

## **Mothercraft and Model Cities**

Ethno-Symbolism and Emblems of Nationalism during the 1927 Royal Visit to Wellington

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### **Abstract**

*On his first full day in New Zealand's capital, the Duke of York visited a "City of the Future", a model housing development at Mandel's Block in the Hutt Valley. The "Moera Settlement" applied British garden suburb principles to working-class housing. It was noteworthy not just for its wide streets and expansive private gardens but also for a tenure system that encouraged residents to purchase their homes using state-subsidised mortgages. While the duke explored a proletarian garden suburb at Moera, the Duchess of York opened the world's first purpose-built Karitane Hospital on Wellington's Mount Melrose. This was a training hospital where nurses learned the Plunket system of "infant welfare and mothercraft". The hospital's revolutionary design and hilltop location maximised sun, views, natural ventilation and – for the student nurses, at least – vigorous outdoor exercise. Drawing attention to a temperate climate, low-density cities and advanced public health practices, the Melrose hospital illustrated New Zealand's putative advantages over the "Old Country". Both episodes portrayed New Zealand as a "Better Britain," a young progressive nation that set an example for the motherland. Applying an ethno-symbolist paradigm, the paper contends that these events were exercises in nation building. Borrowing from Russell McGregor's work on Federation-era Australian nationalism,<sup>1</sup> my analysis of the two royal excursions shows that Pakeha New Zealanders asserted their Britishness while simultaneously distancing themselves from their metropolitan cousins. Urban areas featured prominently in this royal-visit "progress narrative". For the duke and duchess's hosts, New Zealand's central cities were unreliable indicators of progress. However, suburban landscapes seemed to produce convincing evidence of the country's advancement.*

## Introduction

The 1927 royal visit provided New Zealanders with an opportunity to style their young nation as a “Better Britain”. This characterisation affirmed Britishness but also distanced *Pakeha* New Zealanders from their metropolitan cousins. “Mothercraft and Model Cities” examines the Duke and Duchess of York’s four-day visit to Wellington. Specifically, the paper shows how idealised suburban landscapes were used to promote New Zealand as a forward-thinking country, where successful social and spatial experiments provided exemplars for the “Old Country”. These claims were situated within a broader narrative that sought to position *Pakeha* as a uniquely progressive branch of the British “race”. I provide a comprehensive examination of New Zealand’s royal-visit “progress narrative” in *The Ephemeral Architecture of New Zealand’s ‘Better Britons’. Etc.* My SAHANZ17 paper reproduces material from this PhD dissertation.<sup>2</sup>

## Ethnic and Civic Nationalism

According to Anthony D. Smith’s ethno-symbolist paradigm, “ethnic nationalism” co-exists with a more inclusive territorially-based “civic nationalism”. In the former case, membership is a given based on “ancestry, culture and history”. In the latter case, membership can be acquired. A sense of solidarity is engendered by affinity for a geographically defined homeland and by rights of citizenship within certain political boundaries.<sup>3</sup>

The distinction between civic and ethnic nationalisms was first made by Hans Kohn in 1944.<sup>4</sup> Kohn used these categories to describe a perceived dichotomy between the nations of Western and Eastern Europe. However, Smith prefers a hybrid model that embraces both possibilities. He thinks that nationalism is “at once ancient and modern”.<sup>5</sup> On the one hand, civic nationalism embraces the ideology and practices of the modern nation-state. On the other hand, no nation-building project can proceed without myths and symbols derived from an alleged shared history. Smith concludes that ethnic and civic categories cannot be neatly separated, although their relationship is sometimes tense and unstable.<sup>6</sup>

Australian academic Russell McGregor develops Smith’s proposition and applies it to Federation-era Australia.<sup>7</sup> McGregor argues that so-called “dominion nationalism” combined British ethnicity with a local civic element. Rather than being inimical to a unique national identity, British traits were an intrinsic and necessary part of Australian character during the early twentieth century. British ethnicity provided continuity with the mother culture. It exploited long-standing traits and practices said to have been handed down from a geographically remote motherland. So, ethnic nationalism was invariant and contributed to stability. Conversely, *distinctive* Australian attributes issued from a more lively civic nationalism that was contingent on local circumstances. In its civic manifestation, nationalism included territorially-based claims about landscape and citizenship as well as favoured social and political practices.<sup>8</sup> The result was a hybrid identity that leaned strongly towards its British roots but could not be fully explained without reference to local influences and adaptations.

