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**The Social and Economic Effects of Migration to New Zealand  
on the people of Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk 1853-71**

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**A dissertation submitted to The Open University  
for the degree of MA in History**

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### **Abstract**

This dissertation will analyse what happened to the people of Stoke by Nayland as a result of the migration to New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century. Its time parameters – 1853-71 – are the period of the provincial administration control of migration into New Zealand. The key research questions of this study are: Who migrated to New Zealand during this period and how did the migration affect their life chances? What were the social and economic effects of this migration, particularly on the poorer local families? How did these effects compare with other parish assisted migration in eastern England? Stoke by Nayland in 1851 appears to have been a relatively settled farming community dominated by a few wealthy landowners so emigrants were motivated more by the ‘pull’ of the areas they were moving to than by being ‘pushed’ by high levels of unhappiness ‘at home’. The migration to Canterbury, New Zealand of a large group of predominantly young single people and young families, was encouraged by Rev. Charles Torlesse and his contacts. The Torlesse servants, the Songers, had travelled to Nelson, New Zealand, ten years earlier. Most migrants were agricultural labourers or female domestic servants, but a significant number were village tradesmen. A few were wealthy. Migration encouraged and assisted the most able to move. Migration provided new openings and brought in new people. It may have diffused the resentment which later surfaced in the East Anglian agricultural disturbances of the mid-1870s. Usually migration opportunities for these men were restricted to parishes a few miles from home. However, for those who could face the upheaval and initial hardships, New Zealand offered a real opportunity to transform their family’s prospects. This dissertation concludes that it is doubtful how much the migration process assisted the life chances of the poorest families in Stoke by Nayland, but the scale of migration was larger than was usually found in parishes which assisted emigration.

## Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: The community the emigrants chose to leave: Stoke by Nayland in 1851.....	12
Chapter 3: Stoke by Nayland migrants to New Zealand 1840-64.....	24
Chapter 4: The Effects of the Canterbury Migration on the Parish of Stoke by Nayland...	45
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	59
Bibliography.....	61

**List of tables**

Table 2.1: Distance of Place of birth from residence 1851.....	18
Table 2.2: Distance of Place of birth from residence: agricultural labourers 1851.....	18
Table 2.3: Age structures of four parishes in 1887.....	19
Table 2.4: Children aged 5-14 at school as % of total popn of that age group in 1851.....	21
Table 3.1: Stoke by Nayland area migrants to New Zealand 1855-1864.....	28
Table 3.2: Age and gender of the Stoke by Nayland / Polstead migrants.....	38
Table 3.3: The occupations of the fathers of adult migrants.....	39
Table 4.1: Agricultural employment in Stoke by Nayland (1851 and 1871 censuses).....	46
Table 4.2: Marriage Illiteracy rates in Stoke by Nayland.....	49
Table 4.3: Marriage Illiteracy amongst Agricultural Labourers in Stoke by Nayland.....	50

## **Personal Statement**

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work and that I have not submitted it, or any part of it, for a degree at The Open University or at any other university or institution.

Parts of this dissertation are built on work I submitted for assessment as part of A825.

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I would like to thank Dr. Jenny Zmroczek for her invaluable help as my tutor for modules A825 and A826 and my supervisor for this dissertation. I would also like to thank my friend Lesley Nunn for her typing assistance and acknowledge my gratitude to my New Zealand friends, the late Wally and Ruth Moore of Rangiora, who helped to start me on this project and introduced me to the doyen of Canterbury historians, the late Don Hawkins.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

*The research question: How did migration to New Zealand affect the people of Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk between 1853-71?*

This dissertation will examine and analyse what happened to the people of Stoke by Nayland as a result of the migration to New Zealand which occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. Its time parameters – 1853-71 – are defined by the period of the provincial administration control of migration into New Zealand. The decade before 1853 will, however, be commented upon in order to establish the background context to this movement of people.

The key research questions of this study will be:

Who migrated to New Zealand during this period and how did the migration affect their life chances?

What were the social and economic effects of this migration, particularly on the poorer local families? To what extent was the Stoke by Nayland emigration similar to the ‘parish assisted’ emigration studied by Gary Howells in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Norfolk? <sup>1</sup>

Two subsidiary questions will also be considered:

How did the migration impact differently on males and females?

How did ‘networks’ (of information and personal contacts) facilitate the migration process?

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Howells, ‘On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860’, *History*, 88 (2003), 587

### *Rationale*

The rationale for this research is that there are obvious gaps in the existing literature regarding emigration which have been commented upon by other historians. ‘The potential of a small-scale case study of migration to illuminate a wider elusive historical process is considerable’ according to Howells.<sup>2</sup>

One of the leading experts in the study of migration, Dudley Baines, also notes that local studies may yield more insight into migration than large quantitative analyses. He particularly recommends more detailed studies of individual and family behaviour over the life cycles of the migrants in order to help develop deeper understanding of the causes and effects of migration.<sup>3</sup> In addition, New Zealand historians have noted how more seems to be known about every other racial group than is known about the largest single group of migrants to New Zealand in the nineteenth century, the English.<sup>4</sup>

### *Context*

Rev. Charles Martin Torlesse, the vicar of the parish of Stoke by Nayland in Suffolk, was the brother-in-law of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, a major figure in the development of the British Empire’s settler colonies (Canada, Australia and New Zealand) in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Rev. Torlesse’s son, Charles Obins Torlesse, became a surveyor of parts of New Zealand’s South Island in the early 1840s before becoming the first British settler in the area he named Rangiora in 1851. Over the next twenty years,

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<sup>2</sup> Gary Howells, ‘Emigrants and Emigrators’ (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Leicester, 1996), p.7

<sup>3</sup> Dudley Baines, ‘Looking at the European Emigration Decision Again’, *Economic History Review*, 47 (1994), 540

<sup>4</sup> Jack Phillips & Terry Hearn, *Settlers* (Auckland, NZ.: Auckland University Press, 2008), P.11

over fifty Stoke by Nayland residents (plus forty from neighbouring parishes) made the enormous journey to New Zealand. The stream of migrants included, as will be illustrated below, some of the village's main tradesmen and most 'reputable' labourers. However, by 1862, Rev. Torlesse was moved to admonish his former parishioners (now living in New Zealand) for their behaviour towards their relatives 'back home'. 'I often go into the cottages of your parents, and sometimes see a good deal of poverty, arising from old age or sickness,' wrote Torlesse. 'I am then led to enquire, has this man or woman got a son or daughter living in plenty?' He was then 'often asked by these kind friends who have lent money to intending emigrants... 'Will that money ever be repaid?' Rev. Torlesse ended his letter: 'Where God has blessed their labourers, they will remember their parents living in poverty at home.'<sup>5</sup> This dissertation will investigate how this migration affected the 'life chances' of the wider families of the migrants, including those relatives left in Suffolk.

### ***Historiography***

Many of the secondary sources look at the migration process from the perspective of immigrants rather than emigrants. This is not surprising – emigrants are moving 'out' of the researchers' focus rather than 'into' it – but it does mean that the literature can appear very immigrant (New Zealand) biased.

Books of relevance to this dissertation may be split into five sub-groups, two of which are general and three more specific. In the former category are those dealing with the Victorian social history and general migration studies. The more specific volumes are concerned with Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the Torlesse family and the migrants'

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<sup>5</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 26 March 1862

destinations in Canterbury, especially the town of Rangiora. In the former group are 'Replenishing the Earth' by James Belich and 'Migration in a Mature Economy' by Dudley Baines. Belich's work looks at the 'settler' revolutions which produced the 'dominions' of the British Empire. He stresses the psychological aspects of the emigration rather than focussing on the purely economic drivers favoured by earlier authorities such as Ravenstein.<sup>6</sup> Baines in a sense takes a compromise path; relating the rate and timing of migration to the characteristics of the areas from which the migrants came. He considers the emigrants to have been well-informed about the advantages and disadvantages of migration. Thus, again, information rather than simple economics was crucial to the decision to migrate. As Baines went on to note in 1994, 'chain migration' is also sometimes used to explain migrant flows. 'It has sometimes been possible to relate the movement of particular emigrants to earlier movement.'<sup>7</sup> As will be seen below, this phenomenon is certainly of relevance in the case of Stoke by Nayland's experience of migration.

General British social histories of the period often have relatively little to say regarding emigration, preferring to limit their gaze to internal rural – urban migration. Indeed, as Howells has commented it often appears that emigration is 'an embarrassing subject best ignored.'<sup>8</sup> However, as he also points out the overall conclusion of many general studies is that emigrants were 'people not leaving from hardship, but responding to aspirations unfulfilled within the old world.'<sup>9</sup> 'Assisted emigration' in particular was seen as a way of helping paupers whilst also showing a continuing concern for labourers more generally. It

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<sup>6</sup> D.B. Grigg, 'E.G. Ravenstein and the laws of migration', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 3:1. 1977, p. 41-54

<sup>7</sup> Baines, p.530

<sup>8</sup> Howells, p.3

<sup>9</sup> Howells, p.9

sought to develop a ‘hope of a better life, both for those who left and for those who stayed behind’.<sup>10</sup> This hypothesis will be tested as far as possible in the case of the Stoke by Nayland – New Zealand migrants.

Not surprisingly, the greatest value of British social histories is in describing and explaining the environment from which the migrants departed. Writing of the years under consideration, Alun Howkins describes it as a period when ‘rural society entered a state of calm in which the rural order functioned by and large successfully’. Earlier economic and social uncertainty had been settled and ‘contradictions were controlled in most situations.’ This ‘new paternalism’ lasted until about 1872.<sup>11</sup> Throughout many of the years from 1850 to 1873 farming, like most other British industries, ‘enjoyed...high prosperity and expansion with resilient prices and profits.’<sup>12</sup>

### ***Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Torlesse Family***

The more specific books relevant to this dissertation examine the histories of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the Torlesse family and the areas of New Zealand in which the emigrants settled. Wakefield is a truly controversial figure about whom opinions have varied enormously over time. In the late nineteenth century his reputation reached great heights, culminating with him being described in 1898 as a man ‘inferior to none in genius and achievement.’<sup>13</sup> By contrast, by the 1990s he was characterised as ‘no more than a

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<sup>10</sup> Gary Howells, ‘On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860’, *History*, 88 (2003), 592

<sup>11</sup> Alun Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History 1850-1925* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1992), p.3

<sup>12</sup> Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: An Economic History of Britain 1700-1914* (London: Methuen, 1976), p.340

<sup>13</sup> R. Garnett, *Edward Gibbon Wakefield, The Colonisation of South Australia and New Zealand* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898), preface, p.xi

successful pamphleteer and lobbyist.’<sup>14</sup> In 2001 Mark Francis went so far as to write of him as a ‘tiny figure overshadowed by the giants of classical economics.’<sup>15</sup> Whilst it is true that Wakefield could never fail to create controversy given his behaviour (as a young man he served three years in Newgate gaol for abducting Ellen Turner, an underage heiress), his achievements remain worthy of note.<sup>16</sup>

Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s life and character were examined in great detail in 2003 by Philip Temple. He noted that despite his personal flaws, Wakefield’s ‘influence on the very condition of the country was absolutely fundamental.’<sup>17</sup> During his time in gaol he had developed a theory for ‘systematic colonisation’ which he outlined in his book, ‘A Letter from Sydney’ (1829). Britain’s surplus capital and population, he suggested, could be advantageously employed in the establishment of colonies overseas which would replicate the best of English pre-industrial rural society. His plans envisaged a gentry group as leaders of these communities, ensuring the development of ‘civilisation’ in these overseas ‘facsimiles’ of English society.<sup>18</sup> Inspired by Wakefield’s ideas ‘systematic colonies’ were established in Canada, South Australia and New Zealand by colonisers who hoped to increase profitability and productivity in Britain. This progress, they believed, would save the nation from ‘stagnation and turmoil while creating a wealthier new society.’<sup>19</sup> However, none of this impressed the United Kingdom government. As late as 1852 Disraeli referred to the colonies as ‘mill-stones round our necks,’ and the Colonial

