

The Immigration of Domestic Servants to
Western Australia in the 1850s and 1890s

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Bachelor of Arts in History

Statement of Presentation

This thesis is presented as part of the requirements for the Honours degree of Bachelor of Arts in History at Murdoch University.

May 2017

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Abstract

The demand for domestic servants in nineteenth-century Western Australia was largely supplied by the government-assisted immigration of parties of single British women to the colony. The two greatest times of servant immigration were, roughly, the 1850s (1849-63) and the 1890s (1889-1901). This thesis compares these decades, showing that, despite changes over time in the women who immigrated to Western Australia, their experience of restrictions in both the journey and domestic service remained consistent. The government in charge of servant immigration changed from the 1850s to 1890s, thus shifting the motives for assisting female immigrants. But this had little effect on the type of women who immigrated, as their decision on whether to immigrate was determined by the position and appeal of the colony at the time. There were also continuities between the decades, with the women consistently finding themselves restricted by rules and lacking in agency. During the voyage, shipboard protective controls served to limit their actions while controls in the hiring process favoured colonial employers at the expense of the servants. Rather than gradually developing over time, these controls had existed from the start of servant immigration. The restrictions on the women continued through to their time in domestic service, where variations in conditions and their live-in work made them dependent on their employers. They were also socially distanced from and made subordinate to their mistresses, a position which was supported by colonial laws and press. Opportunities to resist the limitations of

service increased from the 1850s to 1890s, but always included moving on, either to a different position or to marry.

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Introduction

Female domestic servants were in high demand in the earliest years of the Swan River Colony, as shown by the letters and diaries of gentry settlers. Charlotte Bussell complained that servants were “not to be had for money”, and William Tanner considered himself lucky that his family had brought out their own maid.¹ The servant shortage meant that the gentry were forced to contribute to their own housework, with Georgiana Molloy sewing and cooking with only her young daughter to help, and the Bussells doing all of the housework when their maid left, even their dreaded laundry as they were unable to afford a laundress.² Due to their short supply, servants were paid what the gentry considered to be “expensive wages” of up to £36 per annum.³

Faced with this shortage, employers felt themselves to be at the mercy of their servants, who could leave them in the lurch at any time, and had to tolerate their misbehaviour.⁴ Despite their maid, Emma Mould, stealing and

¹ Charlotte Bussell, letter December 1840, in Marian Aveling (ed.), *Westralian Voices: Documents in Western Australia Social History* (Nedlands, University of Western Australia Press, 1979), p. 301; William Tanner to mother, December 1831, in Statham (ed.), *The Tanner Letters: A Pioneer Saga of Swan River and Tasmania 1831-1845* (Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 1981), p. 27.

² Rica Erickson, *The Bride Ships: Experiences of Immigrants Arriving in Western Australia 1849-1889* (Carlisle, WA: Hesperian Press, 1992), p. 26; Katrina Alford, *Production or Reproduction: An Economic History of Women in Australia, 1788-1850* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 149-50; Fanny Bussell, letter 6 February 1834, in Steve Howell, ‘Notes on a Scandal: Emma Mould and the Bussells’, *Early Days*, Vol. 14, Part 2 (2013), p. 287; Nance Donkin, *The Women Were There: Nineteen Women Who Enlivened Australia’s History* (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1988), p. 154.

³ Fanny Bussell, letter 5 April 1833, in Howell, ‘Notes on a Scandal’, p. 280; William Tanner to mother, 3 January 1832, in Statham (ed.), *The Tanner Letters*, p. 32.

⁴ F. K. Crowley, ‘Master and Servant in Western Australia 1829-1851’, *Early Days*, Vol. 4, Part 6 (1953), p. 103.

pretending to be pregnant, the Bussells kept her on for many years instead of facing the prospect of having to do without a servant.⁵ Servants could also leave to get married, which meant that mistresses had to find and train a replacement.⁶ Knowing their worth, servants were able to be rude or pretentious, and insolence was a common complaint by mistresses, although no doubt exaggerated by these ladies who considered themselves the aggrieved parties. Fanny Bussell griped that “You cannot conceive the annoyance of servants here, expensive wages and consummate impudence”, while Charlotte Bussell wrote that their shortage made them “so independent that they care little about pleasing those they serve”.⁷ William Tanner complained that servants were “behaving to their mistresses almost as equals”.⁸

The high demand for domestics in the colony led the authorities in 1849 to begin importing parties of female servants from Britain. The first group comprised twenty-one women from English workhouses and orphanages, who sailed on the *Mary*. Once arrived, they were readily employed at prices favourable to colonial employers, and almost all were married within two years.⁹ The success of this initial attempt, combined with the need to continually replace servants as they left to marry, meant that the immigration continued,

⁵ Howell, ‘Notes on a Scandal’, pp. 280-6.

⁶ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 150, 175.

⁷ Fanny Bussell, letter 5 April 1833, in Howell, ‘Notes on a Scandal’, p. 280; Charlotte Bussell, letter December 1840, in Aveling (ed.), *Westralian Voices*, p. 301.

⁸ William Tanner to mother, October 1831, in Statham (ed.), *The Tanner Letters*, p. 23.

