficient primary evidence with which to draw meaningful generalisations on certain issues. While they will lose some of the sense of how the specificities of local places shaped community formation, they will gain nuance in other areas.

A fuller study of community formation in colonial Port Chalmers could approach the topic from four additional angles. Firstly, it could scrutinize primary sources relating to community formation across the Otago colony as a whole to provide more insights into issues for which source material for the port is lacking, including how ethnic differences may have shaped everyday experiences of community in lieu of explicitly ethnic associations, and how Catholics experienced community. A wider body of primary sources could also help to nuance understandings of the different gendered experiences of community. Further research could look harder at women’s neighbourhood ties, but my study has shown that men also formed tight bonds through institutions such as lodges as well as communities of labour. Future histories of colonial community formation need to be more attentive to the experiences of ordinary men such as Alfred Smith, the labourer and bachelor whose funeral attracted such a large attendance in the port, as well as collective labourers such as seamen who formed shipboard communities. Secondly, a fuller study of the port could also engage in a deeper investigation of the colonists’ varied cultural backgrounds and the different norms and aspirations they brought with them: emphasis on the colonial environmental factors that shaped community formation needs to be balanced with appreciation of colonists’ imported values. Thirdly, comparative work comparing Port Chalmers with different colonial ports as well as other less mobile places would help to sharpen understandings of the ways in which mobility shaped community formation.

Finally, biographical studies of individuals or families would further illuminate the particularities of life in the port. Exploring the lives of individual colonists would help to nuance our understandings of the values behind the new society they worked to build. Although often cohesive, community life emerged out of the intersections of a diverse range of individual lives that co-existed in Port Chalmers. The characters

featured in this study illustrate the complex and multi-layered texture of colonial life, in which the varied experiences of figures as different as Bridget Penny, Frank Bullen, Alexander Cameron, John Joyce, George Dodson, Mary Coleman and Mrs William Johnstone were woven together through the shared circumstances of migration and life in a particular local place.
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**Chapters in edited collections**


Bueltmann, Tanja, Andrew Hinson and Graeme Morton. “Introduction: Diaspora, Associations and Scottish Identity.” In *Ties of Bluid, Kin and Countrie: Scottish
Fairburn, Miles, and Stephen Haslett. “Did Wellington Province from the 1850s to 1930 Have a Distinctive Social Pattern?” In The Making of Wellington 1800-1914,


**Articles**


Bentley, Jerry H. “Sea and Ocean Basins as Frameworks of Historical Analysis.”  


Theses


**Oral Presentations**


Clarke, Alison. “Popular piety, the sacraments and Calvinism in Colonial New Zealand.” At Calvin Rediscovered conference, Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Dunedin, 24 August 2009.


**Websites**


Appendix One: Limitations of the interpretation of “crime” in chapter four

Crime statistics do not record the full extent of acts that break the law. Many instances of drunkenness and other forms of misbehaviour in Port Chalmers undoubtedly occurred out of public view and escaped the attention of both church authorities and the police and courts. Historians of law, crime, and policing have argued that crime rates are contingent upon definitions of crimes and the nature of law enforcement by the police and courts: what appears as a “crime wave” might be better explained as a “control wave” in some situations. Histories of crime, therefore, must take account of the social, cultural and moral values and issues of power at play in the making of laws, in their enforcement, and on the reportage of “crime” in the newspapers. They must also consider the contexts in which behaviour deemed “criminal” occurred, including the values of the offenders themselves and the values of other members of the community. These values are seldom articulated through official sources and need to be traced through wider research.