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<sup>14</sup> Philip Temple, *A Sort of Conscience: The Wakefields* (Auckland NZ.: Auckland University Press, 2003), Kindle edition 13198

<sup>15</sup> Temple, 13198-13207

<sup>16</sup> Tom Brooking, *The History of New Zealand*, (Westport, USA: Greenwood Press, 2004), p.43

<sup>17</sup> Temple, 13227

<sup>18</sup> Temple 3299, 3209

<sup>19</sup> K.I. Stringer, ‘Social Aid in Otago and Canterbury’ (unpublished MA Thesis, University of Canterbury, NZ, 2015), p.53

Office declared that the islands of New Zealand ‘were to be swept under the imperial carpet with the minimum of effort and expense.’<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, from Wakefield’s point of view, many of the early schemes did not attract the ‘quality’ of migrants he thought essential to create peaceful, successful colonies. His ideal were what he described as the ‘uneasy class’, in other words middle class people who were comfortably-off, but struggling to maintain their position in society, together with individuals seeking to ‘better’ themselves.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, the prospective early migrants who were coming forward were frequently penniless and unable to tackle new lives in the colonies in the self-sufficient manner required of them by Wakefield’s vision.<sup>22</sup>

Wakefield concluded that his original settlements in New Zealand (such as Nelson on the northern edge of the South Island) were falling short of his vision because ‘religious cohesion had been the missing ingredient.’<sup>23</sup> Though never a particularly religious man, he could claim to be the person who incorporated the ‘moral factor’ into the emigration process.<sup>24</sup> Temple, however, points out that Wakefield left morality to the churches and to female members of his family and so his ‘religiosity’ was never more than a ‘sort of conscience.’<sup>25</sup> So important does Temple consider this aspect of Wakefield’s personality that he chose the phrase ‘A Sort of Conscience’ as the title of his aforementioned survey of

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<sup>20</sup> Stringer, p.42

<sup>21</sup> Stringer, p.55

<sup>22</sup> Stringer, pp.56-7

<sup>23</sup> Stringer, p.60

<sup>24</sup> Hilary M Carey, *God’s Empire; Religion and Colonialism in the British World 1801-1908* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011), p.316

<sup>25</sup> Carey, p.317

Wakefield, his family and their lives. Religion, Wakefield believed could, as Carey puts it, 'lend legitimacy to colonies and undercut those who opposed (them) on moral grounds.'<sup>26</sup>

Wakefield's ideas found an appreciative audience within his wider family. His elder sister, Catherine, was married to the Reverend Charles Martin Torlesse. Writing almost ninety years later, Wakefield's niece, Francis Torlesse, could still clearly recall the effect of Wakefield's criminal behaviour on his sister: 'I do not think any words can be found to describe the grief caused to her by his conduct, or how keenly both she and my father felt the social stigma attached to his name.'<sup>27</sup> Despite this, the vicarage would always remain the place Edward Gibbon Wakefield, his brothers William and Arthur and Edward's children, would consider the true family home.<sup>28</sup> As early as 1837, Edward was writing to his brother-in-law Charles of how New Zealand is 'one of the finest countries in the world, if not the finest, for British settlement...' and of how his brother Arthur 'thinks of commanding the first expedition.'<sup>29</sup> Wakefield's ideas had a huge effect on the Torlesse family. As will be discussed below, several younger members of the family travelled to the newly established province of Canterbury and several Torlesse servants migrated to New Zealand. Rev. Torlesse became a member of the management committee of the Canterbury Association, an organisation founded to facilitate emigration to the new colony. He was present, together with Wakefield and the Bishop of Norwich (Samuel Hines) and other dignitaries, at a large public meeting called to publicise emigration held in Ipswich Town Hall on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1850.<sup>30</sup> A few weeks later he also attended the 'public breakfast' given by the Canterbury Association to wish good luck to the first party of

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<sup>26</sup> Carey, p. 318

<sup>27</sup> Francis Torlesse, *Bygone Days* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1914), p.97

<sup>28</sup> Temple, 3433

<sup>29</sup> Temple, 4645

<sup>30</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1/6/1850

‘pilgrims’ departing for New Zealand. The *Times* report of the event takes great pains to emphasise (several times) the ‘respectable’ nature of the migrants. In accordance with the Wakefield ideals, these people were, it was said, definitely not criminals of the kind who were transported to Australia. Bishop Hines stated that he trusted ‘the time had come when the spirit of colonisation had freed itself from these debasing associations.’<sup>31</sup>

Frances Torlesse remembers her father ‘constantly went to London for meetings’ and even after the Association was wound up in 1852 her parents promoted emigration ‘by every means in their power.’<sup>32</sup>

### ***Problems encountered in the research***

Researching migration is a challenging task. It is, to quote Howells’ memorable phrase, ‘a little like trying to do an unfamiliar jigsaw in the dark.’ Nineteenth century emigration is, in general, less well recorded than the migration of earlier centuries and British, and especially English, emigration has remained relatively little explored by historians.<sup>33</sup> The major sources, census records and shipping passenger lists, both have serious weaknesses when employed for this purpose. Whilst generally reliable, the data recorded by the census enumerators clearly reflected what the respondents wanted written down – which was not always the ‘truth’ – and can only provide at best ‘snapshots’ at ten-yearly intervals. The passenger lists do not survive in any complete form (though Canterbury vessels are better recorded than those to other provinces) and were not always filled in reliably.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *The Times*, 31/5/1850

<sup>32</sup> Torlesse, p.99

<sup>33</sup> Howells, p.1-2

<sup>34</sup> Ancestry web site [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/categories/img\\_passlists/](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/categories/img_passlists/)

Inevitably, sources such as Victorian passenger lists and census returns contain contradictions and details which are too imprecise to be certain as to who and what they refer to. The name 'George Cook', for instance, occurs in both sources, but it seems impossible to be sure exactly which 'George Cook' they are referring to. Ages, in particular, are often imprecise. Sometimes they are raised - rather in the manner of teenage army recruits in the First World War - but they may also have been reduced amongst older migrants. For this reason, ages given in census returns have been relied upon whenever possible for consistency's sake. The migrant individuals listed were identified by 'triangulating' and cross-referencing details given in *The Torlesse Papers*, D.N. Hawkins *Rangiora*, the Macdonald biographies, *Lyttelton Press* reports and online family histories. D. N. Hawkins study of the history of Rangiora, written by an author with access to Torlesse papers unavailable in England, helped to identify individual migrants whose stories could then be investigated.<sup>35</sup> Ancestry.co.uk and a wide selection of individual family history web sites added further to the data regarding the Stoke by Nayland emigrants to New Zealand. Inevitably, some individuals will have 'slipped through the net', indeed sometimes tantalising hints of other persons exist, but cannot be clarified. Thus, the named migrants should be seen as representing a very substantial sample of a potentially larger group.

The most fundamental difficulty with this area of research is the simple fact that there is no central, reliable, and comprehensive record of who the emigrants were. This difficulty is particularly acute when trying to identify migrants from a specific location. For this reason, expressions such as 'at least' will be used throughout this study when referring to

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<sup>35</sup> D.N. Hawkins, *Rangiora The Passing Years and People in a Canterbury County Town* (Rangiora, New Zealand: Rangiora Borough Council, 1983)

the numbers of migrants. The people identified below are those who can be confidently included amongst the groups of migrants. These lists are therefore a minimum. It is doubtful whether a completely accurate list could ever be compiled so long after the events described.

## **Chapter 2: The Community the Emigrants Chose to Leave: Stoke by Nayland in 1851**

### ***Overview***

In the mid-nineteenth century a significant number of residents from the south Suffolk parish of Stoke by Nayland emigrated to the new province of Canterbury in New Zealand. It is the aim of this chapter to examine the nature of the community they chose to leave and to consider how much hardship at home may have contributed to their decision to travel to the other side of the world. It will look in particular at two aspects of mid-nineteenth century Stoke by Nayland. Firstly, the occupational and wealth structure of the parish and secondly, how migratory was that community? To help put these aspects in context, Stoke by Nayland will be compared to other mid-Victorian parishes, in particular with one of similar size in nearby Essex, Castle Hedingham. The majority of the data quoted will be derived from the relevant 1851 census enumerators' books.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Geographical and occupational Context***

Stoke by Nayland is a village situated north of the River Stour, six miles S.S.W. of Hadleigh. In 1953 it was succinctly described as follows:

Small compact development following a square form. Church centrally situated. Tendring Hall Park occupies area south of the village and probably influenced development.

Secondary settlement at Scotland Place and along Scotland Street. Scattered farms.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Census Enumerators' Books – 1851: Catton HO 107/1811, Kirton HO 107/1801, Stoke by Nayland HO 107/1788, Castle Hedingham HO 107/1784, < [www.ancestry.co.uk/search/categories/1851uki/](http://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/categories/1851uki/) > [accessed Dec 1, 2018] Heigham HO 107/1816 <http://welbank.net/norwich/index2.html> [accessed Dec 1, 2018]

<sup>2</sup> *A Survey of Suffolk Parish History: West Suffolk* (Ipswich: S.C.C., 1990), no page no.

In 1840 there were fifty-seven landowners, but the holdings of one of them, Sir Joshua Ricketts Rowley of Tendring Hall, far exceeding the rest combined. His 3285 acres represented 64% of the parish's 5277 acres. The next largest landowner was Patrick Mannock of Gifford's Hall (810 acres, 15%), followed by three men, Isaac Hoy, Abraham Reeve and John Hoy, with combined holdings of 420 acres (8% of the total). 52 owners held the remaining 13% of the parish.<sup>3</sup> These acres housed a population of 1406 in 1851, an increase on the 1362 of 1841, but a decrease from the 1447 counted in 1831. In common with most southern English rural communities of the time, Stoke by Nayland's life was dominated by the land and the agriculture carried out on it. 199 males gave their occupation as 'agricultural labourer' in 1851, 27.7% of the total male population (719) of the parish.

Castle Hedingham, some fifteen miles west of Stoke, had an almost identical population in 1851 (1394), but was much smaller in area (2,429 acres) and, as a result, had a smaller number of agricultural labourers (133, or 20.7% of the total male population). In both villages the principal female occupation was typical of the English countryside of the time, domestic service, but there was a contrast between the numbers so employed. In Stoke by Nayland there were sixty-eight (9.9%) female servants, in Castle Hedingham the comparable figure was forty-three (5.9%). Nationally in 1851, agricultural workers made up 15% of the male population while 8% of females were domestic servants.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Suffolk Record Office, Bury St. Edmunds, T113/1, SBN Tithe Apportionment Award 1840

<sup>4</sup> Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: An Economic History of Britain 1700-1914*, (London: Methuen, 1976), p.260

### *Social Structure*

In many southern English villages, including Stoke by Nayland, a relatively small group of men dominated the local community. The local squire, the parson and the larger tenant farmers, ‘a circle of people to whom common men touched their hats,’ often constituted a virtual ‘petty dictatorship’ in which the characters of these men in charge set the tone for how most people lived their lives.<sup>5</sup> If a larger proportion of the parish was owned and controlled by only a very small group the result was what historians term a ‘close’ parish. In such communities, the proportion of men employed in trades and crafts was smaller, and the proportion of women in domestic service tended to be higher, than in ‘open’ parishes where land ownership was more widely dispersed.<sup>6</sup> Their local control allowed the wealthy landowners to discourage the settlement of poorer, less regularly employed members of society in their parish which was beneficial to the better-off since it helped to reduce the parish poor rate which they, the more affluent, were required to pay. These differences were especially marked where the larger landowner was resident in the parish. Even the ratios between the sexes differed in the two types of parishes, reflecting the differing labour demands. In ‘close’ parishes, there were typically more males than females. In Stoke the proportions were 51% males:49% females. In the large ‘open’ parish of Heigham outside Norwich, by contrast, the proportions were 46% males:54% females.