⁹ J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 5 November 1849, CSR Vol. 192, Fol. 147-8; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 10-2.

albeit under a different scheme. The year after the *Mary* arrived, the transportation of British convicts to Western Australia began, seeing almost ten thousand male convicts sent out at a cost to the British parliament over the next eighteen years.¹⁰ Britain had also agreed to pay for an equal number of free immigrants to be sent to the colony and many of these were single women, employed as servants upon arrival.¹¹ Single women formed forty-one percent of the total adult assisted immigrants between 1857 and 1860, rising to fifty-four percent between 1857 and 1860, and fifty-seven percent in the 1860s.¹²

Although there was a demand for servants, it was not constantly high.¹³ The first party under this British scheme saw twenty-two women still waiting for employment after almost four weeks in the colony, whereas the next two groups were quickly employed.¹⁴ When four ships with servants arrived within twelve months in 1853, the colony was unable to absorb so many domestics at once and there became a glut of labour.¹⁵ Some women had to wait up to two months in depots, and the overcrowding there saw country hiring depots

¹⁰ R. T. Appleyard, 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth 1850-1914', in C. T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1987), pp. 213-4; I.H. Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy and Population in Western Australia 1850-1901* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1986), p. 49; Pamela Statham, 'Why Convicts II: The Decision to Introduce Convicts to Swan River', *Studies in Western Australian History*, No. 4 (December 1981), p. 6.

¹¹ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 16-7, 24, 31; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 29, 39.

¹² Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 30-1.

¹³ B. W. Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2002), p. 20; C.T. Stannage, *The People of Perth* (Perth: The Perth City Council, 1979), pp. 113-4.

¹⁴ J.D. Wittenoom to T.N. Yule, 21 August 1850, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 49-50; J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 8 April 1852, CSR Vol. 243, Fol. 15-17; J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 10 June 1852, CSR Vol. 243, Fol. 29-30.

¹⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 41.

established in 1853.¹⁶ The glut of servant labour also saw the number of immigrant women reduced between 1855 and 1857 to lessen the strain on the colony.¹⁷ The labour market recovered in the late 1850s, although servant immigration levels remained below those of the early 1850s.¹⁸

It was only under the 1890s scheme that levels rose significantly. Beginning in 1889, about one hundred single women arrived each year in two parties.¹⁹ This was temporarily halted in early 1898, resuming in 1900, before being suspended the following year when immigration from the eastern colonies was deemed sufficient to supply servants.²⁰ Twenty-one parties of servants arrived under the 1889 to 1901 scheme, and almost all of the women were selected by the United British Women's Emigration Association.²¹ A ladies' organisation designed to assist women, usually servants, to emigrate and to protect them on their journey, the association was led by middleclass

¹⁶ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 45, 48.

¹⁷ 'The following despatch, which was laid before the Council on Saturday, has been handed to us for publication', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 June 1856, p. 2; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 27, 29.

¹⁸ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 31, 104; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 66, 95-6, 111-2; Jan Gothard, *Blue China: Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001), p. 79.

¹⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 79.

²⁰ *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, Collections Held by the Fawcett Library Relating to Australia and New Zealand. Australian Joint Copying Project, Reels 2291-2, 1898, p.12; *Ibid.*, 1899, p. 11; *Ibid.*, 1901, p. 33; *Ibid.*, 1902, p. 19.

²¹ Janice Gothard, 'Protecting Labour: Carrie Hall and the Master and Servants Act', *Papers in Labour History*, No. 6 (November 1990), pp. 44-7.

ladies of a philanthropic turn of mind, especially the vice president, the Hon Mrs Ellen Joyce.²²

The periods 1849 to 1863, and 1889 to 1901, were the biggest times of servant immigration to Western Australia.²³ For servants migrating to colonial Western Australia, their journey and time in service was usually a small but significant part of their lives between leaving home and leaving service, usually to get married.²⁴ This thesis compares the two largest decades of servant immigration: roughly the 1850s and 1890s. The type of women who immigrated, and the government and agencies which directed their immigration and hiring, changed between the 1850s and 1890s, yet the women's experiences remained consistent. They faced restrictions on their freedoms throughout, both on the voyage and once in service. From the start, protective measures had been established for immigrant servants, but which also served to control and limit them. They continued through to the women's time in depot and their hiring. Once in service, the women found themselves further restricted by their mistresses and colonial society, being made dependent on and subordinate to their employers. However, there were increasing opportunities to resist this, albeit often passively, by the 1890s.

²² Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 19-20, 28; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1889, p. 9; *Ibid.*, 1889-90, pp. 2, 8.

²³ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 66, 85; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 79.

²⁴ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 260; Beverley Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1975), p. 6.

The main secondary sources on immigrant servants to Australia used in this thesis are Erickson's *The Bride Ships*, which focuses solely on Western Australia and covers 1849 to 1889; Gothard's *Blue China*, which looks at the whole of Australia from the late 1850s to the end of the century; and the more recent *Agents of Empire* by Chilton, covering the 1860s to the 1920s and comparing the Australian and Canadian schemes.²⁵ More secondary sources are available on immigrant servants in the eastern colonies than in Western Australia, and as their lives were less documented in service than as government immigrants, there are more sources on the immigration process than domestic service.

Few sources before the 1990s focus on the reasons motivating servants to immigrate to Australia, instead looking at what motivated the government to offer assisted passages. Authors such as Hammerton and Vanden Driesen take the women's decision to immigrate for granted.²⁶ There is more work on push factors from Britain, and particularly Irish female emigration. Jackson argued that diminished opportunities for marriage and an increasing patriarchy drove female emigration, although Hamilton and Fitzpatrick denied the latter, with Hamilton agreeing that women faced fewer marriage offers, and Fitzpatrick

²⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*; Gothard, *Blue China*; Chilton, *Agents of Empire*.

²⁶ A. J. Hammerton, "Without Natural Protectors": Female Immigration to Australia, 1832-36', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 65 (October 1975), p. 539; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*.

claiming that emigration was linked to a loss of social status from poverty.²⁷

From the 1990s there were more sources discussing pull factors to Australia.