It has been beyond the scope of this study to explore the values that influenced the actual formulation of laws in colonial Otago in detail. My use of official records to denote crime rests on the assumption that laws broadly reflected the values of the wider population, given that the colony was a democracy. A more detailed study would explore this assumption and the factors at play on it, not least the fact that only men who owned property of a certain value were enfranchised during this period. It would also investigate the public debates across Otago over perceived social ills such as intemperate drinking, violence and vagrancy, and note that these issues had moral and religious connotations as well as legal connotations that ultimately shaped the

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formulation of laws and policies for their enforcement.⁴ I have made some attempts to contextualize law enforcement values in Port Chalmers, but sources for tracing the occupational subculture of the police and the biographies of individual policemen are limited. The divergent opinions presented by witnesses at Scott’s case, for example, indicate the contested and subjective nature of laws and their enforcement, and the difficulties of pinpointing exactly whose values the law and the agents of its enforcement represented. By prosecuting the police Walter Scott and his supporters attempted to invoke the law as a protector of their rights, interests and sentiments. However, lacking more qualitative evidence, it is difficult to convincingly determine whether Port Chalmers residents lived in fear of the police or criminals, or neither, or both.

Finally, the limited scope of this study prevented me from comparing rates of crime in Port Chalmers with rates of crime in another colonial port or town, an exercise necessary for drawing conclusions about whether Port Chalmers’ crime rate was “high” or otherwise. A more detailed study would also consider civil cases, which would reveal the extent to which members of the community tried to resolve disputes amongst themselves with the help of the courts and provide more qualitative evidence of the values held by diverse members of the community.⁵ During this period, characterized by some historians of British crime as a transitionary phase between “community law” negotiated by members of the community themselves and “state law” enforced by police, private individuals could still sue each other in court for criminal acts such as violence and crimes against property independently of the police.⁶ A study of civil cases in Port Chalmers would likely reveal more evidence of interpersonal violence and crimes against property. Some of these would involve alcohol. However, civil cases would be unlikely to raise the number of prosecutions for drunkenness.

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⁴ Some historians have made generalizations about the values expressed by legislators and the courts. Heather Lucas argued that the attitudes of the courts in late-nineteenth century Dunedin reflected middle class values in their treatment of prostitutes. Lucas, 7. Richard Hill argued that the law reflected the values of the dominant socio-economic/racial order. Hill, part 1, 12-13.

⁵ Civil cases form big a part of Fairburn and Dean Wilson’s analyses of colonial community. Fairburn argued that recourse to the courts represented a lack of community because it indicated the absence of informal mechanisms of disputes resolution. Wilson, on the contrary argued that the court was a legitimate way for Auckland’s working classes to resolve disputes and negotiate community values. Miles Fairburn, The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1989), 225-229; Dean Wilson, “Community and Gender in Auckland,” NZJH 30, no.1 (1996): 25, 35.

Appendix Two: An overview of policing at Port Chalmers

The goldrushes catalysed a rapid expansion of policing in Otago. The number of men employed as policemen increased dramatically and Police Commissioner St John Branigan, an import from the Victorian goldfields, stepped up the professionalization drive begun during the late-1850s. Branigan reorganized and trained the force along Victorian lines, combining features of the two main contemporary British policing models: the London Metropolitan Police (LMP) and the para-military Irish Constabulary. The Victorian model paired the LMP’s modern beat system of patrolling with the Constabulary’s ethos of overt coercion. When prospectors struck gold at the Lindis River in March 1861 the Port Chalmers police force consisted of one corporal and one private. With the harbour teeming with ships carrying supplies, new arrivals, and opportunistic seamen looking to make a break from their life adrift and try their luck at the diggings, Branigan established a “Water Police Force” at the port in September 1861 to the general welcome of the population.

From the beginning of the records in November 1861, at least one policeman walked the beat in Port Chalmers twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. The force grew rapidly with subsequent strikes. By the end of 1861 Corporal David Kilgour, a Port Chalmers local, had been transferred to Dunedin for training and replaced by the Victorian Sergeant John Chapman. Chapman commanded up to nine men at Port Chalmers during the most intense wave of immigration in 1861-1862. This number fell over the years as activity in the port slowed down, from six to eight officers (including the sergeant) in 1863-1864 to an average of six in 1865, five in 1866, and finally four in September 1866, where it remained with occasional upward fluctuations until the end of the period in question.