Most studies of British royal tourism focus narrowly on ethnic similarity. Given this standard reading, New Zealand’s early twentieth-century royal visits reveal the persistence of certain ethnic and cultural traits among members of the British diaspora. According to this analysis, the visits failed to engage civic solidarities or the distinctive side of colonial identity. However, my analysis shows how the tours produced a broader symbolic footprint. As well as providing an obvious fillip to imperial unity, the events promoted local civic allegiances and drew attention to various types of difference including the cultural distance between colony and motherland. This complexity was possible, because malleable symbols allowed a single event to portray the ethnic and civic facets of identity without apparent contradiction. So, royal visit performances allowed *Pakeha* New Zealanders to appear resolutely British, while simultaneously “Othering” metropolitan Britons and promoting the superiority of life in the dominions.<sup>9</sup>

### Urban Images in the Progress Narrative

Progress is a recurring theme in New Zealand's royal visit discourse. During the first decades of the twentieth century, royal tours bolstered claims that *Pakeha* New Zealanders were an unusually industrious and progressive people. This notion helped to stitch together the dual components of *Pakeha* identity. Progress was the birth right of all Britons. So, provided the colonists remained true to their ethnic origins, New Zealand's rapid advance was pre-ordained like that of other British dominions. However, the *path* of New Zealand's development was held to be distinctive, and this belief helped to fashion a recognisable identity for the young nation.<sup>10</sup>

Images of cities reinforced this trope. New Zealand's prosperity was based on agriculture, but touring royals spent most of their time in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. So, the visitors were asked to interpret these urban environments as indicators of progress. To promote such a reading, souvenirs contained flattering "then-and-now" comparisons that contrasted the early days of settlement with contemporary urban scenes that were fast acquiring metropolitan scale. In this way, the pace and extent of change was made obvious.<sup>11</sup> Other items of ephemera encouraged similar perceptions. When they arrived in Auckland, the duke and duchess received an album of "colour-tinted" photographs and watercolour miniatures prepared by the Government Publicity Office. Illustrations included "distinctive views of the four main centres" along with more conventional images of the country's famous "beauty spots". Wellington was represented by views of Parliament and a busy commercial port. Dunedin was identified by its distinctive Octagon. However, the scenes from Auckland and Christchurch portrayed parks and recreational spaces rather than buildings. Images of Ellerslie and the Avon River suggested a leisured populace occupying a verdant suburban landscape.<sup>12</sup>

The "progress narrative" was harder to sustain in real life. Wellingtonians harboured a deep-seated ambivalence about the character and quality of their city's core. Some locations were shamefully untidy and still displayed the rawness of a frontier town. Other spaces were congested or meanly built and, in these respects at least, resembled too closely the flaws of older cities "at Home". There were pockets of order to indicate how a more mature urban character might one day assert itself. But not even the government precinct or the civic center escaped disfigurement by vacant sites and shoddy, poorly maintained buildings.<sup>13</sup> As a result, there was a persistent discrepancy between bold claims about advancement and the deficient state of the capital's administrative and commercial districts.<sup>14</sup>

These anxieties caused streets and buildings to be embellished or camouflaged prior to receiving their royal guests. The decorations had a magical quality. They appeared suddenly and often at the last minute, as though the approaching royal entourage had the power to alter everything in its path. Exaggerating the magnitude of these changes, the *Evening Post* reported: "Wellington was transformed in a twinkling from a prosaic commercial city into an open-hearted and affectionate City of Empire."<sup>15</sup> In some locations, street decorations created idealised spaces that were more centered and more symmetrical than the city's permanent fabric. In Bunny Street, masts lined the edges of the carriageway and a rudimentary ceremonial arch marked entry to the government precinct.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere, such as Wellington's dilapidated Lambton railway station, structures were shrouded by a forgiving mantle of bunting and freshly cut foliage.<sup>17</sup> However, the capital's metamorphosis was most apparent at night. At the City Council's behest, strings of coloured lights were suspended across "the main avenues of trade", converting these thoroughfares into "canopied arcades". As a result, "Wellington appeared at its best" when the duke and duchess arrived.<sup>18</sup>

There was a second strategy for reconciling claims about progress with New Zealand's unimposing urban centres. Tour programmes began to feature suburbs. Here, the sight of modern detached homes, attractive schools, tidy industrial estates and ample parkland helped to neutralise the poor impressions created by shabby, ill-formed business districts. Indeed, with the rise of garden city

design precepts, it could be argued that flourishing suburbs were a *more* creditable and up-to-date achievement than monumental architecture at the city's core.