Erickson claims that women were drawn to Western Australia by the

availability of husbands and high wages in the mid-nineteenth century.²⁸

However, for a little later in the century, Gothard claims that the women

emigrated as servants, not husband hunters. She also noted that migration was

made easier for women already distanced from their families by live-in work in service.²⁹

The immigrant servants to the eastern colonies were seen as having a worse reputation than those to Western Australia, yet are more ardently defended. Hammerton showed that the women to the eastern colonies in the 1830s were unruly, but blames the lack of protection policies for this.³⁰

McCloughlin's work on the 1840s Irish servants is even more sympathetic,

claiming that complaints about the women's behaviour were largely

unfounded.³¹ Hamilton also defended Irish servants, stating that although

²⁷ Pauline Jackson, 'Women in 19th Century Irish Emigration', *The International Migration Review*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Winter 1984), pp. 1010-8; Paula Hamilton, "'No Irish Need Apply': Aspects of the Employer - Employee Relationship Australian Domestic Service 1860-1900', *Working Papers in Australian Studies*, Working Paper No. 1 (University of London: Australian Studies Centre, 1985), p. 6; David Fitzpatrick, 'The Unimportance of Gender in Explaining Post-Famine Irish Emigration', in Eric Richards (ed.), *Visible Women: Female Immigrants in Colonial Australia* (Australian National University, Canberra: Research School of Social Sciences, 1995), pp. 159-64.

²⁸ Erickson, *Bride Ships*.

²⁹ Jan Gothard, 'Wives or Workers? Single British Female Migration to Colonial Australia', in Pamela Sharpe (ed.), *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Global Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 150-1, 153-6; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 6-13.

³⁰ Hammerton, 'Without Natural Protectors', pp. 549-50.

³¹ Trevor McCloughlin, *Barefoot and Pregnant? Irish Famine Orphans in Australia* (Melbourne: The Genealogical Society of Victoria Inc., 1991), pp. 6-17.

untrained they were not ignorant or untrainable.³² Works by Heath-Stubbs, Monk, Seymour and Chilton which focus on the emigrators' organisations such as the Girls' Friendly Society and United British Women's Emigration Association later in the century, portray their work in selecting and supervising servants positively, and as such represent these servants as being of a higher quality than earlier.³³ The immigrants to Western Australia are acknowledged as having a better reputation, although the writers do not attempt to explain away the several groups who did misbehave. Erickson and Vanden Driesen view the women as having control over their own behaviour and reputations, and only Gothard suggests that the selection and protection by emigrators had a significant effect on the quality of the women's behaviour.³⁴

Secondary sources view the emigrators as performing important work out of kindness, although from the 1990s they also acknowledged that these ladies could be over-protective and controlling. The earlier works on emigrators claimed that their work was invaluable in protecting young women.³⁵ But later

³² Hamilton, 'No Irish Need Apply', pp. 10, 14; Paula Hamilton, 'The "Servant Class": Poor Female Migration to Australia in the Nineteenth Century', in Eric Richards (ed.), *Poor Australian Immigrants in the Nineteenth Century* (Australian National University, Canberra: Division of Historical Studies and Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, 1992), pp. 124, 127-9, 131.

³³ Mary Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway* (London: G.F.S. Central Officer, 1926), pp. 70-3; Una Monk, *New Horizons: A Hundred Years of Women's Migration* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963), pp. 15-7, 49-52; Barbara Roberts, 'Mothers of the Race: Caroline Chisholm and Female Emigration in the British Empire', *Atlantis*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1976), pp. 107-10; Jane Seymour, *A Century of Challenge: A History of the Girls' Friendly Society in Western Australia from 1888-1988* (Perth: Girls' Friendly Society, 1988), pp. 7-19.

³⁴ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 103-4; Erickson, *Bride Ships*; Gothard, *Blue China*.

³⁵ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, pp. 70-3; Monk, *New Horizons*; Seymour, *Century of Challenge*.

sources also looked at the negatives, with Gothard's article on Carrie Hall showing that while the emigrators worked as advocates for the servants, they also tried to take over the running of immigration and make it stricter.³⁶ Her book focused more on the controls which emigrators insisted on establishing, showing that mainly in the eastern colonies these ladies were responsible for segregation, matrons and controlled hiring.³⁷ Similarly, Chilton wrote that the emigrators' attempts to control immigration disempowered the women, while still acknowledges the ladies' good intentions in seeking to protect the women and feminise emigration.³⁸

Domestic service is largely viewed negatively, with the focus initially on the physical labour performed. Later, especially in sources focused on Britain, the pressures to conform to the ideal of a deferential and subordinate servant were added. Kingston, Ryan and Conlon, writing on Australian women in the workforce, saw servants as overworked.³⁹ Stannage, like Kingston, outlined the heavy housework performed, adding that 1850s servants also had to live and work alongside convicts.⁴⁰ Writing about Britain and France, McBride not only studied domestic work, but also the manners of deference which servants had

³⁶ Gothard, 'Protecting Labour', pp. 45-51.

³⁷ Gothard, *Blue China*, chpt. 3-6.

³⁸ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, pp. 9-12, 181.

³⁹ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, Introduction, pp. 31-3, 36-40, 58-60; Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788-1974* (West Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1975), pp. 32, 35-49, 75.

⁴⁰ Stannage, *The People of Perth*, pp. 112-3.

to show to their employers.⁴¹ Similarly, Davidoff discussed how servants' subordinate status was reinforced through hierarchy and their behaviour on-duty.⁴² This inferior status was mentioned in Hamilton's work on Irish servants in Australia, and in Higman's work on service, although Higman claims that Australian servants were less deferential to their employers than their British counterparts.⁴³ Whereas these sources agreed that service was negative, either physically or socially, Alford and Erickson represent it more positively, viewing the immigrant servants as tough, hardworking women who soon left to marry.⁴⁴

Sources did not initially assign much agency to immigrant servants, sidelining their actions or outlining the restrictions placed upon them. Hitchins, Hammerton and Vanden Driesen view government policies as determining the number and type of immigrants, instead of the immigrants' decision to travel.⁴⁵ They faced restrictions once in the colony, with Crowley showing that servants were disadvantaged in dealing with their employers.⁴⁶ Although Alford writes that they could "move on" to respond to poor wages, Higman notes that

⁴¹ Theresa M. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1976), pp. 23-5, 49-50, 55-6, 68.