2 Hill, Policing the Colonial Frontier, part 1, 549-552, 554-557.
3 Ibid, 540.
5 Ibid, 555.
6 Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1861-1863, (AAWC/D166/21862/11), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1863-1867, (AAWC/D166/21862/12), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1867-1870, (AAWC/D166/21862/13), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1870-1873, (AAWC/D166/21862/14), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Diary of Duty and Occurrences 1873-1875, (AAWC/D166/21862/15), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin.
In pure numerical terms, the force, measured against the town’s settled population, was at its peak coercive power during the early-1860s. However this was offset by the large floating population in the town during those years. The force was probably at its highest coercive capacity in numerical terms during the late-1860s, but the uncertainty of the figures quantifying the mobile population makes it difficult to say for sure. Four or five officers could deal with the port’s resident population satisfactorily, and the police records indicate quiet periods where a lack of crime left the force somewhat idle. During July and August of 1870, for example, two constables scraped and painted the police boats rather than walking the beat, while in March 1874 Constable Hugh Nickle spent four days collecting Census papers. But waves of drunkenness such as a spree would have stretched their resources. In dealing with drunkards the police also had to consider the small size of the lock-up, which provided room for only a few men at most, and its inconvenient location some distance uphill from the main centre of drinking. Edward Barton’s reminiscences of living on Gooseberry Hill (below the Presbyterian Church) in the late-1860s and early-1870s recalled watching policemen struggle to escort drunken seamen up Mount Street to the lock-up.

In addition, the wide range of duties falling on the police limited their ability to keep constant watch over the behaviour of the port’s drinkers. The Water Police’s brief included maintaining order amongst ships’ crews and their passengers, checking for smuggled gold and stowaways, checking for criminals entering the colony from Australia, and preventing seamen from deserting for the goldfields. Aside from the special tasks of the Water Police, the Sergeant and his Constables performed a plethora of other duties. They patrolled the town, manned the watch-house and lock-up, attended the Court, escorted prisoners to and from the prison in Dunedin, dealt with lost property (including boats gone adrift and stock astray), retrieved the bodies of drowning victims and attended the Coroner’s inquests, inspected licensed houses, maintained order on Quarantine Island and the quarantine hulks at Goat Island, stayed over on ships when

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7 Diary 1873-1875, 2-5 March 1874.
8 The lock-up was located next to the police barracks in Ajax Road. ODT, 1 October 1862, 4; Ian Church, Port Chalmers and its people, (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books), 25. On calls for a larger lock-up, see: ODT, 13 April 1867, 4. The lock-up was extended in 1874 so that it provided 3 cells. ODT, 22 August 1874, 2.
9 Edward Barton, Reminiscences of early days in Port Chalmers, Turnbull, Norman S. Papers, (Misc-MS-111/002). Hocken Collections, University of Otago, 1.
10 Hill, part 2, 559-560.
the Captain feared disorder among the passengers and crew, cleaned the station, maintained the Water Police boats, and attended the train. The Sergeant oversaw the running of the station and completed piles of paper work. On a typical day in 1874 Sergeant Thomas Neil performed the following:

Filling diary and writing charge sheet 9 to 9.30am. Patrol on town & Railway Pier, suburbs and Macandrew Terrace 9.30 to 11.30am. Patrol on the Peninsula 11.30am to 12.30pm. Office duty – copying 5 crime reports 12.30 to 1.30pm. Patrol on town & Railway Pier 2.30 to 3.15pm. Office duty – copying crime report re G.M. Drummond 3.15 to 4.30pm. Boat duty amongst the shipping 4.30 to 6pm. Patrol on town 6 to 7.15pm, do. 8 to 8.45pm, do. & on Railway Pier 9 to 11.45pm.

In addition to Sergeant Neill’s fifteen hour day, Constables Carter, Erridge, Nickle and Bell each contributed eight hours of patrolling over two four hour shifts.