The ‘open’ and ‘close’ labels should, however, be seen more as two ends of a continuum than as discrete definitions. Stoke was more ‘close’ than Castle Hedingham, but it had several medium-sized landowners and one major landholder, P. Mannock, who was

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<sup>5</sup> Graham Nicholson and Jane Fawcett, *The Village in History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988), p.415

<sup>6</sup> Dennis Mills, and Kevin Schurer, (eds), *Local Communities in the Victorian Census Enumerators’ Books* (Oxford: Leopard’s Head Press Ltd, 1996), p.415

sometimes described in trade directories as ‘abroad.’<sup>7</sup> Thus Stoke was not a classic ‘estate’ village, but it was still felt to justify the positive Victorian adjectives ‘fertile and picturesque’ when being described in 1874.<sup>8</sup> Its limited range of occupations emphasised its nature. An 1850 trade directory entry makes clear how a wider range of trade and craft activities were taking place in the neighbouring parish of Nayland.<sup>9</sup> Twenty years earlier, the 1831 census had noted 191 people in agriculture in Stoke, but only seventy-seven employed in agriculture in Nayland. By contrast, the smaller Nayland (population 1,047 to Stoke’s 1,447) had 107 in retail trades while Stoke had only seventy-nine. Nayland also had fourteen professionals to Stoke’s six.<sup>10</sup> Slater’s 1850 directory listed sixty-seven individuals in thirty-five trade categories in Nayland while Stoke had only thirty-six individuals in fifteen categories.<sup>11</sup> The River Stour was navigable to Nayland and wagons travelled twice-weekly from the village to both Ipswich and London (three times weekly to Colchester). It had ‘retail shops, a large silk throw string mill, a soap manufactory, a brewery and several malt kilns.’ At that time Stoke could boast none of these industrial ‘advantages’.<sup>12</sup>

But for those who lived in the parish of Stoke by Nayland employment was, it appears, by contemporary standards, comparatively regular. Writing of the Blean area of Kent, Reay discovered that only 54% of the men and boys who described themselves as agricultural

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<sup>7</sup> Slater, Isaac, *Slater's Royal National and Commercial Directory and Topography of the Counties of Beds, Cambs, Hunts, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northants and Suffolk* (Manchester: Slater, 1850), p.58

<sup>8</sup> William White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Suffolk* (Sheffield: White, 1844), p.194

<sup>9</sup> Slater, p.58

<sup>10</sup> *A Survey of Suffolk Parish History: West Suffolk* (Ipswich: S.C.C., 1990), no page no.

<sup>11</sup> Slater, pp.58-59

<sup>12</sup> White, pp.562-9

labourers in 1851 were accounted for in the number of labourers local farmers declared themselves as employing. Thus, he estimated, 46% of the labouring workforce were out of work when the census was taken in the spring of that year. He goes on to comment that if ‘there is such a thing as a typical agricultural worker, the occasional or annual labourer has a strong claim’.<sup>13</sup> In Castle Hedingham, labouring work was even less secure – only 28% of labourers were employed according to the farmers. But in Stoke the comparable figure was 62%.

As noted above, another major source of regular, secure, employment was domestic service. The two main halls of the parish supported full hierarchal sets of servants: Tendring Hall had seventeen staff (ten females and seven males) serving Joshua and Charlotte Rowley while Giffords Hall employed seven servants (five females and two males) to serve the retired Lt. Colonel Francis Gresley. In addition, eleven farmers of 100 acres or more had domestic servants, plus a few smaller farmers and local worthies such as the Rev. Charles Torlesse and the Catholic priest, Mathias Lane. About seventeen other households employed servants, usually a solitary general servant.

### ***Poverty***

The relatively affluent nature of Stoke by Nayland’s community is further reflected in the limited extent of poverty apparent in the 1851 census returns. Twenty-one local people were recorded as ‘paupers’ (three men and eighteen women). This group was all over fifty-five years of age with the exception of one thirty-eight-year-old female described as a

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<sup>13</sup> Barry Reay, *Microhistories: demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930* (Cambridge: CUP 2002), p.28

'cripple'. Those who mention occupations were virtually all former agricultural labourers or laundresses. This contrasts very forcibly with the situation in Castle Hedingham. In Stoke only 1.5% of the total population were paupers, almost identical to the 1.6% in the affluent suburban parish of Catton in Norfolk where the poor had relatively easy access to the employment and poor relief of nearby Norwich.<sup>14</sup>

In Castle Hedingham 4.2% of the population were paupers. Nineteen of these fifty-eight individuals were in employment (84% of them as straw platters) and thirteen (almost a quarter) of their number were under twenty-five years of age. Whereas in Stoke by Nayland only 14% of paupers were male, in Castle Hedingham this figure rises to 36%. The Stoke by Nayland paupers were almost exclusively elderly and infirm females. By contrast, the Castle Hedingham poor included a significant proportion of people – of both sexes – of employable age. Furthermore, the Stoke by Nayland paupers were less local – only one-third had been born in the parish – and so perhaps had less local kinship-support than their counterparts in Castle Hedingham where over half were still living in their place of birth. The levels of contemporary unrest in the Poor Law Unions in which the two parishes were situated reflected these differences. In Castle Hedingham's Union (Halstead) there were 'riotous assemblies' and 'damage to the private property of Poor Law administrators' following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, but in Sudbury (Stoke by Nayland's) Union no such protests took place.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Catton HO 107/1811

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Charlesworth, (ed), *An Atlas of Rural Protest in Britain 1548-1900* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), p.160

### *Migration*

How migratory was this apparently reasonably comfortable Stoke by Nayland community in 1851? Table 2.1 compares the percentages of local people who gave their birthplaces as at given distances from their residence in 1851. It includes Stoke by Nayland, Castle Hedingham and Hernhill in Kent.<sup>16</sup> The table makes it clear that in all three villages over 70% of the population were living within five miles of their birthplace. Stoke and Castle Hedingham were particularly immobile, with almost 60% still living in the parish in which they were born. This localism becomes even more marked when the largest occupational group, agricultural labourers, is considered (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.1: Distance of Place of birth from residence 1851**

	Hernhill %	Stoke %	Castle Hedingham %
Residence 1851	32.8	56.7	58.6
Less than 5 miles	37.8	22.1	21.7
5 – 10 miles	11.2	7.2	7.6
10 – 20 miles	9.5	4.0	4.3
Over 20 miles	7.0	9.8	7.6

**Table 2.2: Distance of Place of birth from residence: agricultural labourers 1851**

	Stoke %	Castle Hedingham %
Residence 1851	72.3	71.0
Less than 5 miles	22.0	24.1
5 – 10 miles	1.5	2.4
10 – 20 miles	1.5	0.9
Over 20 miles	2.6	1.4

Clearly, these men (there were also a few women) were almost exclusively local. Over 94% were living less than five miles from their birthplace. If mobility did not come from

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<sup>16</sup> Reay, p.166

the large group of agricultural labourers, who were the 20% of the residents who had moved more than five miles from the parish of their birth? Not surprisingly, the young and single were the most mobile members of these societies. Only 41% of Stokes unmarried females between the ages of 15 – 24 were born in the parish, a figure which drops to only 24% when female servants are considered. These young women were truly mobile – there were even two girls working at Tendring Hall who had been born in London! Given that the forty-five domestic servants constituted 57.1% of this unmarried age group in Stoke, their mobility was a significant feature of part of the local community. The relatively large size of this occupational group (over 8% more than its equivalent in the Blean, Kent) is also another indication of Stoke's relative prosperity.<sup>17</sup> In Castle Hedingham only 13.7% of the young unmarried women were servants since 40.2% were employed in the local craft industry of straw platting.

These population movements affected the age structures of the communities concerned.

**Table 2.3: Age structures of four parishes in 1887** <sup>18</sup>

Ages	Kirton	Castle Hedingham	Stoke by Nayland	Heigham, Norwich	National
0 – 14	38.5%	38%	36.5%	31%	35%
15 – 64	54.5%	58.5%	58%	64.5%	60%
65+	5%	6%	5.5%	4.5%	5%
TOTAL POP.	546	1,394	1,406	7,751	

The four parishes in Table 2.3 have been arranged in order of their total populations, but this rank order also applies to their respective proportions of adults of working ages too.

The large Norwich suburban parish of Heigham attracted a high proportion of employable adults, who would in turn produce further economic and thus population growth. The

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<sup>17</sup> Reay, p.31

<sup>18</sup> Mathias, p.450

relatively small and isolated coastal parish of Kirton, Suffolk, was not attracting so many adults and thus not economically expanding. Stoke by Nayland and Castle Hedingham were between these two positions.

### ***Reasons for migration***

The reasons why individuals migrate are often explained by the use of two distinct but potentially overlapping hypotheses: the 'relative income' theory and the information hypothesis.<sup>19</sup> The former sees decisions as dominated by potential economic benefits, the latter sees knowledge and contacts ('networks') as central to decision-making. In both cases 'push' and 'pull' factors come into play. Robert Johnson has described these factors as follows: 'Push' factors – industrialisation, long-term rural poverty and expanding populations; 'Pull' factors – better job opportunities, higher wages, land ownership and freedom (from the squire, etc.)<sup>20</sup> For the people of Stoke in 1851 there does not seem to have been a major 'push' to leave as a result of widespread unemployment and poverty within the parish. Neither was there a major pull such as significant industrialisation occurring close by. There were expanding towns in the region- such as Colchester and Ipswich- but they were not growing at the spectacular rates experienced in the north of England. In many rural communities poorer people were faced with a stark choice between 'a precarious existence on the land, picking up seasonal work, parish relief and irksome charity or a farewell to loved ones and a new life elsewhere.'<sup>21</sup> This does not appear to have been such a dilemma in Stoke, hence the relatively static population and low mobility rates. The trends identified in this chapter appear to fit well with two of

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<sup>19</sup> Dudley Barnes, 'Looking at the European Emigration Decision Again', *Economic History Review*, 47 (1994), p.527

<sup>20</sup> Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.64

<sup>21</sup> Nicolson and Fawcett, p.146

Ravenstein's 1885 'Laws of Migration' which suggest that females are more migratory than males within the county of their birth and the major causes of national migration are economic.<sup>22</sup> The immobility of agricultural labourers nationally was to continue into the 1860s and was seen as a reason to justify their low standing within rural society.<sup>23</sup> The sons of agricultural labourers were also highly unlikely to pursue careers different to their fathers.<sup>24</sup> The wealthier and more skilled rural men were generally more mobile. The Stoke percentages of 48% of tradesmen and 35% of farmers living in their parish of birth were almost identical to those occurring in other larger rural parishes.<sup>25</sup>

### *Education*

The 'information hypotheses' mentioned above presupposes the ability to understand and access available information in order to make informed judgements about the 'pro and cons' of potential migration. Unfortunately for the agricultural labourers of Stoke, in this too, they appear to have been at a disadvantage, when compared with some other parishes.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 2.4: Children aged 5-14 at school as % of total popn of that age group in 1851**

	Males	Females
Boughton, Kent	53.5	54.5
Hernhill, Kent	32.9	42.4
Castle Hedingham	41	46

<sup>22</sup> W,T.R.,Pryce, (ed), *From Family History to Community History* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), pp.10-12

<sup>23</sup> Bogusia Wojciechowsha, 'Brenchley: a study of migratory movements in a mid-nineteenth century rural parish', in Mills, Dennis and Schurer, Kevin, (eds), *Local Communities in the Victorian Census Enumerators' Books* (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press Ltd, 1996), p.265

<sup>24</sup> Wojciechowsha, p.225

<sup>25</sup> Dennis Mills and Kevin Schurer, 'Migration and Population turnover', in Mills, Dennis and Schurer, Kevin, (eds), *Local Communities in the Victorian Census Enumerators' Books* (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press Ltd, 1996), p.226

<sup>26</sup> Reay, p.226

Stoke by Nayland	35	46
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Stoke by Nayland had 187 children described as scholars, pupils or at school in 1851, but thirty-one of them were in two boarding schools in the parish and have been excluded from these statistics. In common with many boarding schools, these two small establishments were patronised almost exclusively by families from outside Stoke.<sup>27</sup> If a further nine ‘scholars at home’ are excluded, the remaining 141 ‘scholars’ were overwhelmingly local children (80% of them had been born in Stoke by Nayland). But they were not especially numerous in Stoke by Nayland – only amongst ten and eleven-year-old boys and ten-year-old girls did their numbers represent more than 51% of their age group in the parish. The highest proportion of girl scholars, 55%, was reached amongst ten-year olds. Of the households headed by agricultural labourers in Stoke in 1851 only thirty had ‘scholar’ children. Labourers’ sons were especially poorly represented: only twenty-one boys were ‘scholars’ as compared with thirty-seven girls. Whilst it is true that only four children (three boys and a girl) under eleven had occupations other than ‘scholar’ listed in Stoke by Nayland as compared with ten straw platters aged under seven in Castle Hedingham, the latter parish had 151 ‘scholars’ and a further nine ‘scholars at home’.