This message was amplified by the highlight of the 1927 Australasian tour: the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament in Canberra. Portrayed as the federal capital's inauguration, this event celebrated modern city planning as well as nation building. One British newspaper described Canberra as being "built on the approved garden city plan".<sup>19</sup> The writer commented enviously on the city's ideal form:

The Australians have had a 'clean slate' on which to draft the newest and most hygienic system of city building. Canberra, some part of which is already in existence, will be an ideal example of urban evolution. Everything will be brand new and up-to-date.<sup>20</sup>

Claims about progressive town planning also pervaded New Zealand's royal visit reportage. Although none of the dominion's cities was as artfully designed as Canberra, most centres benefitted from a strong relationship with the natural landscape. Combined with low-density suburban growth and ample open space reserves, this circumstance allowed local boosters to discover modern planning principles at work in several of New Zealand's larger towns and cities. As the "Edinburgh of the South", Dunedin "ignore[d] the squalor" of its namesake. The southern city's "wide streets and windy hillsides" resembled Princes Street in the Scottish capital's celebrated New Town.<sup>21</sup> Christchurch was called "the Garden City of New Zealand". It was a "monument to the spirit of the Pilgrims" with a "strong civic life", "splendid institutions" and "wide spaces reserved for the public good".<sup>22</sup> Petone and Lower Hutt were simultaneously "a wonderful spectacle of industrial progress" and "a garden city in the making".<sup>23</sup>

Wellington was depicted as a city in balance with its natural environment, and suburbs became its most progressive feature. In his royal travelogue, Taylor Darbyshire imagined the duke and duchess gazing out at the capital from the "porticoes" of Government House in suburban Newtown. In Darbyshire's telling, city and landscape merged, and a pleasing equilibrium was established between the natural and constructed elements of the scene. Industry was quite literally over-looked, and the city centre had only an implied presence. Instead, an enchanting combination of hillside housing and dramatic scenery gave the city its character.<sup>24</sup>

Wellington's welcome address contained a photographic essay that presented the region as an exemplar of modern urban development.<sup>25</sup> Images depicted the city as a collection of spacious residential suburbs, where industry had an assigned place and nature was never far away. Captions reinforced the notion that Wellington's citizens occupied an ideal garden setting, which combined nature and city in equal measure. Thus, Upper Hutt was "A Picturesque Settlement" and Eastbourne was "A Seaside Resort". The content of Petone's photograph was more prosaic, but it still suggested openness and order. Entitled "View of Industrial Area", this image depicted a clearly delineated, well-organised industrial zone containing wide streets, modern factories and ample room for growth.<sup>26</sup>

The royal visitors appeared to be receptive to such imagery. Styled as the "Industrial Prince", the Duke of York exhibited a particular interest in the living and working conditions of the industrial labour force. He was president of the British Industrial Welfare Society, and he made frequent visits to factories where he sought to engage both employers and workers. He promoted greater communication between social and economic classes, regarding such dialogue as a means for reducing the industrial conflict that dogged Britain's economy.<sup>27</sup> The duke's curiosity about manufacturing processes and his advocacy for workers' interests helped to create a public persona quite unlike that of previous royal visitors. He was perceived as "a young man of intense seriousness", and he seemed to possess an acute sense of the responsibilities that accompanied his privileged

position.<sup>28</sup> He was known to prefer “informal visits” over ceremony, and his “spontaneous and sincere” interest in “everyday situations” were said to give him a special rapport with “working-men”.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Duke Visits a “City of the Future”**

The duke visited the Hutt Valley twice during his short stay in New Zealand’s capital. On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March, immediately after Wellington’s civic reception, he travelled to Lower Hutt to see “a garden city in the making” (Figure 1). There, he toured a state-sponsored workers’ housing scheme at Mandel’s Block, later known as the Moera Settlement. The following day, the duke returned to Petone to visit the Wellington Woollen Manufacturing Company. Both excursions were presented as informal private visits. In reality, they were organised by the Department of Internal Affairs and were widely publicised.<sup>30</sup>

The *Dominion* called the workers’ housing development a “City of the Future.”<sup>31</sup> The *Evening Post* described it as “progressive”, and Darbyshire referred to it as a “model village”.<sup>32</sup> It was occupied by a first generation of suburban working-class families who had exchanged congested rental accommodation in the city for spacious “four or five room” houses. These could be purchased with modest weekly mortgage payments. Dwellings were “all of pleasing design”, and the duke noted how well each home was “fitted up” with modern bathrooms, built-in wardrobes and other “conveniences”.<sup>33</sup>



**Figure 1.** Aerial view of Moera, 1956. Whites Aviation. Source: National Library of New Zealand (Wellington) WA-41267-F.