⁴² Leonore Davidoff, 'Mastered for Life: Servant and Wife in Victorian and Edwardian England', in *Worlds Between: Historical Perspectives on Gender and Class* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 20-7.

⁴³ Hamilton, 'No Irish Need Apply', pp. 3-4, 14-5; Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, chpt. 5, 8.

⁴⁴ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, chpt. 1; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, chpt. 3.

⁴⁵ Fred H. Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931); Hammerton, 'Without Natural Protectors', p. 539.

⁴⁶ Crowley, 'Master and Servant in Western Australia 1829-1851'; F. K. Crowley, 'Master and Servant in Western Australia 1851 - 1901', *Early Days*, Vol. 4, Part 6 (1954).

servants could not hold out for the best pay.⁴⁷ Hamilton and Gothard suggest that servants coming to the eastern colonies to better themselves did not find the higher wages and greater freedoms expected.⁴⁸ From the 1990s the women were seen more positively as their own agents. McClaughlin admired the Irish servants travelling to eastern colonies as headstrong women seeking to play the situation on their own terms.⁴⁹ Erickson represented the 1850s servants as choosing to come to Western Australia to make successful matches, and in some cases becoming family matriarchs.⁵⁰ Gothard also claimed that the women decided to immigrate, and accepted the emigrators' protections as the price of their free passage.⁵¹

In addition to secondary sources, this thesis also draws on several primary sources, particularly government records, and from mainly the 1850s and 1890s. Very significant is the Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, covering the shipping of immigrants.⁵² For the 1850s are annual reports and correspondence of the Emigration Commissioners, and for the 1890s further

⁴⁷ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 175-6, 217; Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 69.

⁴⁸ Hamilton, 'No Irish Need Apply', pp. 9, 14-5; Janice Gothard, "'Radically Unsound and Mischievous": Female Migration to Tasmania, 1856-1863', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 93 (October 1989), pp. 394, 401.

⁴⁹ Robin F. Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor: Australian Recruitment in Britain and Ireland, 1831-60* (Hampshire: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), pp. 250-3, 257; McClaughlin, *Barefoot and Pregnant*, pp. 8-10.

⁵⁰ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 10-2, 37-8, 42-3, 82, 85, 111-2, 131, 159-63; Rica Erickson, 'Friends and Neighbours: The Irish of Toodyay', *Studies in Western Australian History*, Vol. 20 (2000), pp. 49, 52-4, 56-7.

⁵¹ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 17, 205-8, chpt. 3-4.

⁵² Colonial Secretary's Office Correspondence, Acc36 1848-59, Acc49 1848-59, Acc527 1889-1900, Acc752 1901, SRO.

official correspondence held in the State Records Office.⁵³ Sources by emigrators about the 1890s include the annual reports of the United British Women's Emigration Association and matrons' official journals.⁵⁴ Few sources were written by servants themselves, and these date only from the 1890s, including shipboard diaries, letters printed in the United British Women's Emigration Association's annual reports, and newspaper letters to the editor.⁵⁵ The *Bicentennial Dictionary* and work from the Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project on the 1853 *Palestine* give insight into their marriages.⁵⁶ There were two main newspapers in the 1850s: the conservative *Perth Gazette*, later the *West Australian*, and its challenger, the more liberal *Inquirer*. By the 1890s there were country papers, including a daily edition of the *West Australian* called the *Daily*

⁵³ Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Reports 9-33, 1851-73, British Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 11-8 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969); Letters from the Secretary of State (Domestic), 1855-71, Colonial Office, Emigration Entry Books of Correspondence, C.O. 385/28-30, PRO Vol. 865; Correspondence – Assisted Immigrants, Items L001-303, 1891-1901, Acc553, SRO.

⁵⁴ *Annual Reports of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1888-1902; M.P. Monk, *Matron's Diary, Nairnshire*, 1895, Item 9, Acc504, SRO; Mary P. Monk, *Matron's Diary, Warrigal*, 1895, Item 10, Acc504, SRO; Susan Margaret Monk, *Matron's Diary, Gulf of Siam*, 1894, Item 8, Acc504, SRO; Passenger Lists and Matron's Journal for *Echuca*, 1892, Acc503, SRO.

⁵⁵ Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, 1900, in Lyn Kane Dale, 'Tapestry: The Story of Maggie Kelly Kane' (Perth, WA: Unpublished Manuscript, 2004); Catherine E. Page, diary transcript, 1900-01, MN 2179, ACC 5960A/1, Battye Library, archived at the State Library of Western Australia, [http://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa_b1943665_2], accessed on 24 August 2016.

⁵⁶ Rica Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians pre-1829 – 1888*, Vol. I-IV (Nedlands, University of Western Australia Press, 1987), archived at the Friends of the Battye Library Inc., [<http://www.friendsofbattye.org.au/BD%20WA.htm>], accessed on 16 January 2017; Western Australian Online Indexes, Births, Deaths and Marriages, archived at Department of the Attorney General, [http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/default.aspx], accessed on 17 January 2017; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine*, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project, 2017.