### *Conclusion*

Stoke by Nayland in 1851 was a farming community whose affairs were dominated by a small group of wealthy landowners. As a result of the employment these men offered there appears to have been a relatively low level of poverty in the village. Its proportion of ‘paupers’ was quite small and those so named were almost exclusively elderly or in some

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<sup>27</sup> Reay, p.227

way infirm. The parish was not well connected by transport links to other parishes and its people had often been born within the village or one of its close neighbours. This was especially true of the largest occupational group, the agricultural labourers. Of the less affluent members of society, only the young female domestic servants appear to have been significantly geographically mobile. This localism was reinforced by the limited extent to which agricultural labourers sent their children to school. Stoke by Nayland in 1851 appears to have been a relatively settled, static community. It therefore seems likely that the emigrants of the next decade were to be motivated more by the 'pull' of the areas they were to move to, than by being 'pushed' out by especially high levels of unhappiness 'at home'.

### **Chapter 3: Stoke by Nayland Migrants to New Zealand 1841-64**

#### ***Overview***

This chapter seeks to investigate the nature of the migration from Stoke by Nayland and, to a much lesser extent, the neighbouring parish of Polstead, to the province of Canterbury, New Zealand, in the mid-nineteenth century. It will describe who the individual migrants were and what their occupational and family backgrounds were. It will also attempt to ascertain, as far as possible, their individual motivations for migrating and the ‘network’ of friends and family which encouraged this process. Two specific aspects of the migrants will also be considered: the relative wealth (or poverty) of the emigrants and the differing experiences of local males and females with regard to migration to New Zealand.

#### ***The Pioneer Migrants of the Crown Colony period (1840-52)***

In April 1841 three ships left Gravesend carrying surveyors and emigrants to what is now Nelson in the north of New Zealand’s South Island. One of the surveyors was the Rev. Torlesse’s 17-year-old son, Charles Obins Torlesse, and amongst the emigrants was William Songer, from Stoke by Nayland. Songer was described as a 29-year-old servant to Captain Arthur Wakefield, R.N. Arthur was Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s brother, and the leader of the expedition.<sup>1</sup> In 1914, Frances Torlesse, Rev. Torlesse’s youngest daughter, related how William Songer had travelled to New Zealand with his wife Naomi (née Emeny) who had been nurse to the Torlesse children.<sup>2</sup> The unfortunate Arthur Wakefield died two years later as a result of the battle with local Maori known as the

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<sup>1</sup> *Whitby* passenger list <https://www.geni.com/projects/New-Zealand-Settler-Ships-Whitby-1841/12835> [Accessed 1 August 2019]

<sup>2</sup> Torlesse, p.107

‘Wairau incident’, but Songer was to live to the age of 84.<sup>3</sup> His obituary in 1904 noted that he was the first person to land and hoist the British flag on the Port Hills. After landing in Nelson, Wakefield’s first organisation established to facilitate British settlement in the new colony, the New Zealand Company, had kept him busy with labouring work. When the company ceased its activities, he became a farmer and he had been one of the founders of the Nelson suburb of Stoke. He had married several times and had been ‘greatly respected and well known throughout the province...(leaving) several relatives and connections in the district.’<sup>4</sup> Indeed, two years before his death Songer was a guest and speaker at a celebratory meal marking the diamond jubilee of the province of Nelson at which the long-serving New Zealand Prime Minister, Richard Seddon, had very publicly praised him and shaken his hand.<sup>5</sup>

William Songer, the son of Isaac Songer and his wife Mary (née Cousins) was truly a pioneer. His father was a Stoke by Nayland agricultural labourer and his mother’s maiden surname, as will be noted below, was significant. William and his wife Naomi (1800-75) had both worked for the Torlesse family and these personal connections were typical of the way that family and friendship ‘networks’ facilitated the emigration process. Emotional ties between the two ‘Stokes’ continued for many decades. Funds from Stoke by Nayland helped to build the Church of St. Barnabas in Stoke, New Zealand, in 1866, and a bell for the church was gifted by Stoke’s principal landowner, Sir Charles Ricketts Rowley, in 1864.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Nelson Evening Mail*, 13 August 1904

<sup>4</sup> *Nelson Evening Mail*, 13 August 1904

<sup>5</sup> *Nelson Evening Mail*, 4 February 1902

<sup>6</sup> *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 12 December 1864

When his surveying cadetship ended in 1843 Charles Obins Torlesse (hereafter referred to as C.O.T) returned to Suffolk. The establishment of the ‘Canterbury Association’ in which his uncle Edward Gibbons Wakefield and his father Rev. Torlesse were enthusiastic participants led to C.O.T. returning to New Zealand on the *Bernicia* in 1848.<sup>7</sup> After three years of extensive travel and surveying around the South Island, C.O.T. established a home and farm on land purchased by his father at ‘Rakihora’ which became known as Rangiora. C.O.T. was the first European settler in the area, but he did not, at that time, expect his family to join him there.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time that C.O.T. was becoming established at Rangiora, William Songer’s sister Sarah travelled to New Zealand. She had married William Sowman of the neighbouring parish of Polstead in 1841. Her new husband had served twelve months in Bury St. Edmunds gaol for breaking and entering and the theft of apples (1836-7), a record which might have helped provide an impetus towards ‘making a new start’ on the other side of the world.<sup>9</sup> In this first wave of settlement – the so- called ‘Crown Colony’ period 1840-52 – about twenty thousand migrants arrived from the United Kingdom.<sup>10</sup> They were arriving in a sparsely populated country where a significant proportion of the men already settled there had convict backgrounds.<sup>11</sup> William Sowman was the son of a maltster, but in 1851 he described himself as an agricultural labourer. At the time of their migration William was thirty-three, Sarah was thirty and they had three sons and a daughter between

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<sup>7</sup> Hawkins, p.20

<sup>8</sup> Hawkins, p. 36

<sup>9</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 12 March 1836

<sup>10</sup> Jock Phillips & Terry Hearn, *Settlers*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008), p.30

<sup>11</sup> Phillips & Hearn, p.28

<sup>12</sup> [www.peelingbackhistory.co.nz/helpful-farmer-honoured-in-road-naming-1869/](http://www.peelingbackhistory.co.nz/helpful-farmer-honoured-in-road-naming-1869/) [Accessed: 23 May 2019]

<sup>13</sup> [www.wikitree.com/wiki/Sowman-45](http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Sowman-45) [Accessed: 29 May 2019]

eight years and three months of age. The family travelled on the *Canterbury* with the ‘assistance’ of a more affluent brother and sister couple, John Dyer (1828-76) and Mary Ann Dyer (1818- ). The nature of the Dyer’s ‘assistance’ is unclear. They were the children of Thomas Dyer and his wife Sarah of Hoath Lane, Stoke by Nayland. Thomas was described in 1851 as a farmer of 130 acres who employed five labourers. John and Mary together with eight other passengers travelled in the relative comfort of the ‘second cabin’. During the voyage Mary met a fellow passenger, Charles Parsons, and married him in 1855. John Dyer shared the ownership of forty hectares of land in Governors Bay near Christchurch. John died in an accident on 6 January 1876, leaving a widow and five children.<sup>12</sup> The Sowmans lived in Christchurch for a few years then migrated again to Nelson, close to William Songer and family. William Sowman became a maltster.<sup>13</sup> COT, the Songers, Sowmans and Dyers appear to represent the sum total of Stoke by Nayland migration to New Zealand before 1853.

### ***Migration in the Provincial Government era (1853-64)***

In 1852 the United Kingdom parliament passed the New Zealand Constitution Act which established provincial councils in the colony. These provincial governments took over responsibility for immigration into New Zealand and over the next eighteen years (when central government assumed this role) the provinces sought to encourage migration. The most energetic of all such efforts was the Canterbury provincial scheme. It brought in about 18% of the 250 000 people who migrated to New Zealand (1853-70) and about 60% of these immigrants were assisted. Migration schemes especially sought to attract farm labourers, builders and domestic servants. There were particularly large flows of migrants

in 1858, 1859, 1862 and 1863, reflecting the recruitment efforts of the Canterbury provincial authorities.<sup>14</sup> Migration from Stoke by Nayland reflected these trends, but the chronology was slightly different.

**Table 3.1: Stoke by Nayland area migrants to New Zealand 1853-1864**

Surname	Name	Birth	Ship	Year	Age
TORLESSE	Henry	1833	Minerva	1853	20
CHISNALL	George T	1835	Cornwall	1853	18
CHISNALL	Thomas	1806	Caroline Agnes	1855	49
CHISNALL	Sarah	1809	Caroline Agnes	1855	46
CHISNALL	Mary Ann	1838	Caroline Agnes	1855	17
CHISNALL	Emily	1846	Caroline Agnes	1855	9
COYTE	Charles	1837	Grasmere	1855	18
HARRINGTON	Eliza	1838	Grasmere	1855	17
HARRINGTON	Thomas	1835	Grasmere	1855	20
MESSENT	John	1838	Grasmere	1855	17
NORFOLK	William	1839	Grasmere	1855	16
BLEWITT	Arthur	1834	Egmont	1856	22
CRYSELL	William	1836	Sir Edward Paget	1856	20
CUDDON	William	1834	Egmont	1856	22
DEAL	James	1823	Egmont	1856	33
DEAL	Harriet	1828	Egmont	1856	28
DEAL	Caroline	1838	Egmont	1856	18
DEAL	Diana	1841	Egmont	1856	15
DEAL	Jeremiah	1844	Egmont	1856	12
DEAL	Charles	1848	Egmont	1856	8
DEAL	Harriet	1848	Egmont	1856	8
DEAL	Eliza	1850	Egmont	1856	6
DEAL	Ellen	1851	Egmont	1856	5
DEAL	Jane	1849	Egmont	1856	7
DEAL	William	1849	Egmont	1856	7
DEAL	Jeffrey	1810	Egmont	1856	46
DEAL	Eliza	1812	Egmont	1856	44
DEAL	William	1820	Egmont	1856	36
TORLESSE	Priscilla	1824	Sir Edward Paget	1856	32
MERTON	James	1801	Egmont	1856	55
MERTON	Susan	1806	Egmont	1856	50
MERTON	Charles	1822	Egmont	1856	34
MERTON	Henry	1856	Egmont	1856	0
MERTON	John	1849	Egmont	1856	7
MERTON	Charlotte	1851	Egmont	1856	5
MERTON	Emmeline	1853	Egmont	1856	3
KING	Esther	1829	Sir Edward Paget	1856	27