However, it was the wider environment that most impressed the visitors:

The streets on the Mandel’s Block and other workers’ home settlements are laid off on modern town-planning lines in sweeping curves and contours. The streets are 50 feet wide and the houses are set back 30 feet from the street line, giving a total air space of 110ft.<sup>34</sup>

Each house stood on an expansive lot with a ready-made concrete patio and pathways. Services were reticulated along mid-block easements that avoided disruption to the “well-constructed” roadways and “unusually wide” footpaths. Two large open spaces were reserved for children’s play areas.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, Mandel’s Block children appeared to be the main beneficiaries of the new amenities:

Many of the families run to five or six children, who are now being brought up in comfortable houses in the brightest and cheeriest surroundings. The healthy appearance of the youngsters is eloquent testimony to the value of their changed environment.<sup>36</sup>

When the duke asked to see a local school, he was taken to Eastern Hutt School. This represented an ideal rather than a typical educational facility. Reputedly, it had the best maintained grounds of any primary school in the country. The school's unique garden setting supported a broader narrative about the advent of a working man's garden city in the Hutt Valley: "The grounds [of Eastern Hutt School] have an appearance entirely different from that of most primary schools; the buildings are surrounded with lawns and gardens beautifully kept." The duke was duly impressed, expressing his surprise that such an attractive landscape could be achieved at a state-operated school.<sup>37</sup>

As so often happened during royal visit performances, superiority to the "Old Country" was transmitted via the healthy, happy countenance of "young New Zealand". Accordingly, the duke's visit to Mandel's Block ended amidst a throng of cheering "youngsters" who gathered to farewell him.<sup>38</sup>

### **The Duchess Inspects a "Mothercraft Training Centre"**

While the Duke of York inspected the workers' housing scheme in Lower Hutt, the duchess undertook her only independent public engagement of the tour (Figure 2). Like the Mandel's Block housing, the new Karitane Hospital on Mount Melrose showed how progressive social policies combined with a healthy physical environment to create favourable conditions for family life. As a young mother, the Duchess of York was ideally suited to open the world's first purpose-built training hospital for nurses engaged in "mothercraft" and infant welfare.<sup>39</sup>

During the 1920s, New Zealand claimed to be a leader in the field of maternity care and infant health. By some measures, the dominion had the lowest infant mortality rate in the world. Deaths from "infantile diarrhea" were a fraction of those in Australia, Canada, Britain and the United States.<sup>40</sup> This remarkable achievement was attributed largely to the work of Truby and Bella King, originators of the "Plunket system" of post-natal care. The Kings had spent 20 years developing their "scientific" approach to infant welfare. By 1927, the government-backed Plunket Society and Karitane Hospitals were delivering the Kings' "system" of care to 80% of all New Zealand babies and their mothers. Knighted in 1925, Sir Truby King was hailed as a "genius" and a "prophet", who had helped to create a "great national asset".<sup>41</sup>



**Figure 2.** Duchess of York opening Sir Truby King Karitane Hospital, Melrose, 1927. Crown Studios Ltd. Source: National Library of New Zealand (Wellington) ½-203353-F.

King was perceived as an international figure: one of the first New Zealanders to become prominent on the world stage. In the field of maternity care and infant health, Sir Truby King's name was "known

the wide world over". As his influence spread, King's reputation was thought to raise New Zealand's profile as an independent state. Health statistics were used to differentiate New Zealand from the motherland and other British dominions. The Plunket Society and Karitane nurses identified New Zealand as a socially progressive country with its own distinctive practices and institutions. In the hyperbole that accompanied the royal visit, King's work was a source of national pride and "made New Zealand famous the world over".<sup>42</sup>

King's principles were adopted "at Home", where they remained closely associated with Britain's most distant dominion. In London, King founded a "Mothercraft Training Centre" modelled on the Plunket system. A medical report on the centre's work referred to the "wonderful success of the New Zealand methods", and the British maternity nurses who applied King's techniques were known as "Truby King nurses". The Duchess of York was the president of the London centre. Wellington's newspapers described her as a protagonist for the Plunket system, who took a "lively interest" in England's child welfare campaign.<sup>43</sup> By 1927, Sir Truby's fame was such that the Duke of York's diary entry for 7<sup>th</sup> March referred to him simply as "the great maternity doctor".<sup>44</sup>