Mail, and more liberal goldfields papers.⁵⁷ The town also had a liberal afternoon paper, the *Daily News*.⁵⁸

This thesis begins by looking at the main differences between the 1850s and 1890s, one of which being that the authorities directing servant immigration changed from the imperial British government supported by the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission to the Western Australian government assisted by the United British Women's Emigration Association. The type of female immigrants also changed, from predominantly Irish workhouse women to experienced English servants, although it is argued here that this change was not related to the difference in governments, but was instead caused by the increased appeal of the colony to immigrants by the 1890s. The second chapter then looks more at the continuities between the decades, arguing that whereas Ellen Joyce and the United British Women's Emigration Association claimed that there had been a great improvement during the nineteenth century in shipboard protections and controls for female immigrants, these protective controls were actually established to a high standard from the start and remained consistent. These controls also extended to the time spent in depot and the hiring process and could be resisted by misbehaving, albeit usually unsuccessfully. In controlling hiring, colonial

⁵⁷ For goldfields newspapers, see the *Coolgardie Miner*, *Kalgoorlie Miner*, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus* and the *Sun*.

⁵⁸ Metropolitan Newspapers, State Library of Western Australia, accessed 15 April 2017 from [<http://slwa.wa.gov.au/explore-discover/wa-heritage/wa-newspapers/metro-country-newspapers>], About Digitised Newspapers, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 4 October 2016 from [<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/about>].

emigrators had an economic motive in addition to protection, as they were also employers, seeking to ensure that servants accepted work from themselves and at low wages. The last chapter then studies the continuation of controls to domestic service, showing that colonial society largely supported the subordinate status of servants to their mistresses. There were also opportunities for resistance by leaving employers, which were more successful than shipboard rebelliousness. The 1890s brought increased means of resistance for servants, through leaving colonists' employment for more lucrative work in the goldfields and through writing letters of complaint to the press.

Chapter One: Differences in Immigrants From the 1850s to 1890s

Servant immigration to Western Australia involved different circumstances in the 1850s and 1890s. Gothard claims that some differences in single female immigration between these decades were caused by the different governments directing immigration at each time: first British and then Western Australian.¹ The change in governments indeed led to a change in the motivations behind servant immigration. However, it did not contribute to the type of women who decided to immigrate. Instead, this depended on the ability of the colony to attract its preferred type of migrants, which it was unable to do until the 1890s due to its earlier lack of appeal to potential immigrants. The women made a conscious decision to immigrate or not, based on their view of the colony.

Servant immigration travelled from the hands of the Western Australian authorities to the British and back again, and in each case was mediated by an emigration agency. The only party of servants sent out under the initial colonial scheme was the twenty-one women per the *Mary* in 1849, with the women's passages paid for using Western Australian funds held by the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, which selected and despatched the party.² The following year, with transportation, assisted immigrants began to be funded by

¹ Gothard, 'Wives or Workers', pp. 150-1.

² Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 2-3.

the British government, although they were still selected by the Commission.³ After transportation ceased, so too did the British government's involvement in Western Australian immigration, with colonial authorities retaking control.⁴ Initially still contracted to the Commissioners, immigration was directed from 1873 by a colonial recruiting agent and then a Selection Committee in London. An Immigration Board and the Colonial Secretary's Office oversaw the 1890s colonial scheme of immigration, but were greatly assisted by the lady emigrators of the United British Women's Emigration Association.⁵ These women worked to select the immigrant servants, arrange their passages and provide matrons to supervise them.⁶

The motivations for providing the women with assisted passages differed between the 1850s and 1890s, following the change over time in the government directing servant immigration. In the 1850s, the British government focused on immigrating women primarily to rectify the numerical disparity between the sexes in Western Australia.⁷ Men had always outnumbered women in the colony, but transportation further widened the gap by introducing almost ten thousand male convicts.⁸ The ratio of men to one hundred women was 179

³ Appleyard, 'Western Australia', pp. 213-4; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 16-7, 49; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 43.

⁴ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 95.

⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 94, 97; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 127.

⁶ Gothard, 'Protecting Labour', pp. 44-7; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1891-92, pp. 8-9; *Ibid.*, 1900, p. 19.

⁷ Gothard, 'Wives or Workers', p. 150; Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, pp. 225-6; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 13, 1853, BPP Vol. 12, p. 37.

⁸ Appleyard, 'Western Australia', p. 212; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 3-5, 16-7.

in 1859, and for the twenty-one to sixty year old age group the ratio was 293.⁹

The British government claimed that female immigration was the solution, and supported it primarily for that reason.¹⁰ The Emigration Commissioners accordingly favoured women over men for assisted passages.¹¹

Unlike the colonial authorities, the British government did not see domestic service as the primary function of the immigrant women.¹² Britain was not keen to export valuable trained domestics to the colonies, as there was no surplus of servants at home.¹³ In their 1856 report, the Emigration Commissioners wrote that although female immigrants had a short-term value as servants, they were primarily sent out to ensure long-term colonial success as wives to balance the sexes.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Western Australian authorities had always requested that single female immigrants were domestic servants. Assisted passages to families in the 1840s, when immigration was funded by the colony, offered lower fares for daughters or sisters in service, and the party of women on the *Mary* were requested by the Governor due to a demand for

⁹ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰ Gothard, 'Wives or Workers', p. 150; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 9-10.

¹¹ Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, pp. 225-6; Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*, p. 26.

¹² Hamilton, 'The "Servant Class"', pp. 120-1.

¹³ Paula Hamilton, "'Tipperarifying the Moral Atmosphere' Irish Catholic Immigration and the State 1840-1860', in Sydney Labour History Group (ed.), *What Rough Beast? The State and Social Order in Australian History* (North Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), p. 20; Julia Bush, "'The Right Sort of Woman': Female Emigrators and Emigration to the British Empire, 1890-1910', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1994), p. 393.