<sup>14</sup>Phillips & Hearn, pp.30-31

NORFOLK	Mary Ann	1834	Sir Edward Paget	1856	22
NORFOLK	Sarah	1836	Sir Edward Paget	1856	20
STREET	Charlotte	1820	Egmont	1856	36
WAYLAND	Fanny	1836	Sir Edward Paget	1856	20
WAYLAND	Joseph	1837	Sir Edward Paget	1856	19
KING	Henry	1837	Maori	1858	21
KING	Walter	1848	Maori	1858	10
BOGGIS	George	1813	Zealandia	1859	46
BOGGIS	Sarah	1817	Zealandia	1859	42
BOGGIS	William	1844	Zealandia	1859	15
BOGGIS	Charles	1846	Zealandia	1859	13
BOGGIS	Charlotte	1849	Zealandia	1859	10
BOGGIS	Marianne	1838	Zealandia	1859	21
HARRINGTON	Sarah Ann	1843	Zealandia	1859	16
LILLEY	Jonathon	1828	Clontarf	1859	31
LILLEY	Mary	1827	Clontarf	1859	32
LILLEY	Reuben	1849	Clontarf	1859	10
LILLEY	Lucy	1850	Clontarf	1859	9
LILLEY	James	1853	Clontarf	1859	6
LILLEY	George	1854	Clontarf	1859	5
LILLEY	Harry	1856	Clontarf	1859	3
MUNNINGS	Joseph	1841	Zealandia	1859	18
NORFOLK	Ann	1843	Zealandia	1859	16
WAYLAND	Joseph	1814	Mystery	1859	45
WAYLAND	Eliza	1843	Mystery	1859	16
WAYLAND	Maria	1846	Mystery	1859	13
WAYLAND	Charlotte	1841	Mystery	1859	18
WAYLAND	Pallisier	1846	Mystery	1859	13
GREENWOOD	Rebeckah	1823	Clontarf	1860	37
JONES	Abraham	1817	Clontarf	1860	43
JONES	Rebecca	1830	Clontarf	1860	30
JONES	Hannah	1831	Clontarf	1860	29
JONES	Thomas	1832	Clontarf	1860	28
JONES	Walter	1844	Clontarf	1860	16
JONES	Mariann	1845	Clontarf	1860	15
JONES	Susannah	1850	Clontarf	1860	10
JONES	Emma	1852	Clontarf	1860	8
JONES	Arthur	1855	Clontarf	1860	5
JONES	Charles	1857	Clontarf	1860	3
JONES	Thomas	1857	Clontarf	1860	3
JONES	William	1859	Clontarf	1860	1
JONES	Charlotte	1860	Clontarf	1860	0
KING	Lucy	1824	Roman Emperor	1860	36
NORFOLK	Henry	1846	Roman Emperor	1860	14
CHISNALL	George	1842	Queen of Mersey	1862	20
BLEWITT	Eliza	1842	Captain Cook	1863	21
BLEWITT	Martha A	1845	Captain Cook	1863	18

CHISNALL	Sarah Ann	1845	Captain Cook	1863	18
KEDGE	Walter	1840	Tiptree	1864	24
KEDGE	Emma	1841	Tiptree	1864	23
KEDGE	Mary Ann	1845	Tiptree	1864	19
WRIGHT	Jane	1845	Tiptree	1864	19

As described above, before 1853 emigration had been limited to the Songers / Sowmans together with the two young Dyers and the Torlesse / Wakefield family members who were at the centre of the local migratory process. In 1853 Charles' brother Henry travelled to Canterbury as did the first of what would become a large family group, George Taylor Chisnall. Both men were young (twenty and eighteen respectively) and single, but they travelled on different vessels and were of very different social classes. Henry Torlesse was on the *Minerva* with his uncle Edward Gibbon Wakefield (who occupied two cabins near the poop). Wakefield, it was said, had at last 'realised his long-cherished project, and arrived in New Zealand with the intention of becoming a colonist.'<sup>15</sup> Henry's parents had travelled to Plymouth to see Henry and Edward off on their voyage. Henry, it was said, was joining his brother C.O.T. in Christchurch for the sake of his health.<sup>16</sup>

George Taylor Chisnall was born 12 July 1835 and was the only son of Thomas Chisnall, shoemaker, and Sarah. In 1851 the family, which included Mary Ann (fifteen) and Emily (five) were living in Thorrington Street, Stoke by Nayland. George had been educated at the village school and had sung in the local choir, both led by Charles Merton. He had worked for his father after leaving school. When he arrived in New Zealand, he went to see his mother's aunt (Mrs. Sowman) in Nelson. He later travelled onto Canterbury and

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<sup>15</sup> <https://sites.rootsweb.com/nzbound/minerva.htm> [Accessed: 27 May 2019]

<sup>16</sup> Temple, Kindle edition 11588

joined his father on the latter's fifty-acre plot at Heathcote. Thomas Chisnall, together with his wife and daughters, had travelled to New Zealand on the *Caroline Agnes* in 1855.<sup>17</sup> George and Thomas went into business together and George continued to run their shoemaking shop in Christchurch after Thomas' death in 1860, before becoming manager of Gould's shop in Columbo Street in Christchurch. Gould also engaged Mr. Stewart who had married Mary Ann Chisnall in 1858. In 1864 George Taylor Chisnall married his cousin Sarah Ann, the daughter of another Stoke by Nayland shoemaker, Ephraim Chisnall, and his wife Rachel (who was born in 1845). George and Sarah Ann were to have ten children. In 1873 Chisnall and Stewart bought the business from George Gould. Chisnall died in 1918 at the age of eighty-two, Sarah lived to be eighty-one by the time of her death in 1926.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, by 1855, the process of emigration to Canterbury was gathering speed in Stoke by Nayland. In addition to the four Chisnalls on the *Caroline Agnes* which had arrived in Lyttelton (Canterbury's port) on 16 August, a slightly earlier and more mixed party of four had disembarked from the *Grasmere* on 9 May. Unlike the married, family-group and slightly more mature early emigrants, these two men and two women were sixteen to twenty years of age and single. Two had no family members in the colony, the other two were brother and sister. The latter, Thomas and Eliza Harrington, were the children of John Harrington and Maria (née Sowman), the sister of the William Sowman who had emigrated to New Zealand four years earlier. In keeping with the typical colonists of the

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<sup>17</sup> Macdonald Dictionary record <https://collection.canterburymuseum.com/objects/709289> [Accessed: 27 May 2019]

<sup>18</sup> Macdonald Dictionary record <https://collection.canterburymuseum.com/objects/709289> [Accessed: 27 May 2019]

period, William was described as a labourer, Eliza as a servant.<sup>19</sup> Eliza married Frederic Helleur in Akaroa in 1858,<sup>20</sup> and lived there until her death aged 49 in 1886.

The other two *Grasmere* passengers were Charles Coyte and William Norfolk. Charles Coyte was the son of Rev. James Coyte (1796-1866), Rector of Polstead, and his wife Mary Ann (née Reynolds) (1804-78). Charles was born in Saxmundham and was attending boarding school there at the time of the 1851 census. This school was run by the Rev. Stephen Rigard and it seems highly likely that another clerical link-between Rev. Coyte and his neighbouring vicar, Rev. Torlesse, helps to explain Charles Coyte's presence on the *Grasmere*. C.O.T. met him on arrival and offered him work. It seems, perhaps not surprisingly, that heavy manual work (such as cutting a road and driving a bullock wagon) did not suit Charles Coyte and circa 1859 he returned to England.<sup>21</sup> His unsuitability for manual labour is underlined by his lifestyle as described in the census of 1891 at which time he was a married man 'living on his own means' in Devon, served by three domestic servants.

William Norfolk came from a very different environment to Charles Coyte. William was the youngest son in a family of five boys and five girls, and his father, Thomas, was an agricultural labourer. The entire family, including William's mother Mary, had been born in Stoke by Nayland and in 1851 they were living in Scotland Street in that village. Life in New Zealand seems to have suited William - in 1856 other siblings came out to join him - but his experience also offered a warning to intending migrants. The land they were

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<sup>19</sup> <https://sites.rootsweb.com/nzbound/grasmere1855.htm> [Accessed: 27 May 2019]

<sup>20</sup> [www.wikitree.com/wiki/Helleur-1](http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Helleur-1) [Accessed: 27 June 2019]

<sup>21</sup> Hawkins, p.72

moving to was still very much pioneer territory. There were relatively few native inhabitants to contend with (unlike New Zealand's North Island), but the landscape itself could be lethal to immigrants. Communications were challenging at best and on 4 March 1872 William Norfolk, aged 34, was drowned in the Waimakariri river.<sup>22</sup>

One of the witnesses at William's inquest was his youngest sibling Henry who, together with their sisters Ann, Sarah and Mary Ann, had arrived in Canterbury by 1872. Ann was listed as a domestic servant and Henry was a labourer. In 1851 the Norfolk family were mostly living close to William Sowman's family in Scotland Street, though Mary Ann had already moved away and was a servant in the home of Rev. William Bull of Old Newton, Suffolk. It seems likely that Rev Torlesse knew this vicar whose parish was only eight miles from his own. Henry was in charge of 'The Lion Hotel' in Rangiora by 1863.<sup>23</sup> He died in Rangiora in 1911, aged 65.<sup>24</sup>

1856 was to bring the largest number of Stoke by Nayland migrants so far to the young colony. They travelled on two ships: the *Sir Edward Paget* which arrived on 2 July and the *Egmont* which docked on 23 December. On the former were two of the Norfolk girls mentioned above together with two Waylands, Joseph and Fanny. Joseph was a 43-year-old agricultural labourer, and it seems Fanny (or Frances) was his sister.<sup>25</sup> A fifth passenger was Esther King, the 27-year-old daughter of the agricultural labourer Isaac King and his wife Lydia. In 1851 Esther had been a cook in the household of yet another rector, Rev. Henry Kirby, in Great Waldringfield, Suffolk, some seven miles from Stoke

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<sup>22</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 14 March 1872

<sup>23</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 11 March 1863

<sup>24</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 3 May 1911

<sup>25</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 5 July 1856

by Nayland. Again, Rev. Kirby's connections with Rev. Torlesse may have been a factor in Esther's decision to migrate.

The passengers on the second migrant ship of 1856 had even stronger links to Rev. Torlesse and included several remarkable individuals. One of them was his eldest daughter, Priscilla (1824-96). After two years in New Zealand she returned to Stoke by Nayland in January 1859 to look after her parents. She then went back to Christchurch again in 1884. After spending 1889-95 in England, she once more travelled to Christchurch in 1895 where she died (aged 75) on 18 June 1896.<sup>26</sup> Given the distances and the lengthy journeys involved, Priscilla's travels were, by any standards, quite extraordinary.

Also, on the *Egmont* were the Merton family. Charles Merton (1821-85) and his wife Charlotte (née Street) had been very popular with the Torlesse family. Charlotte had been nurse to the Torlesse children. Charles, 'a clever, promising youth' had, through Rev. Torlesse's help, become 'not just school master in the village school, but also the moving spirit in musical matters for miles around' Stoke by Nayland. He continued a wide range of cultural and sporting activities in New Zealand, leading his obituary to comment that no man led a 'busier, more vigorous, more useful and blameless life...to few can the epithet 'worthy' be more fitly applied than to the late Charles Merton'.<sup>27</sup> The Mertons brought with them their four young children, all under eight years of age, and Charles' parents, James Murton (Charles had changed the spelling of his surname), a 59-year-old agricultural labourer, and Susan (née Denny).

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<sup>26</sup> [www.thekingscardlecticks.com/webs/pedigrees/1669.html](http://www.thekingscardlecticks.com/webs/pedigrees/1669.html) [Accessed: 27 June 2019]

<sup>27</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 27 Jan 1886

The other local emigrants on the *Egmont* were another two young single men who somewhat resembled Coyte and Norfolk on the *Grasmere*: Arthur Blewitt and William Cuddon. Blewitt was the son of Nathaniel Blewitt, carpenter of Polstead, and his wife Eliza (née Chisnall). The family connection to the young Chisnalls already in the colony was probably significant. William Cuddon appears a more unusual case. His family were wealthy brewers in the neighbouring village of Nayland and were noted Roman Catholics. The Cuddons paid seat rent for pews in the ‘Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Edmund’ which had been built in Withermarsh Green, Stoke by Nayland, in 1827. William apparently fell out with his family over his decision to marry the protestant Marianne Boggis. The couple sailed on the *Egmont* as steerage passengers despite the enormous £3000 gift William had been given by his family. They were married in Christchurch in 1858 and went on to have fourteen children all of whom were raised as Anglicans.<sup>28</sup> The Church of England connection must surely have brought them into close contact with Rev. Torlesse and been influential in their decision to migrate.