In this context, the opening of Wellington's Karitane Hospital inverted one of the conventions of New Zealand's royal tours. Instead of inaugurating the offshoot of some long-standing British institution, the duchess visited a modern health initiative founded on the edge of the empire. Rather than finding a deficient copy of a facility in London, the duchess discovered a prototype for the metropolis. The new hospital at Melrose was "the most wonderful thing of its kind in the world": "the world's largest and best equipped Karitane Hospital".<sup>45</sup> The "baby hospital" included innovations such as a "milk room" for cool storage, a physically detached isolation ward and a nearby "emulsion factory" from which tins of "Plunket emulsion" were dispatched "all over the world". As the "culmination" of Sir Truby King's "monumental" work, the new complex placed Wellington "in the van of the child welfare movement".<sup>46</sup>

The opening ceremony was treated as an event of national importance. Referring to the new facility, Plunket's fundraising appeal declared: "All New Zealand may be proud of it."<sup>47</sup> The duchess arrived with Mrs. Coates, wife of the Prime Minister, and Sir Heaton Rhodes, who represented the Government as "Minister in Attendance". Other cabinet ministers were present along with the chief justice and lesser members of the judiciary.<sup>48</sup> There was only one speech, delivered by Sydney Kirkcaldie, chairman of the hospital committee. He described the Plunket Society as "a great national asset", which would "further the health and prosperity of the nation".<sup>49</sup>

The event had limitations as a piece of theatre. Little ceremony occurred. The Duchess of York made no speech, but simply declared the building open and unveiled a commemorative plaque. There was a moment of visual drama when the duchess used a gold key to unlock the main entrance doors.<sup>50</sup> However, the hospital's congested hilltop site was poorly suited for a public spectacle, and few of the onlookers could see or hear these formalities taking place on the building's front steps.<sup>51</sup>

In other ways, the suburban hilltop provided the ideal setting for a display of visual rhetoric about New Zealand's advancement. Like the workers' settlement in Lower Hutt, the "sunny heights of Melrose" epitomised the health-giving benefits of a good climate and abundant open space.<sup>52</sup> The building was designed to maximise access to sun and air. The mothers' bedrooms opened onto verandas and, in the trainee nurses' accommodation, internal walls stopped short of the ceiling so as to encourage cross-ventilation. The *Evening Post* reported: "The result is perfect fresh air from end to end, and indeed throughout the whole building, fresh air has been provided for as the most important necessity."<sup>53</sup> Because it was "bathed in life-giving sun and air", the "beautiful Life-saving Hospital" seemed to encapsulate New Zealand's advantages *vis a vis* the Motherland.<sup>54</sup>



**Figure 3.** Duchess of York and Sir Truby King on the tennis court at the Karitane Hospital, Melrose, 1927. Crown Studios Ltd. Source: National Library of New Zealand (Wellington) ½-203353-F.

The event situated the Duchess of York within a dramatic yet nurturing landscape, where natural features substituted for the traditional trappings of royal ceremony. Seated on an improvised dais at the building's north-facing entrance, the duchess occupied "a sunlit throne commanding a royal view of shimmering sea, tawny hillside, and creaming surf".<sup>55</sup> When she appeared on a balcony to greet the crowd, she also acknowledged sweeping views over a verdant harbour city.<sup>56</sup> In a defining image of the hospital visit, the Duchess of York and Sir Truby King stand in a corner of the nurses' tennis courts, gazing out across a sea of rooftops (Figure 3). The caption to this illustration reads: "The Duchess admires Wellington from the Karitane Home at Melrose."<sup>57</sup> Significantly, the two protagonists were not looking towards the capital's commercial and administrative core. Their gaze reversed the perspective of earlier royal visit ephemera and took in the bungalows and gardens of Wellington's rapidly expanding eastern suburbs. Implicitly, the duchess and Sir Truby were also looking towards Wellington's future, where healthy "Plunket babies" would grow to adulthood in an environment as wholesome and invigorating as the new hospital.<sup>58</sup>

### Conclusion

The two excursions were intensely symbolic. When the Duke of York toured the model workers' housing project in Lower Hutt, he witnessed a more modern landscape than any he had encountered during official functions in the heart of the capital. At Mandel's Block and Eastern Hutt School, the duke entered a real "City of the Future" rather than an illusion conjured up by bunting and festive electric lights. Here, the social fabric was almost as carefully wrought as the wide streets and wholesome bungalows. The Mandel's Block development offered working-class families the prospect of a freehold home in a garden suburb. This novel possibility combined modern town planning with cheap loans, free education and the other hallmarks of a state-operated welfare system.<sup>59</sup>