¹⁴ Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 16, 1856, BPP Vol. 13, p. 18.

servants.¹⁵ Even after transportation began and immigrants were selected by Britain, the Governor continued to request that female immigrants be servants.¹⁶ Colonial newspapers bemoaned the servant shortage and saw female immigration as the solution.¹⁷ In this regard, the British and colonial authorities supported female migration for different reasons.¹⁸

However, both authorities' policies were also shaped by the nineteenth-century view of women as domestic and refining.¹⁹ Women were regarded as having a civilising influence, encouraging a moral and virtuous society.²⁰ Immigrant women were charged with improving Western Australian society by spreading gentleness, purity and law-abidingness to raise the quality of the male settlers.²¹ These men were represented as rough and uncouth colonists who indulged in liquor and were isolated in rural areas.²² Both the *Gazette* and *Inquirer* in 1853 wrote of their hopes that the female immigrants' marriages

¹⁵ Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, pp. 203, 224-5; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 2.

¹⁶ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 18.

¹⁷ 'King George's Sound', *Inquirer*, 15 June 1853, p. 2.

¹⁸ Gothard, 'Wives or Workers', pp. 150-1; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁹ Robert D. Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 139-40; Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 7-8.

²⁰ Grant, *Representations of British Emigration*, pp. 139-40, 144.

²¹ Margaret Anderson, "'Helpmeet for Man': Women in Mid-Nineteenth Century Western Australia', in Patricia Crawford (ed.), *Exploring Women's Past* (Carlton, South Victoria: Sisters Publishing Ltd, 1983), pp. 103-4.

²² Grant, *Representations of British Emigration*, pp. 152-3; Margaret Anderson, 'Women and the Convict Years in Western Australia', in Rica Erickson (ed.), *The Brand on His Coat* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1983), p. 91.

would encourage men to settle down on the land.²³ A group especially in need of reform were the numerous convicts, who in 1854 made up just over half of the single male population over twelve years old.²⁴ Immigrant women were expected to work their magic through marriage, and the governments anticipated that transportees would be popular husbands for immigrant servants.²⁵ Part of the reason that private schemes to send disreputable women to Western Australia to be reformed were unsuccessful, and plans to send out female convicts floundered, was because both involved unreformed women who, from the governments' point of view, held no use as an improving force.²⁶ Instead, as Anderson wryly notes, this task of reforming the expirée men was left to the respectable free immigrant women.²⁷

The colonial authorities' motivations for immigrating women in the 1890s were similar to before, being focused on the women's role firstly as servants and only secondly as wives to balance the sexes. Domestic service was still seen as suffering from a shortage of servants, especially, the newspapers claimed, because so many women were leaving service to get married and had

²³ 'Domestic Sayings and Doings', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 4 February 1853, p. 2; 'The Inquirer', *Inquirer*, 13 July 1853, p. 2; 'Domestic Sayings and Doings', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 4 November 1853, p. 2.

²⁴ Anderson, 'Women and the Convict Years', pp. 84, 91.

²⁵ Grant, *Representations of British Emigration*, pp. 152-3; Margaret Grellier, 'The Family: Some Aspects of Its Demography and Ideology in Mid-Nineteenth Century Western Australia', in C. T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1987), pp. 495-9.

²⁶ Grant, *Representations of British Emigration*, pp. 154-5; Anderson, 'Women and the Convict Years', p. 93.

²⁷ Anderson, 'Women and the Convict Years', p. 96.

to be replaced.²⁸ Only women with experience as servants were provided with the free passages in this scheme, instead of any single woman of marriageable age.²⁹ Parties of female immigrants were referred to, with good reason, as “domestics”.³⁰ To ensure that the supply of servants continued, the colonial authorities willingly accommodated United British Women’s Emigration Association recommendations.³¹ The association followed the colonial government in believing that the immigrant women were to be servants, requesting that the women provide references attesting to their experience in service.³²

Although domestic service was the women’s primary role, this was not mutually exclusive to marriage. Service was usually seen as a transition stage rather than a lifelong career, with women leaving after several years, or perhaps only months, and then marrying.³³ The emigrators expected that the women would marry but only after working in service, a short-term ambition, first.³⁴ Marriage helped to reduce the imbalance between the sexes which was once again widened in the 1890s, as male miners were drawn to Western Australia

²⁸ ‘Domestic Service’, *Western Mail*, 21 May 1892, p. 27; ‘The Servant Girl Question’, *Eastern Districts Chronicle*, 24 March 1894, p. 5; ‘General News’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 6 December 1895, p. 6; ‘Local and General’, *W.A. Record*, 7 December 1895, p. 6.

²⁹ Gothard, ‘Wives or Workers’, p. 155; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 12; Ellen Joyce to Agent General Malcolm Fraser, 11 December 1894, Item 80, 1895, Acc527, SRO.

³⁰ Agent General R.C. Starr to Chairman of the Immigration Board, 19 February 1892, *Echuca* 16/2/1892, Acc553, SRO.

³¹ Gothard, ‘Protecting Labour’, pp. 45-7.

³² *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1889-90, p. 16; ‘Correspondence’, *Birmingham Daily Post*, 10 January 1891, Issue 10156, accessed from British Library Newspapers, Part I.

³³ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 260; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 6; Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, p. 7.

³⁴ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 9-10, 12; Bush, ‘Right Sort of Woman’, p. 390.

by the gold rush.³⁵ Immigrant servants were seen as also valuable because they could help to reduce this imbalance.³⁶ However, the place where men outnumbered women the most was the goldfields, which was where the immigrant servants were discouraged from going because of the greater need for servants in the towns.³⁷

In addition to the changes in the policies of servant immigration over time due to first a British and then a colonial government directing immigration, the type of female immigrants arriving in the colony between the 1850s and 1890s also changed. In the 1850s many of the women were from Irish workhouses, especially after 1858 when English workhouse women were no longer welcome.³⁸ The *Gazette* wrote that the *Travencore* carried Irish women, and the *Palestine* carried women selected from the Irish Mountbellew and Ennis workhouses.³⁹ Most of the Irish women came from workhouses, although the poor conditions at home led others who were not in an institution to apply for

³⁵ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 4-5, 127.