For a couple of years there was a lull in the migratory stream from Stoke by Nayland, with only two males, Henry King and Walter Julius King, the brother and nephew of Esther King, making the journey to Lyttelton on the *Maori* in 1858. In 1859, however, the process resumed, and in fact peaked, with seventeen local emigrants on two ships. The *Clontarf* which docked in Lyttelton on 5 January brought the Lilley family, Jonathan, 31, an agricultural labourer, his wife Maria (née King) and their five children aged between three and ten. Maria’s relationship to the other Kings in Canterbury is unclear.

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<sup>28</sup> Sally Arnold, The Cuddons of Nayland, <[www.naylandandwiston.net/history/history\\_docs/cuddons.pdf](https://www.naylandandwiston.net/history/history_docs/cuddons.pdf)[https://www.naylandandwiston.net/history/history\\_docs/cuddons.pdf](https://www.naylandandwiston.net/history/history_docs/cuddons.pdf)> [Accessed: 20 May 2019]

In November 1859 the *Zealandia* arrived carrying the Boggis family. George Boggis, 46, was a saddler and harness maker who was a well-established local artisan, appearing in every village trade directory entry between 1844-58. His wife Sarah was originally a Chisnall, a family who, has already been noted, were now established in Christchurch area. The couple brought with them their four children, aged ten and twenty-one. The *Zealandia* also brought Ann Norfolk (mentioned above) and two other single people, Sarah Ann Harrington and Joseph Munnings. Sarah Ann was the 16-year-old younger sister of Eliza and Thomas Harrington, who had arrived in 1855. Joseph Munnings (1843-1921) was another example of the young son of comfortably wealthy parents setting out on a great adventure. In 1851 he lived at Scotland Place in Stoke by Nayland, where his mother was described as a widowed farmer of 230 acres who employed eighteen men. Joseph went into partnership with William Cuddon in Christchurch and both men became successful businessmen.<sup>29</sup>

Two migrant vessels arrived in the early months of 1860. The *Roman Emperor* (27 January) brought two further young members of now established settler families: Lucy King and Henry Norfolk. In March the *Clontarf* returned with the large Jones family on board. Abraham Jones was 43 and another agricultural labourer. His wife Rebeckah (née Greenwood) was 37 and they brought seven children, all under 17. This group appear to have been a perfect example of the kind of large, young family group Howells identifies when he notes the exceptionally family-based nature of ‘assisted emigration’.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Macdonald Dictionary Record <https://collection.canterbury-museum.com/objects/715543>

<sup>30</sup> Gary Howells, ‘On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860’, *History*, 88 (2003), 593

In 1862 and 1863 only two ships arrived bearing a few more members of established Stoke by Nayland and Polstead settler families. George Edward Chisnall (1842-1924) came over on *The Queen of Mersey* in 1862, and Sarah Ann Chisnall travelled on the *Captain Cook* the following year, together with Eliza and Martha Ann Blewitt. George Edward Chisnall later ran a butcher's shop in Christchurch. The Blewitt girls had followed their brother, Arthur, to New Zealand as soon as they were able. Their father had been a bell ringer at Stoke by Nayland and his daughters had attended the parish school ran by Charles Merton. Their parents were apparently bitterly opposed to their emigration.<sup>31</sup>

The last major shipload of Stoke by Nayland migrants before the final illness of C.O.T. were carried aboard the *Tiptree* which landed at Lyttelton on 20 January 1864. Two family groups arrived in New Zealand that day, the Kedges and the Lilleys. The Lilley party consisted of the brothers and sisters of Jonathan who had come over on the *Clontarf* in 1859 together with their parents Jonathan and Sarah (née Ward). These family members had lived in Polstead, and their parents were, remarkably, in their early sixties. They were joined by Elizabeth Grimsey, the younger Jonathan's niece, who was sixteen according to the census record, but was described in the ship's passenger list as being twenty.

The other family group, the Kedges, were three siblings, Walter (1839-1907), Emma and Mary Ann, who in 1851 had lived with their parents John and Ann in Polstead. Their father John had been described at that time as a 'pauper agricultural labourer'. The

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<sup>31</sup> [www.angelfire.com/md/derecourt/Bluett.html](http://www.angelfire.com/md/derecourt/Bluett.html) [Accessed: 27 May 2019]

family's reason for emigration is unclear and the pauperism of their parents is noticeable.

Walter settled at Akaroa and spent his life dairying and fruit growing.<sup>32</sup>

### *Analysis of migrants*

From the available data a number of patterns are clearly identifiable. The vast majority of migrants were either young single individuals or members of family groups with children.

**Table 3.2: Age and gender of the Stoke by Nayland/Polstead migrants**

MALES		Age	FEMALES	
Percentage				Percentage
1.2	1	60-64	1	1.2
1.2	1	55-59	0	0
0	0	50-54	1	1.2
2.4	2	45-49	1	1.2
1.2	1	40-44	2	2.4
0	0	35-39	3	3.6
3.6	3	30-34	5	6.0
1.2	1	25-29	1	1.2
13.2	11	20-24	6	7.2
9.6	8	15-19	11	13.2
6.0	5	10-14	2	2.4

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<sup>32</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 13 Aug 1907

6.0	5	5-9	5	6.0
6.0	5	0-4	2	2.4
51.6	4.3		40	48.0

As can be seen in Table 3.2, male migrants slightly outnumbered female migrants and 43% of migrants were aged fifteen and twenty-four. The peak age group for males was twenty to twenty-four, while for females it was fifteen to nineteen. Almost 5% of new migrants were over fifty years old.

**Table 3.3: The occupations of the fathers of adult migrants**

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Agricultural Labourer	22	61.1
Vicar/Rector	4	11.1
Farmer	3	8.3
Shoemaker	3	8.3
Carpenter	3	8.3
Brewer	1	2.8
	36	99.9

Where the fathers of adult migrants could be identified (Table 3.3) they were overwhelmingly (61%) agricultural labourers. The significant proportion (11%) of priest's children was another clear sign of the influential part in the process played by Rev. Torlesse and his peers. The high proportion of the children of village tradesmen is notable. In 1851 twenty-eight times as many Stoke by Nayland households were headed by

agricultural labourers than were headed by carpenters. The ratio between labourers and shoemaker households was similar. The comparable ratio amongst the fathers of the migrants was less than eight to one (61% to 8%). The relatively wealthy farmers and brewers' children were also somewhat 'over-represented' though the number involved in the latter case was too small to be significant.

Single women – predominantly young according to Table 3.2 - were the largest single group except for the children who were taken to the colony by their parents. These women made up almost a quarter of the total migrant group, a reflection both of the high mobility of these young females and of the 'pioneering spirit' required to face such an undertaking. A number of them had, as has been illustrated above, already 'broken away' from their family homes into domestic service. There was a great demand for servants in the new colony and these women migrated in response to that demand. They were often supported psychologically and perhaps physically on the voyage and/or in the colony by the presence of relatives.<sup>33</sup>

Migration offered a path to a potentially better life for those able to deal with the demands of an enormous journey and the potentially arduous few years of establishment in a 'new world'. It did not, however, offer a general route out of poverty for the poorest members of Stoke by Nayland society. Of the twenty-one people named as 'paupers' in the 1851 Stoke by Nayland census return and the thirteen so identified ten years later, only one surname appears in the list of migrants. That name, Cousins, is interestingly the surname of William Songer's mother. This family connection did not, however, enable any other

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<sup>33</sup> Joanna Trollope, *Britannia's Daughters*, (London: The Cresset Library, 1983) p.73

people of this name (itself by far the most common surname in Stoke by Nayland in 1851) to make the journey to Canterbury. A lengthy 'parochial list of indoor and outdoor poor' for 1858 is more revealing. The list of 102 Stoke by Nayland individuals includes twenty 'indoor' and eighty-two 'outdoor' paupers. Sixty-eight family names appear of whom six occur amongst the migrants: Grimsey, Harrington, Jones, Lilly, Norfolk and Wayland. Four individuals closely related to known Canterbury migrants of the period are listed. John Harrington, the father of Thomas and Eliza who migrated in 1855, received benefits for 'sickness' and John Norfolk, brother of the migrants Thomas and Mary, was paid a significant sum (£6 3s 7d) on account of 'sickness and surgeons orders'. Two actual migrants were beneficiaries of parish assistance. One of the two Jonathan Lilleys was paid a small sum of 4s 9d for 'sickness' while the young Charlotte Wayland (1840-1913), sister of Joseph and Fanny, received the much greater sum of £2 11s 2d, also for 'sickness'.<sup>34</sup> Following the migration of her siblings in 1856, it seems that this period of sickness combined with the death of another brother George was enough to lead the remainder of Charlotte's immediate family to emigrate in 1859. The passage of her father Joseph together with his four remaining daughters has not as yet been identified, but Charlotte married Henry Sidcole (1837-1923) in New Zealand in 1864. They went on to have ten children.

The Stoke migrants were not greatly dissimilar to the majority of New Zealand emigrants of this period. The occupational mix was usually about one-quarter each of agricultural labourers, skilled trade workers and other labourers, with the final quarter being all other groups.<sup>35</sup> In this they reflected the Wakefieldian 'ideal society' which surely influenced

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<sup>34</sup> Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds Branch, FB80/G6/10: Parochial List of indoor and outdoor poor 1858

<sup>35</sup> Tony Simpson, *The Immigrants: The Great Migration from Britain to New Zealand 1830-90* (Auckland: Godwit, 1997), p.115

Torlesse in his dealings with potential local migrants. He would surely have approved of Poor Law commissioner Kay's contemporary opinion that emigration 'was one way of restoring a spirit of paternalism in rural England'.<sup>36</sup> Torlesse's significance is apparent in the sheer number of migrants to Canterbury from a small area of Suffolk at a time when East Anglia as a whole supplied only 9% (about 280) of the English and Welsh assisted settlers.<sup>37</sup> In most parishes which organised assisted emigration Howells found a mere handful of individuals were involved.<sup>38</sup>

The lack of very poor migrants from Stoke also appears to mirror the general nature of the settlers who travelled to New Zealand. Though the vast majority of migrants were 'assisted' this did not mean the process was by any means 'free'. To begin with, the migrants were required to provide a range of 'clothing, bedding and other necessaries for the voyage' and they had to make their own way to the port of embarkation.<sup>39</sup> The actual passage to New Zealand was very costly. In 1858 the *Zealandia* carried the Levett family from Dennington, Suffolk, to Lyttelton. The group consisted of Henry, a forty-three-year-old shepherd, his three domestic servant daughters and two young sons. The total fare was £96 5s. of which the provincial government contributed £20. The remainder was made up of £56 5s in promissory notes provided by Henry Levett together with £20 in cash. Clearly this represented an enormous investment for a middle-aged Suffolk shepherd used to living in a rural economy where banking and credit were virtually unknown to working people.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Gary Howells, 'On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860', *History*, 88 (2003), 603

<sup>37</sup> Phillips and Hearn, p.78

<sup>38</sup> Gary Howells, 'On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860', *History*, 88 (2003), 599

<sup>39</sup> Simpson, p.77

<sup>40</sup> *Zealandia* passenger List, p.11

<http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/Digitised/Emigration/EmbarkationLists/Zealandia-1858/Zealandia-1858.pdf>

To be able to undertake such an enterprise Levett and his fellow assisted passengers would have needed the support, morally and financially of their social superiors or ‘betters.’ At the very least, they had to obtain satisfactory ‘references’ in order to satisfy the stringent – and wordy- application process. To gain such support, migrants had to be accepted as ‘respectable’. Thus, the emphasis on this word when describing the initial group of emigrants noted above. At almost the same time COT writing in Lyttelton excused the lack of roads and public buildings with the phrase: ‘We may be poor, but we shall be respectable’.<sup>41</sup> The very poorest members of rural society had little chance of convincing their social superiors (even the well-meaning Rev. Torlesse) that they would be able to meet the stringent demands the emigration process would make on them. Emigration was designed for the ambitious and self-sufficient; it was no longer the ‘shovelling out (of) paupers’ which had been attempted in the 1830s.<sup>42</sup> Howells has noted the positive comments made regarding the local emigrants by parish officials. As one man from West Rainham, Norfolk put it: ‘the efficient labourer goes, leaving the profligate behind.’<sup>43</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The migration from Stoke by Nayland to Canterbury, New Zealand, involved a large group of local, predominantly young, single people and young families, who, encouraged by Rev. Charles Torlesse and his contacts, emigrated between 1851 and COT’s death in 1864. The process had been pioneered by the Torlesse family and their servants, the Songers, who had travelled to Nelson, New Zealand, ten years earlier. The majority of migrants were

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<sup>41</sup> H. Whiteside, ‘We shall be respectable: Women and representations of respectability in Lyttelton 1851-93’, (unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, New Zealand, 2007), p.23

<sup>42</sup> Gary Howells, ‘On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834–1860’, *History* 88, (2003), 587

<sup>43</sup> Gary Howells, ‘On Account of their Disreputable Characters: Parish-Assisted Emigration from Rural England, 1834-1860’, *History*, 88 (2003), 594

agricultural labourers or female domestic servants, but a significant number were village tradesmen. A few were wealthy, the children of middle-class parents. This latter group travelled in more comfortable quarters, other migrants were almost all government (or assisted) passengers who migrated during the New Zealand provincial government (1853-70) period. For many the journey led to a better life overseas, but it is doubtful how much the migration process significantly assisted the life chances of the very poorest families in the Suffolk village of Stoke by Nayland, though it did undoubtedly touch the lives of families such as the Lilleys, Norfolks and Waylands. The next chapter will examine the effects of migration on Stoke by Nayland by 1871.