The landscape of social and economic progress was also plainly visible from Mount Melrose. No less than Mandel's Block, the experimental Karitane Hospital symbolised New Zealand's standing as one of the world's most socially advanced nations. The benefits of scientific mothercraft were allied to sun, fresh air and exercise. Not coincidentally, similar properties attracted families to suburban lifestyles and, more generally, to life in the dominion. As the benefits of healthy living were enumerated, migration from city centre to garden suburb mirrored the journey from imperial centre to the outer margins of the British world. Both routes led to better physical and social environments, and the symmetry of the two trajectories underscored claims that New Zealand's expansive suburbs were superior to the densely-packed cities of the "Old Country".<sup>60</sup>



With hindsight, New Zealand's democratic reforms and modern welfare policies resembled those of other "neo-Britains". Nevertheless, to the Duke and Duchess of York's hosts, these advances *seemed* unique and promised to give New Zealanders a special status within the empire. In particular, they set New Zealand apart from its motherland. Presented with scientific mothercraft and model worker housing, the royal visitors were invited to admire a new brand of British enterprise that produced marvels not seen "at Home".<sup>61</sup>

To a well-informed observer, the Mandel's Block project was an application of established British garden city planning principles. The curving streets, wholesome cottages and generous gardens could be traced to model developments at Letchworth, Hampstead Garden Suburb and the more recent Welwyn Garden City.<sup>62</sup> However, in 1927, the British Government's post-war promise of "Homes fit for heroes" had not been delivered on any scale.<sup>63</sup> The mass construction of state-subsidised suburban "semis" had yet to "[redraw] the map of working-class housing".<sup>64</sup> Instead, there was a growing perception that the "unnatural" environment of Britain's congested inner cities was damaging to health – especially among children. In 1927, a British School Medical Service report established a link between "the *enclosure* of urban living" and "descent into physical degeneracy".<sup>65</sup> Summer camps, youth hosteling, Scouting, Guiding and even "open-air schools" became popular, as public and private agencies tried to counter the "malignant" effects of city life.<sup>66</sup>

From New Zealand's perspective, these metropolitan anxieties confirmed the superiority of colonial lifestyles. In contrast to the "physical degeneracy" detected among British school children, the presumed benefits of fresh air and vigorous outdoor work were thought to have transformed *Pakeha* New Zealanders into a hardier variant of British stock. So, even if initiatives at Mount Melrose and Mandel's Block resembled characteristically British forms of social betterment, these experiments were favoured by a more benign physical environment than that of the motherland.<sup>67</sup>

Although New Zealand's prosperity was said to be rooted in the ethnicity of its first British colonists, the direction of progress reflected the country's geographical advantages and innovative government practices. These attributes steer the royal visit's progress narrative towards the civic side of the ethno-symbolist paradigm. Here, as McGregor predicts, territorially-based state initiatives correlate with an emerging sense of difference. In simple terms, New Zealanders distanced themselves from metropolitan Britons by adopting novel modes of development within a public sphere that came to be known as the laboratory of the welfare state.<sup>68</sup>

New Zealand's cities produced versatile images to accompany the progress narrative. Depictions of central Wellington appealed to ethnic nationalism, suggesting either convergence with British cultural norms or a troubling failure to replicate the architecture and urbanism of Home. Given a positive reading, New Zealand's capital was fast evolving into an archetypal British city. Viewed in negative terms, Wellington was a deficient copy that might never develop an authentically British cultural landscape. As evidence of regression within colonial society, this unflattering portrayal distanced *Pakeha* New Zealanders from their ethnic origins.<sup>69</sup>