Constant patrolling served to remind the population of the force’s coercive capacity, yet the police records themselves reveal few instances in which they actually used overt coercion outside of the Walter Scott case. In 1863 Sergeant Mallard treated himself and Constable Bell to a glass of sherry each at the Port Chalmers Hotel, only to follow up by reporting publican George Dodson for selling spirits without a license. However, similar instances of entrapment aroused hostility towards the police amongst the Otago public, and it does not appear that the police engaged in undercover operations in the manner of Ontario’s “whisky detectives.” On a winter’s evening in 1866 Sergeant Frederick Mallard marched himself and three constables to the Port Chalmers Town Hall to oversee a public meeting. The Resident Magistrate had anticipated a breach of the peace at the gathering, which had been convened to discuss the controversial mayoral elections. After almost two hours the meeting broke up without disturbance and the men returned to their station, demonstrating the efficacy of a visible police presence. Outside of police records, little evidence remains of protests against police authority. The public outcry in response to the Walter Scott case and the infamous 1862 “riot,” during which about fifty men from the ship Thane of Fife attempted to pull down the lock-up in order to free a prisoner confined inside, were the

11 Diary, 1861-1863; Diary 1863-1867; Diary, 1867-1870; Diary, 1870-1873; Diary 1873-1875.
12 Diary 1873-1875, 13 February 1874.
13 Hill, part 2, 570.
14 Diary 1863-1867, 3 July 1863.
16 Diary 1863-1867, 4 July 1866; ODT, 6 July 1866, 4.
two major exceptions.\textsuperscript{17} Aside from these cases, the major challenge to police authority appears to have been occasional resistance to arrest. J. Carter Wood has noted that resistance to arrest marked the perception that the police had “overstepped community acceptance of their legitimate role.”\textsuperscript{18} However the wider community did not tend to come forward to support a person, usually a seaman, who had resisted arrest. Resistance to arrest differed from Scott’s case in that the challenge to police authority occurred under intoxication and involved less police violence, if any at all. The absence of other charges against the police demonstrates that the community of non-seamen at Port Chalmers found little cause to object to policing practices.

\textsuperscript{17} Diary 1861-1863, 19 January 1862; ODT, 22 January 1862, 2; OW, 25 January 1862, 7; Church, \textit{Port Chalmers and its people}, 25.

Appendix Three: The nature of punishments imposed by the Port Chalmers Resident Magistrate’s Court

The colonial justice system dealt with offenders quickly compared with the standards of today. Depending on the time of arrest and the state of the offender they were either locked up (in the case of most drunks), sent home with a summons to appear before the court the following day, or brought before the Resident Magistrate’s Court immediately. The Court pronounced sentences without delay, offering most offenders the option of paying a fine or taking a term in prison (sometimes with hard labour). A Constable escorted those with significant prison sentences (more than 24 to 48 hours’ imprisonment) to the Dunedin prison while others paid fines and returned to their lives. Table A3.1 shows the patterns of punishments handed down for each offence, demonstrating that overall rates of imprisonment fell and punishments by fine rose, while discharges fluctuated over the period. In 1866 a convicted drunkard was equally likely to pay the fine or take the prison sentence. By 1874 only 14% of drunkards were imprisoned while 57% paid a fine and 28% were discharged with a caution.

Table A3.1. Punishments imposed by the Port Chalmers Resident Magistrate’s Court by proportion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drunkenness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisoned</td>
<td>46.00%</td>
<td>32.00%</td>
<td>14.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fined</td>
<td>51.00%</td>
<td>44.00%</td>
<td>57.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
<td>28.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total offences</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All offences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisoned</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fined</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total offences</strong></td>
<td>156</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Derived from: Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870, (AAWC/D166/21861/2), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1870-1877, (AAWC D166 21861 3), Archives New Zealand, Dunedin. The 1862 Charge Book did not record punishments.
The scale of punishments changed little over the years. The courts seldom handed out
the maximum sentences prescribed for each offence, which further suggests that law
enforcement was not overly coercive at the port. Punishments for a relatively ordinary
drunk and disorderly offence usually consisted of a fine of five to twenty shillings, or a
prison term of twenty-four to forty-eight hours.\(^2\) The maximum penalty for
“drunkenness” under the Licensing Ordinance 1864 was a fine of £2 or a term of three
days’ imprisonment, while the Vagrant Act 1866 allowed for “habitual drunkards” –
defined as those who incurred three or more convictions in twelve months – to be
imprisoned for up to three months with hard labour.\(^3\) According to an 1870 *ODT*
report, the average wages of manual workers in Otago ranged from eight to fifteen shillings per
day, suggesting that for many the fines were “little more than nominal.”\(^4\) The trend
away from imprisonment can then perhaps be explained by increasing financial security,
which allowed people to pay the fine more readily than sacrifice time in prison.\(^5\)
Unfortunately the records do not thoroughly explain variations in the degrees of
punishments, although it seems that one-off offenders who presented a respectable
appearance received more lenient treatment while repeat offenders such as Thomas
Griffen Green and Bridget Penny, along with others who maintained defiance, often
attracted harsher penalties.\(^6\)