## **Chapter 4: The Effects of the Canterbury Migration on Stoke by Nayland**

### ***Overview***

The aim of this chapter is to consider the effect of the migration of more than fifty people recorded as living in Stoke by Nayland in 1851, to New Zealand in the period 1853–64.

The most obvious effect was as a part of the decline of 232 in the village's population between 1851 and 71.<sup>1</sup> This decline, however, whilst quite significant, was not particularly unusual. Many rural parishes in Suffolk witnessed a decline in their population during this period and nearby Boxford, for instance, experienced a reduction of a similar size (about 17%) over the same period. This chapter will identify how the Stoke by Nayland community were impacted by the loss of fifty local people to the other side of the world.

### ***Local farming and agricultural labourers***

Throughout the period under consideration the lord of the manor and principal landowner of the parish was, as in 1851, a member of the Rowley family, living in Tendring Hall, and the parish vicar was still Rev. Charles Martin Torlesse. The years since 1851 had been part of what historians have dubbed the 'Golden Age' of English agriculture. However, while this term may have accurately reflected the experience of the rural elite such as the Rowleys and their fellow farmers and landowners, the 'new climate of a wage economy

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<sup>1</sup> The statistical data in this essay is, unless otherwise stated, taken from the 1851 and 1871 census enumerators books for the parishes concerned, available through ancestry.com.

was often precarious' for the farm labourers. Indeed, the standard of living of Suffolk labourers was known to be particularly challenging.<sup>2</sup>

There is some evidence of these poor conditions in the 1871 census returns for Stoke by Nayland. Whereas the 1851 parish listing contained eleven people described as 'paupers' or on 'parish relief', by 1871 this group had grown to thirty-seven individuals. The five men were all over seventy-four years of age, the women were predominantly over sixty-five. There were, in addition, six women aged between thirty-three and fifty-four. A further fourteen local people, four men and ten women, were unemployed. These men were all agricultural labourers, all but one of the women were domestic servants.

**Table 4.1: Agricultural employment in Stoke by Nayland (1851 and 1871 censuses)**

	Total agric acreage	A. Number described as agricultural labourers	B. Number employed by farmers	A - B
1851	3137	207	164 (152 men + 12 boys)	41
1871	4652	166	254 (193 men + 61 boys)	-88

This image of relative hardship (as compared with twenty years earlier) is made all the more interesting by the fact that the number of labourers employed by local farmers was given as 193 (plus sixty-one boys) in 1871 an increase of forty-one men (and forty-nine boys) over the situation in 1851. The total acreages of the parish's farms had increased from 3137 acres to 4652 acres over the same period, reflecting the expansion of agriculture through these years of 'high farming'. In 1851 there had been forty-one more people describing themselves as 'agricultural labourers' than the farmers claimed to be employing; this situation was now reversed. The local farmers said they were employing

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<sup>2</sup> Peppy Macdonald, 'Rural Settlement Change in East Suffolk 1850-1939' (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, U.E.A. 2017), p.29

254 workers while only 166 Stoke by Nayland people said they were farm labourers. This implies that in 1851 the 'excess' Stoke-resident labourers had needed to travel to other villages to find work, but now it was the Stoke farmers who had to look outside the parish to find the labourers they required.

Clearly something significant had happened to the most numerous section of the rural workforce, the agricultural labourers. As Newby has commented, during the 'golden' years the economic position of the agricultural labourers in general had weakened.<sup>3</sup> Wages in industrial areas had grown more rapidly than agricultural wages and this was especially true for Suffolk labourers where the proportion of rural occupied males working on farms was almost twice the national average.<sup>4</sup> As a result, Suffolk wage rates were notoriously low.

### ***Migration***

These economic pressures encouraged migration from rural to urban areas. In Stoke by Nayland's case this resulted in about 60% of the people who gave their place of birth as 'Stoke by Nayland' still living in the parish in 1871, and about 20% were living elsewhere in Suffolk. The remaining 'Stoke-born' were living outside their home county. This latter group were not as mobile as they might at first sight appear, given the very close proximity of the village to Essex, so it's not surprising that about half of these non-Suffolk residents lived in that county. Indeed, within England only five Stoke by Nayland born – men employed as agricultural labourers lived outside Suffolk and Essex.

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<sup>3</sup> Howard Newby, *The Deferential Worker: A Study of Farm Workers in East Anglia* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p.60

<sup>4</sup> Newby, p.37

Persons born in the Essex village of Castle Hedingham were noticeably more mobile over long distances than their Stoke by Nayland counterparts. In 1871 almost 600 London residents gave their place of birth as Castle Hedingham. By contrast, a mere fifty-five recorded Stoke by Nayland as their birthplace. Interestingly, this is only slightly more than the number who emigrated to Canterbury, New Zealand. This may be a reflection of the process Janet Doust was describing when she noted:

Differing rates of economic growth between and within regions, (encouraged) internal migration. This process could provide enough ‘opportunities for those who might otherwise have resorted to overseas migration.’<sup>5</sup>

The encouragement of the Torlesses appears to have been a significant factor in encouraging local people to choose emigration in preference to longer distance internal migration. Such migration as the agricultural workforce did participate in, affected the make-up of the village workforce in one specific way. By 1871, the proportion of the agricultural labourers aged fifty-sixty who were locally born was less than half what it had been in 1851, the opposite of the growth of locally-born labouring men in this age group which had occurred in Castle Hedingham.

### *Literacy and migration*

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<sup>5</sup> Janet Doust, ‘English emigrants to Eastern Australia 1815-60’ (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Australian National University, 2004), p.22

A less easily quantifiable aspect of the labouring workforce may also have changed. Many farmers and landowners feared that the labourers who departed would be the very men they least wished to lose. As early as 1827, a Norfolk vicar, Rev. Brereton, had forecast that emigration would appeal most to ‘people of ambition and enterprise.’ It was feared that the poor and less ambitious would fill the spaces vacated by the migrants, and this may indeed have happened in Stoke by Nayland.<sup>6</sup> One possible indication of this is the changing illiteracy rate in the parish. Whilst it is almost impossible to be sure who was truly ‘literate’ in the modern sense of the word, the signatures or ‘marks’ appended to parish marriage registers at least allow the estimation of illiteracy with some degree of certainty.

In the mid-nineteenth century the proportion of men and women nationally needing to ‘mark’ the register was falling, a trend which rapidly accelerated after the 1870 Education Act. Thus in 1848, 51% of men marrying in Cosford Hundred were illiterate, but by 1855 only 42% of men in the county of Suffolk were unable to sign their names.

**Table 4.2: Marriage Illiteracy rates in Stoke by Nayland<sup>7</sup>**

Time period	% Grooms illiterate	% Brides illiterate	Grooms % - Brides %
1837-40	42	48	-6
1841-45	33	57	-24
1846-50	43	46	-3
1851-55	42	42	0

<sup>6</sup> Robert Lee, ‘Encountering and Managing the poor: Rural Society and the Anglican Clergy in Norfolk 1815-1914’ (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Leicester, 2003), p.196

<sup>7</sup> S.R.O.(I) FB80/D1/10,11 Stoke by Nayland parish marriage register

1856-60	56	40	16
1861-65	54	41	13

In 1848, half of the men marrying in Stoke by Nayland, could sign their names. This figure fell slightly by 1856 and 1858. Part of the reason for this fall was the large number of local agricultural labourers marrying, who themselves were less literate than in previous years.

**Table 4.3: Marriage Illiteracy amongst Agricultural Labourers in Stoke by Nayland**

Time period	Ag Lab Grooms	% Ag Lab Grooms illiterate
1837-40	18	72
1841-45	21	47
1846-50	26	65
1851-55	32	56
1856-60	40	67
1861-65	17	58

In 1839-41 on average only 40% were unable to sign, but by 1857-9, 66% made their 'mark'. By 1863, only one of the seven labourers who married could sign (86% could not). The comparable illiteracy statistics for the daughters of agricultural workers were much more positive: 1839-41 88%, 1857-9 47% but by 1863 0%.<sup>8</sup> By contrast, the daughters of men who were not agricultural labourers were rarely illiterate. Only 17% of such females were merely able to make their mark after 1837.

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<sup>8</sup> S.R.O.(I) FB80/D1/10,11 Stoke by Nayland parish marriage register

Two further points of interest are revealed by the Stoke by Nayland marriage registers. Firstly, only seven of the known future migrants were married in the local parish church, perhaps indicating a relatively mobile lifestyle early in their working lives. Of the five migrant men who did marry in the parish, all but one was 'illiterate'. Both future migrant women were unable to sign. Illiteracy itself did not, it seems represent a complete bar to migration. Secondly, the number of marriages solemnised in the parish church dropped suddenly to only two in 1861 from seventeen in 1858. The stream of young people of both sexes of ages eligible for marriage (about twenty-four) leaving the village must have contributed significantly to this decline. From 1861 until 1867 the number of marriages involving the children of labourers increased again, but only very slowly.

### *Social changes resulting from migration*

Given the fact that the encouragement and indeed approval of Rev. Torlesse was a crucial part of the emigration process, it is perhaps not surprising if he selected the most adventurous, but also socially acceptable, of his parishioners for his support. Recent research has referred to two cultures clashing in Victorian East Anglia: 'one that pre-dated living memory...and one that was alien, legalistic, elite and authoritarian.' This clash could result in the labourers hating their employer and above all, their parson.<sup>9</sup> It would not be surprising if Torlesse was most approving of parishioners who did not actively participate in this 'clash' of cultures. One vicar wrote of 'the greatest trial' of his rural ministry in the 1870s being 'the absence of higher grade music,' a sentiment which may help to explain Torlesse's enthusiastic support for Charles Merton though the loss of the musically

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<sup>9</sup> Lee, p.3,12

talented Merton, headmaster of the village National School, must have been a disappointment to him personally.<sup>10</sup>

### *The relatives of migrants remaining in Stoke by Nayland*

The migration process was of course especially significant for the specific families involved. The most numerous family in the village, the Cousins, had been little touched by migration, but the lives of families such as the Norfolks and the Chisnalls had been transformed. In 1851 there had been fourteen people bearing each of these latter two surnames. Twenty years later there were only four Norfolks and one Chisnall in Stoke by Nayland. This woman, Elizabeth Chisnall, was the seventy-one-year-old widow of William, an agricultural labourer, who had never lived outside the parish. Since most of his family had emigrated to New Zealand, the couple were left with only limited family support in their old age and so Elizabeth was now on parish relief. She may indeed have been an example of the kind of person Rev. Torlesse was referring to when he criticised the emigrants for not doing enough to help their relatives 'back home'.<sup>11</sup> Another person in a similar position was Lydia King, a seventy-nine-year-old widow who, like Elizabeth Chisnall, lived in one of the Churchyard alms houses and would therefore have been well known to Rev Torlesse. Lydia had been born in Wormingford, Essex, and three of her children had travelled to Canterbury, New Zealand, in 1856, 1858 and 1860.