³⁶ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 131.

³⁷ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 166; Ellen Joyce, *Letter to Girls on Leaving England* (St. John's Croft, Winchester: Warren and Son, 1894), Item 80, 1895, Acc527, SRO, p. 7; 'Domestic Servant Problem', *West Australian*, 1 March 1901, p. 2.

³⁸ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 31.

³⁹ 'The Independent Journal', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 21 January 1853, p. 2; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project*, 2017.

free passages.⁴⁰ Before 1858, some women were selected from English workhouses, such as St. Giles's in London.⁴¹

The colonists also found that the immigrant women tended to lack training or experience in domestic service.⁴² The immigration agent did not feel confident that the party of women from the 1850 *Sophia* would find ready work, as few were trained for service, and the surgeon of that ship wrote that the women were unaccustomed to work.⁴³ Workhouse women were unlikely to have been trained in domestic skills, and of the Mountbellew and Ennis women from the *Palestine* it was reported that "few of them have been ever before in service".⁴⁴ When the first party of Irish women arrived at Fremantle, they were dubbed "bog Irish" by some settlers, and seen as untrained.⁴⁵ There was a complaint in the *Inquirer* that "Really useful serving girls are still in demand, none of that description being at present in depot".⁴⁶

However, the press soon recognised that the immigrant women were not untrainable. The *Inquirer* wrote that "the majority of them had never been accustomed to in-door service, and that but few of them were really good

⁴⁰ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 37-8; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 43-4; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 23.

⁴¹ John Simpson Howard, Surgeon's Report of the *Emma Eugenia*, 8 June 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 119-20.

⁴² Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 23; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 39; Erickson, 'Friends and Neighbours', p. 50.

⁴³ J.D. Wittenoom to T.N. Yule, 31 July 1850, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 22-3; Thomas Parr, Report on *Sophia*, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 34-5.

⁴⁴ Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*, p. 161; 'Domestic Sayings and Doings', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 6 May 1853, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Erickson, 'Friends and Neighbours', p. 50; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 23; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 39.

⁴⁶ 'Immigration Agent's Report', *Inquirer*, 31 May 1854, p. 3.

domestic servants, is undeniable; but, that they are incapable of ever becoming so is not borne out by experience.”⁴⁷ With “good manners and impeccable behaviour”, the women were represented by the newspapers as having the right attitudes to do well in service.⁴⁸ The *Travencore* party possessed “good temper and willingness to do their best and be instructed in household duties”.⁴⁹ At the time female servants were more highly valued for their characters and attitudes than their domestic experience, making it easier to accept untrained maids.⁵⁰ The women were meant to be respectable, especially if destined to become wives and mothers, and character, unlike skills, could not be regained once lost.⁵¹ It is unsurprising, therefore, that the Irish women soon won over the Western Australian colonists. They were pleasant, willing, and objected neither to working in the country nor to marrying expirees.⁵² Governor Kennedy himself stated that these Irish servants were “universally well spoke of as a most useful and well conducted class”.⁵³

Although accepted, Irish workhouse women were not the preferred type of female immigrants. Western Australia would ideally have chosen English and Scottish women, as it did in the 1860s when Governor Hampton demanded that only servants of these nationalities be given assisted fares. In this attempt

⁴⁷ ‘Wednesday, April 9, 1856’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 9 April 1856, p. 2.

⁴⁸ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 23.

⁴⁹ ‘Domestic Sayings and Doings’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 6 May 1853, p. 2.

⁵⁰ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 169-70; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 34.

⁵¹ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, p. 227; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 34.

⁵² Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 39, 42-3.

⁵³ Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 16, 1856, BPP Vol. 13, p. 30.

to reduce levels of Irish immigrants to no more than their proportion of the British population, Gothard claims that Hampton and the colonial authorities were “infected with the anti-Irish sentiments by the eastern colonies”.⁵⁴ The most preferred type of immigrant servant was also ready-trained, instead of being from a workhouse.⁵⁵ This ideal woman hailed from country districts and was unspoilt by “urban contagion”.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, as shown, the colonists accepted immigrants who did not fulfil all of these criteria.

However, in the 1890s the immigrant servants were no longer workhouse women, unlikely to be Irish, and were already trained for service. As experienced servants, they had to provide references to this effect, which were scrutinised by Ellen Joyce.⁵⁷ Lists of the women from the *Nairnshire* and *Warrigal*, both in 1895, show that many of the women had held specialised and high-ranking positions in service in Britain. Alongside the lesser-trained and -paid generals and nursemaids, the *Nairnshire* had six cooks and two cook-housekeepers.⁵⁸ The *Warrigal* had eight cooks and one housekeeper. Only two women from the *Warrigal*, sisters, had no domestic experience, but their work

⁵⁴ Janice Gothard, “‘Pity the Poor Immigrant’: Assisted Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia”, in Eric Richards (ed.), *Poor Australian Immigrants in the Nineteenth Century* (Australian National University, Canberra: Division of Historical Studies and Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, 1992), p. 101.

⁵⁵ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 43, 47-9; Stephen Walcott to Colonial Secretary, 11 November 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 145-6.

⁵⁶ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 47.

⁵⁷ Ellen Joyce to Agent General Sir Malcolm, 11 December 1894, Item 80, 1895, Acc527, SRO; Monk, *New Horizons*, p. 14.