\(^2\) The *Tweed* passengers charged with “drunk and disorderly” behaviour, for example, were sentenced to a
fine of ten shillings or twenty-four hours’ imprisonment.

\(^3\) Licensing Ordinance, 1864, *Otago Ordinances* 1864, (Central Library, University of Otago), 911;
Vagrant Act, 1866, *New Zealand Statutes* 1866, (Central Library, University of Otago), 47.

\(^4\) *ODT*, 21 February 1870, 6; Graeme Dunstall, “Frontier and/or cultural fragment? Interpretations of
violence in colonial New Zealand,” *Social History* 29, no. 1 (February 2004): 80.

\(^5\) The court may also have encouraged fines due to the inadequate state of the Dunedin gaol and the labour
required of the Port Chalmers police to transport prisoners to and from Dunedin. *OW*, 5 December 1863,
4.

\(^6\) Sandra Quick, “‘The Colonial Helpmeet Takes a Dram’ Women Participants in the Central Otago
Appendix Four: Tables relating to chapter five

Table A4.1. Sizes of ocean-going crews calling at Otago Harbour¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of crew</th>
<th>No. of vessels</th>
<th>Average crew/vessel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>8687</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>5545</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>2485</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>1660</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>1489</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1531</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1554</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>3155</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>2724</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35970</td>
<td>2223</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A4.2. Sizes of coasting crews calling at Otago Harbour²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of crew</th>
<th>No. of vessels</th>
<th>Average crew/vessel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>8552</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>8287</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>13762</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30601</td>
<td>2727</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Statistics of New Zealand: table 8, 1860; table 25, 1861; table 8, 1862; table 8, 1863; part II, table 8, 1864; table 8, 1865; table 8, 1866; part II, table 8, 1867; table 8, 1868; table 8, 1869; table 8, 1870; table 8, 1871; part II, table 1, 1872; part III, page 1, 1873; part III, page 75, 1874; part III, page 70, 1875.
² Statistics of New Zealand: part III, page 8, 1873; part III, page 80, 1874; part III, page 74, 1875.
Table A4.3. Vessels and crew registered at Dunedin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crew</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
<th>Average crew/vessel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A4.4. Deserters apprehended at Port Chalmers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Deserbers apprehended</th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1866</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1874</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imprisoned</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discharged</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instances of desertion</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

3 Statistics of New Zealand: table 29, 1862; table 29, 1863; part II, table 29, 1864; table 29, 1865; table 29, 1866; part II, table 30, 1867; table 30, 1868; table 30A, 1869; table 30A, 1870; table 30A, 1871; part II, table 26, 1872; part III, page 9, 1873; part III, page 81, 1874; part III, page 75, 1875.

4 Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1861-1863, AAWC/D166/2861/1, Archives NZ Dunedin; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1863-1870, AAWC/D166/21861/2, Archives New Zealand, Dunedin; Port Chalmers Watch-House Charge Book 1870-1877, AAWC D166 21861 3, Archives New Zealand, Dunedin. Here an “instance of desertion” refers to when any number of seamen from the same ship deserted at the same time. The “instances of desertion” recorded here only refer instances when the seamen were apprehended, and therefore entered into the Charge Book. Many more instances occurred where seamen escaped apprehension, some of which were reported in the Diary of Duty and Occurrences. The 1862 figure quoted in chapter four is based on research in both the Charge Book and Diary. I did not systematically record desertions reported in the Diary for the other years.