While attention focused on the central city, impressions fluctuated between these two possibilities: approximation to an archetype and the poor imitation. However, when consideration shifted to suburban Wellington, the city's meaning stabilised and lost its negative connotations. A complementary set of urban images appeared, and these supported a different kind of nationalism. As scenes from a "Better Britain", depictions of a proletarian garden city and scientific mothercraft reinforced claims about a distinctive national identity. No longer derivative or incomplete, places like Mandel's Block and Mount Melrose represented a version of progress that confirmed Britishness but also set *Pakeha* New Zealanders apart from Britons elsewhere.<sup>70</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Russell McGregor, "The Necessity of Britishness: Ethno-Cultural Roots of Australian Nationalism," *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3 (2006): 493-511.
- <sup>2</sup> Christopher McDonald, "The Ephemeral Architecture of New Zealand's 'Better Britons'. Etc.," PhD diss. University of New South Wales, 2016, 247-331.
- <sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2001), 39-42; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 25-27.
- <sup>4</sup> Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* [2<sup>nd</sup> edition] (New York: Collier, 1967), 329-331.
- <sup>5</sup> Anthony D. Smith et al., "Fourth Nations and Nationalism Debate on Aviel Roshwald's *The Endurance of Nationalism*," *Nations and Nationalism* 14, no.4 (2008): 638; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 27.
- <sup>6</sup> Smith, *Nationalism*, 42; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 27.
- <sup>7</sup> McGregor, "The Necessity of Britishness," 494,499,507.
- <sup>8</sup> McGregor, "The Necessity of Britishness," 508; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 27-30.
- <sup>9</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 8.
- <sup>10</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 253-254.
- <sup>11</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 286-288
- <sup>12</sup> "Album De Luxe. Etc.," *Dominion* (21 February, 1927): 6; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 285.
- <sup>13</sup> "The Royal Visit. Etc.," *Dominion* (9 December, 1926): 8; "Wellington's Civic Centre. Etc.," *Dominion* (3 March, 1927): 12; "Topics of the Day," *Evening Post* (1 March, 1927): 8; "The Duke in Dunedin. Etc.," *New Zealand Freelance* (23 March, 1927): 20.
- <sup>14</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 302.
- <sup>15</sup> "Letting Themselves Go. Etc.," *Evening Post* (7 March, 1927): 12.
- <sup>16</sup> "City Illuminations. Etc.," *Dominion* (5 March, 1927): 10; "The City's Welcome. Etc.," *Evening Post* (7 March, 1927): 7.
- <sup>17</sup> "Preliminary Welcome. Etc.," *Dominion* (7 March, 1927): 9.
- <sup>18</sup> "Special Lighting. Etc.," *Dominion* (12 February, 1927): 8; "Strings of Coloured Globes," *Dominion* (1 March, 1927): 10; "City Illuminations," *Dominion* (2 March, 1927): 11; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 290-293.
- <sup>19</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 284.
- <sup>20</sup> "The Royal Visit to Australasia," *Western Daily Press* (1 January, 1927), Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, *George VI, King of Great Britain, 1895-1952 – Journeys etc.*, Pam 1927 ROY 4728: 1 [newspaper clipping].
- <sup>21</sup> Taylor Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour of the Duke and Duchess of York* (London: Edward Arnold, 1927), 122.
- <sup>22</sup> W. E. Leadley to Hislop [enclosure], 8 January 1927, *Duke & Duchess of York – Visit of 1927 – Addresses of Welcome – Presentation of*, IA1, 13/555/43, Archives New Zealand (Wellington).
- <sup>23</sup> "News of the Day. Etc." *Evening Post* (15 December, 1926): 10; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 285.
- <sup>24</sup> Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 108-109; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 285.
- <sup>25</sup> Wellington City Council, *Address to Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York from the Citizens of Wellington and District Etc.*, Wellington City Archives, 00396:1:4: 5-8.
- <sup>26</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 285-286.
- <sup>27</sup> "Topics of the Day," *Evening Post* (7 January, 1927): 6; "Human Side of Industry. Etc.," *Evening Post* (19 March, 1927): 9; "The Duke of York. Etc.," *Evening Post* (5 March, 1927):19.
- <sup>28</sup> "The Royal Argosy. Etc.," *New Zealand Freelance* (16 February, 1927):11.
- <sup>29</sup> "Fourth Royal Visit to New Zealand. Etc." *Dominion* (7 March, 1927): 18; "A Surprise Call. Etc." *Dominion* (8 March 1927): 11; New Zealand Government Publicity Office, *Royalty in New Zealand: Official Pictorial Souvenir Etc.* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1927), 13; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 293.
- <sup>30</sup> Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 109-110; "A Surprise Call. Etc." *Dominion* (8 March, 1927):11; H.R.H.Duke of York, *Diary* (8 March 1927), Royal Archives, Windsor, GVI/PRIV/DIARY accession no. 2061 pt. Jan 6<sup>th</sup> 1927 to June 27<sup>th</sup> 1927; "A Surprise Visit. Etc.," *Evening Post* (8 March 1927): 12; "Woollen Factory. Etc.," *Evening Post* (9 March, 1927): 10; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 293-294.
- <sup>31</sup> "City of the Future. Etc.," *Dominion* (22 February, 1927): 9.
- <sup>32</sup> Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 109; "A Surprise Visit. Etc.," *Evening Post* (8 March, 1927):12.
- <sup>33</sup> "City of the Future. Etc.," *Dominion* (22 February, 1927): 9; "A Surprise Call. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 11; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 295.