Neither woman had access to the wider family support network which Reay comments upon when discussing modern ideas of the community rather than kin caring for the

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<sup>10</sup> Lee, pp.10-11

<sup>11</sup> *Lyttelton Times*, 26 March 1862

elderly.<sup>12</sup> Luckily for the poorer residents of Stoke by Nayland the village remained unexceptional in its level of poverty within its local area. The percentage of Stoke by Nayland-born 'indoor' paupers in the local Sudbury Union workhouse declined from 2.8% to 1.3% between 1851 and 1871 – the earlier figure having been somewhat inflated by three young 'scholars' aged ten-eleven. The slightly more populous Cavendish sent the workhouse six inmates while Assington, two-thirds the size of Stoke by Nayland, sent the same number of people to the 'house' in 1871 as Stoke by Nayland. A parochial 'List of Paupers' compiled in 1862, the year Rev. Torlesse wrote of the poverty of the migrants' relatives, listed twenty-two 'indoor' paupers and seventy-six persons in receipt of 'outdoor' relief. Only three known migrant surnames appear amongst the 'outdoor' paupers (Chisnell, King and Jones) and the lack of data (particularly ages) makes it impossible to be sure exactly who these individuals are.<sup>13</sup>

Ten Stoke by Nayland households listed in the 1851 census of the parish contained people who were to migrate to New Zealand in the ensuing two decades. Of the fifty-nine individuals in those households, only fourteen were still present in Stoke ten years later. Two members of those families had died, Frances and George Wayland, the latter the tragic nine-year-old victim of being kicked by a horse. Only one of the family members, Cornelius King, had migrated within England. He was living in Shoreditch, Middlesex, where he was a labourer. The entire Boggis, Chisnall, Jones, Lilley, Merton and Wayland households had emigrated to Canterbury. The Torlesse family were, as has been noted above, a somewhat unusual exception to this pattern.

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<sup>12</sup> Barry Reay, *Microhistories: Demography, Society and Culture in Rural England, 1800-1930* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), p.170

<sup>13</sup> S.R.O.(B) FB80/G6/11 Stoke by Nayland parochial list of paupers

*Migration from Stoke by Nayland to other parts of England 1851-71*

By 1871 only seven of the members of the 1851 migrant households can be traced in England and almost all of them were still resident in Stoke by Nayland. Two couples were headed by agricultural labourers fifty-six and sixty-two years of age. The remaining three individuals were a general labourer, the daughter of a labourer and Cornelius King, still the only non-Stoke resident. Cornelius was now working as a gas works stoker in Hackney. Ten years later in 1881 he was living with what appears to have been his third wife in a household of ten including his niece, a lodger and a boarder. The only other person (apart from the Torlesses) from the 1851 fifty-nine household members who can be identified in 1881 was John Harrington, the former agricultural labourer, who was a 67-year-old patient in the Essex and Colchester Hospital.

White's 1844 *Directory of Suffolk* lists four shoemakers in Stoke by Nayland; three Chisnalls and Richard Pooley.<sup>14</sup> The migration process left only a Pooley shoemaker together with a newcomer, Walter Winney, in 1869.<sup>15</sup> Another important tradesman of the village, George Boggis, the saddler and harness maker had also emigrated, to be replaced by Charles Tricker by 1869. It is now almost impossible to quantify the psychological and economic effects of the loss and replacement of these established members of the local community on the village. It is, however, possible to quantify in more detail the occupational nature of the individuals born in Stoke by Nayland who had, by 1871, moved to live in Essex and London. These people, 104 men and 127 women, made up 48% (living in Essex) and 24% (resident in London) of Stoke by Nayland-born migrants to areas of England outside Suffolk.

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<sup>14</sup> William White, *Directory of Suffolk* (Sheffield: R. Leader, 1844), p.569

<sup>15</sup> E.R.Kelly, *Post Office Directory of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk* (London: Kelly, 1869), p.903

The largest single occupational ex-Stoke by Nayland group in both areas were female domestic servants (twenty-six in Essex and nine in London), with agricultural labourers making up twenty-one of the males living in Essex. No agricultural labourers were found in London, a statistic in keeping with Wood's research into Norfolk migration to London in the same period.<sup>16</sup> Ten women resident in Essex could be described as agricultural labourers' wives and a further eight were gardeners' wives, though only four gardeners were listed. Four farmers were living in Essex as were thirteen artisans (carpenters, bricklayers and blacksmiths). Twenty-two young people were 'scholars'.

Ipswich, the largest town in Suffolk, contained twenty-seven Stoke by Nayland-born residents in 1871. Seventeen of them were women, a very mixed group including two young domestic servants, together with a cook and a housekeeper. There were also three scholars. The ten males were likewise a varied group including two sawyers and two scholars. Only one of the twenty-seven had a job in anyway linked to agriculture, a butcher. In many cases their occupations were of a more urban character, notably the errand boy and the 'parcel delivery porter'.

The greater mobility of females already noted in a previous chapter was reflected in what was happening in the opposite direction. By 1871 almost 30% of the female residents of Stoke by Nayland had been born more than five miles from the village. This represents twice the comparable figure for males. The proportion of Stoke by Nayland residents (of both genders) as listed in the census returns who were born more than five miles from

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<sup>16</sup> Roger Woods, 'Mid-Nineteenth Century Migration from Norfolk to London' (unpublished M.A., Institute of Historical Research 2014), p.19

Stoke had almost doubled between 1851 and 1861. No such change was evident in Castle Hedingham. In fact, the mobility of the largest female occupational group in Castle Hedingham, the straw plaiters, remained very low. Even in 1871, less than eight per cent of such females were born at such a distance from their present home. This probably indicates the lack of demand for their skills, which as has been noted in an earlier chapter, was reflected in their relative poverty.

These population movements in and out of Stoke by Nayland also had an effect on where people lived in the village. The most populous area – Scotland Street – on the north-east side of the village, was recorded as having 216 inhabitants in 1851. This declined to 118 in 1861 and only 103 in 1871. At the earlier date, almost a quarter of its residents had been members of labourers' families. By 1871, only twenty labouring people lived there.

Scotland Street had declined from being much the largest centre of occupation by agricultural labouring families to their being only half the size of the labouring group in Back Street. This seems to reflect the change in the nature of the demand for agricultural labourers noted earlier in this chapter. Local farmers were giving more work to labourers from outside the village as distinct from employing Stoke men. This will have changed the relationships between the farmers and the men, possibly in the latter's favour.

As was noted above, Stoke by Nayland in 1871 was still led by the families who had led it in 1851. Orthodox Anglicanism underpinned the power of the establishment in rural England at the time. Stoke by Nayland was unusual in having not one, but two, Church of England churches within its bounds together with, almost uniquely in Suffolk, a Catholic chapel. The latter was built by the Mannock family, local landowners whose influence encouraged this church to be less in favour of social reform than the non-conformist

congregations growing up in neighbouring parishes.<sup>17</sup> The Anglican church was extremely influential at this time in areas of life such as education and charitable measures aimed at dealing with poverty. In 1857, a local newspaper reported the Church's opinion that it was not 'the province of the state to educate the people.'<sup>18</sup> Rev. Torlesse, as we have seen, was involved in both these aspects of life in addition to actively promoting emigration. In neighbouring parishes, such as Polstead and Assington, Primitive Methodist and other Non-Conformist chapels had been established, but no such buildings were erected in Stoke by Nayland. The chapels could lead, many farmers feared, to unfortunate (for them) results. 'The labourer, self-taught, brought via the chapel to read and preach...was a formidable figure.'<sup>19</sup>

### *Conclusions*

Migration and emigration encouraged and assisted the most able to move. To quote a west Norfolk landowner writing in 1867: 'A great many of our best labourers and boys have been leaving the neighbourhood; their only commodity is their labour, so one cannot wonder at their disposing of it to their advantage.'<sup>20</sup> The most able and energetic took advantage of the opportunities it offered, but, as in the case of Cornelius King, internal English migration did not always ensure a prosperous life. Many Stoke by Nayland people moved a short distance, while a select group, approved and guided by Rev. Torlesse, travelled not to London or northern England but to the 'promised land' of New Zealand. At the very least the village community was 'shaken up' economically and psychologically

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<sup>17</sup> T.C.B. Timmins, (ed), *Suffolk Returns from the on the Census of Religious Worship, 1851* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), p.11

<sup>18</sup> E.A., Goodwyn, *A Suffolk Town in Mid-Victorian England: Beccles in the 1860s* (Ipswich: Suffolk Press, 1965), p.22

<sup>19</sup> Alun Howkins, *Poor Labouring Men: Rural Radicalism in Norfolk 1872-1923* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1985), p.185

<sup>20</sup> Howkins, p.10

by this process. It provided new openings and brought in new people. It may also, incidentally, have helped to diffuse the resentment which was to surface a few years later in the East Anglian agricultural disturbances of the mid-1870s, removing as it did some of the most ambitious labouring families and changing the balance of supply and demand to the advantage of local village labourers. The migration opportunities for these men and their families were generally restricted to the parishes a few miles from home and few ventured to larger urban areas. However, for those who could face the upheaval and initial hardships New Zealand offered a very real opportunity to transform their lives and their family's prospects.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

This dissertation has investigated the effects of mid-Victorian migration from Stoke by Nayland to the province of Canterbury in New Zealand. It has looked, in particular, at how this movement impacted upon the wider village population and the poorer members of the community. It has also examined the differing experiences of the two genders.

This study has been composed of three main sections. The first chapter considered the community the migrants left by describing Stoke by Nayland in 1851. It concluded that the village at that time was a relatively stable and 'comfortable' rural community, lacking obvious causes of unhappiness which would have constituted significant 'push' factors in the migrants' decision to move. The second chapter identified the local people who travelled to New Zealand 1841-64. Beginning with a few pioneering individuals, migration greatly accelerated after 1855. The majority of these migrants were assisted in their migration by the provincial government in Canterbury. Most of the migrants were agricultural labourers, but they were not the poorest farm workers or indeed the poorest members of the local community. The final chapter examined the effects of the Canterbury migration on the village. The process clearly 'shook up' the village psychologically and changed the personnel fulfilling important trade roles in Stoke by Nayland.

The emigrants from Stoke by Nayland were, probably as a result of Rev. Torlesse's pivotal role in the process, quite close to the cross-section of English pre-industrial rural society envisaged by Edward Gibbon Wakefield. In keeping with Wakefield's philosophy, and with Gary Howells research results, they did not include the struggling poorest individuals who

continued to seek assistance in the conventional manner through the Poor Law. For those who were adaptable and ambitious enough, emigration seems often to have led to improved life chances. As a result of Rev. Torlesse's enthusiasm, the numbers of migrants from Stoke by Nayland greatly exceeded the usual handful of emigrants Howells has identified from parishes in three eastern counties. But for the relatives left behind, as Rev. Torlesse pointed out, the loss of family members brought little benefit. Wealthier members of Stoke society who tried the Canterbury experience did not always adapt well to it and sometimes returned home. Working class men and women both took to the hardships of their new lives more readily and had greater financial difficulties in affording the journey home. As a result, they were ultimately often more successful in the long term in their new colonial homes.

Emigration literally opened up new horizons for these individuals and their families. When the British economic situation declined in the 1870s these ambitious individuals were no longer resident in Stoke by Nayland to agitate for reform and improved working conditions. They and their peers were helping to shape the more egalitarian, socially progressive society in the new antipodean colony, leaving their less ambitious and perhaps less adaptable former neighbours in the traditional society back at 'home'. A comparison between the extent of rural radicalism during the 1870s 'Revolt of the Fields' in the Stoke by Nayland area and the neighbouring Suffolk parishes which lacked the enthusiastic advocacy of emigration provided by the Torlesse family would be an interesting follow-up to this dissertation. Research into the New Zealand lives of the Stoke migrants would also provide a worthwhile project for future historians.

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