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- <sup>34</sup> "City of the Future. Etc.," *Dominion* (22 February, 1927): 9.
- <sup>35</sup> "City of the Future. Etc.," *Dominion* (22 February, 1927): 9; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 295.
- <sup>36</sup> "City of the Future. Etc.," *Dominion* (22 February, 1927): 9.
- <sup>37</sup> "News of the Day. Etc.," *Evening Post* (8 March, 1927): 8; "Eastern Hutt School," *Evening Post* (11 March, 1927): 13; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 295.
- <sup>38</sup> "A Surprise Visit. Etc.," *Evening Post* (8 March, 1927): 12; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 2295-296.
- <sup>39</sup> Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 110; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 296.
- <sup>40</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8; "Plunket-Karitane Appeal," *Dominion* (17 February, 1927): 9; "How Best to Win. Etc.," *Dominion* (7 March, 1927): 10.
- <sup>41</sup> Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 110; "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8; "Karitane Hospital. Etc.," *Dominion* (23 February, 1927): 14; "Plunket-Karitane Appeal," *Dominion* (16 February, 1927): 16; "A Splendid Achievement," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 10; "Opened by the Duchess. Etc.," *Evening Post* (7 March, 1927): 12; "Your Chance and a Week to Take It," *Evening Post* (16 February, 1927): 12; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 296.
- <sup>42</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8; "A Splendid Achievement," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 10; "Your Chance and a Week to Take It," *Evening Post* (16 February, 1927): 12; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 296.
- <sup>43</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8; "How Best to Win. Etc.," *Dominion* (7 March, 1927): 10; "The Karitane. Etc.," *Evening Post* (5 March, 1927): 10; "Karitane Fund. Etc.," *Evening Post* (19 January, 1927): 10; "A Worthy Compliment," *Evening Post* (23 February, 1927): 8.
- <sup>44</sup> H.R.H. Duke of York, *Diary* (7 March 1927), Royal Archives, Windsor, GVI/PRIV/DIARY accession no. 2061 pt. Jan 6<sup>th</sup> 1927 to June 27<sup>th</sup> 1927.
- <sup>45</sup> "For the Babies," *Dominion* (4 February, 1927): 8; "Your Chance and a Week to Take It," *Evening Post* (16 February, 1927): 12.
- <sup>46</sup> "How Best to Win. Etc.," *Dominion* (7 March, 1927): 10; "A Splendid Achievement," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 10; Taylor Darbyshire, *The Royal Tour*, 110; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 297.
- <sup>47</sup> "Plunket-Karitane Appeal," *Dominion* (17 February, 1927): 9.
- <sup>48</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8.
- <sup>49</sup> "Opened by the Duchess. Etc.," *Evening Post* (7 March, 1927): 12; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 296-297.
- <sup>50</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8.
- <sup>51</sup> "Karitane Hospital. Etc.," *Dominion* (23 February, 1927): 13-14; "The Karitane Opening. Etc.," *Evening Post* (5 March, 1927): 10; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 298.
- <sup>52</sup> "Plunket-Karitane Appeal," *Dominion* (17 February, 1927): 9.
- <sup>53</sup> "The Karitane. Etc.," *Evening Post* (5 March, 1927): 10.
- <sup>54</sup> "Plunket-Karitane Appeal," *Dominion* (18 February, 1927): 7; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 298.
- <sup>55</sup> "Duchess of York and Karitane Work. Etc.," *Dominion* (8 March, 1927): 8.
- <sup>56</sup> "Opened by the Duchess. Etc.," *Evening Post* (7 March, 1927): 12.
- <sup>57</sup> "The Duchess Admires Wellington etc.," *New Zealand Freelance* (16 March, 1927): 34.
- <sup>58</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 298-300.
- <sup>59</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 303.
- <sup>60</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 303.
- <sup>61</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 304.
- <sup>62</sup> Christine Garnaut, "Towards metropolitan organisation: town planning and the garden," in *The Australian Metropolis. A Planning History* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2000), 47.
- <sup>63</sup> D. Hardy, *From Garden Cities to New Towns: Campaigning for Town and Country Planning, 1899-1946* (London: Spon, 1991), 137-8.
- <sup>64</sup> Hardy, *From Garden Cities to New Towns*, 172.
- <sup>65</sup> David Pomfret, "The city of evil and the great outdoors: the modern health movement and the urban young," *Urban History* 28, no.3 (2001): 410; McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 303-304.
- <sup>66</sup> Pomfret, "The city of evil," 405-406, 411-412.
- <sup>67</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 304.
- <sup>68</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 304.
- <sup>69</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 305.
- <sup>70</sup> McDonald, "Ephemeral Architecture," 305.