⁵⁸ M.P. Monk, Matron’s Diary, *Nairnshire*, 1895, Item 9, Acc504, SRO.

on the family farm made them eligible as farm servants.⁵⁹ Of the 1893 *Gulf of Taranto* women, the *Daily News* noted that “All had either been in domestic service or had received such home-training.”⁶⁰ Indeed, one servant on the *Banffshire* suggested to a reporter on arrival that “she did not belong to the common 'garden' variety of 'general,' and she hinted that the Government of Western Australia should think itself highly honored because she had consented to come here at all.”⁶¹

Although better experienced in service, the women in the 1890s still had to prove their good characters. An Annie Allen’s 1895 application form shows that she had to provide two references attesting to her character. One reference was to be from her last employer, so she had to have been employed before. She also had to provide a medical certificate as to her good health and a signature from her minister to affirm that all of the application was true.⁶² Potential immigrants were interviewed by the United British Women’s Emigration Association’s secretary Miss Lefroy, at the association’s offices.⁶³ The association vowed only to assist women of “good character and capacity”.⁶⁴ When the

⁵⁹ Mary P. Monk, *Matron’s Diary, Warrigal*, 1895, Item 10, Acc504, SRO.

⁶⁰ ‘General News’, *Daily News*, 28 February 1893, p. 2.

⁶¹ ‘Importing Women’, *Evening Star*, 17 July 1900, p. 3.

⁶² Annie Eliza Allen, Application Form for Free Passage, to Agent General, 13 March 1895, Item L177, Acc553, SRO.

⁶³ Monk, *New Horizons*, p. 15.

⁶⁴ *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1888, p. 5.

Woolloomooloo left London in 1898, the *Daily News* could confidently write that “Each [woman] goes out with an excellent character.”⁶⁵

The immigrant servants were also predominantly English and Scottish in the 1890s, with far fewer Irish women selected. Of the forty servants on the *Cornwall* in 1897, only sixteen were Irish, with the rest English, Scottish or Welsh, and ten out of fifty were Irish on the *Woolloomooloo* the following year.⁶⁶ A similar number were Irish on the *Banffshire* in 1900 – eleven out of forty-seven – but then only five out of fifty the following year on the *Surrey*.⁶⁷ Most of the immigrant women came from country districts, which fitted with the colonists’ preference for rural immigrants.⁶⁸ With the departure of the *Cornwall* from London in 1897, the *Coolgardie Miner* contrasted the “sturdy Irish peasant girls congregated in one corner” with the English servants’ “neat blouses and well-fitting brown shoes [which] bespoke acquaintance with town life”. However, the *Miner* added that most of the women were from country districts, and suggested that “some of them in speech and demeanor gave evidence of having received better education and training than fall to the lot of the ordinary domestic.”⁶⁹

⁶⁵ ‘Fifty Servant Girls Off to Westralia’, *Daily News*, 11 January 1898, p. 4.

⁶⁶ ‘News and Notes’, *West Australian*, 29 September 1897, p. 4; ‘News and Notes’, *West Australian*, 20 January 1898, p. 4.

⁶⁷ ‘Arrival of Immigrants in the S.S. Banffshire’, *Daily News*, 11 July 1900, p. 3; ‘Seeking New Homes. Arrival of 50 Immigrant Girls’, *West Australian*, 26 January 1901, p. 6.

⁶⁸ ‘Immigrant Girls Arrival at Fremantle’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 1 October 1897, p. 9; ‘Fifty Servant Girls Off to Westralia’, *Daily News*, 11 January 1898, p. 4; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 47-9.

⁶⁹ ‘Off to West Australia’, *Coolgardie Miner*, 15 September 1897, p. 6.

The perceived quality of the immigrants had improved over time, with the women now predominantly rural, trained English servants; precisely what the colony desired. And the colonists thought enough of them to rapidly hire each party as it arrived.⁷⁰ Those women from the *Gulf of Taranto, Banffshire* and *Perthshire* were all hired on the first day.⁷¹ Newspaper accounts of the women's arrival describe them positively as "the picture of health, and in high spirits".⁷² The party on the *Surrey* were "well-dressed, pleasant faced, and happy-looking [women] ... all prepared to accept situations as general servants", which was the type most required by employers.⁷³ In 1897 Premier Sir John Forrest praised the United British Women's Emigration Association's efforts, stating that it was well worth importing these women, as they were readily employed, good servants, and a good class of person.⁷⁴

The growing appeal of the colony was the primary cause of this difference in the type of female immigrants arriving over time. In the 1850s, it was disadvantaged in trying to attract the desired types of migrants. Western Australia had begun with slow economic development, resulting in a small and underdeveloped colony.⁷⁵ Prices were high, but wages were not.⁷⁶ As shall be

⁷⁰ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 69.

⁷¹ 'Hiring Female Immigrants', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 March 1893, p. 10; 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 6 August 1900, p. 5; 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 13 July 1901, p. 4.

⁷² 'Importing Women', *Evening Star*, 17 July 1900, p. 3.

⁷³ 'Seeking New Homes', *West Australian*, 26 January 1901, p. 6; Correspondence – Assisted Immigrants, 1891-1901, Items L188-9, L236-65, L276-7, L289-92, L294-6, Acc553, SRO; Passenger Lists and Matron's Journal for *Echuca*, 1892, Acc503, SRO.

⁷⁴ *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1897, p. 19.

⁷⁵ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, p. 31; Pamela Statham, 'Swan River Colony 1829-1850', in C. T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia* (Nedlands: University of Western

shown in the following chapter, women were not attracted by the prospect of generous pay, as female immigration had served to lower wages for servants.⁷⁷ This was especially obvious in comparison to the eastern colonies, notably gold-boom Victoria.⁷⁸ The presence of large numbers of convicted criminals, once Western Australia became a penal colony in 1850, further discouraged prospective immigrants.⁷⁹ The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission stated bluntly in an 1855 report that “Western Australia is not so advantageous a destination for Emigrants as the other Australian colonies”.⁸⁰ This lack of appeal was acknowledged by the *Inquirer*, which wrote that “The natural attractions of Western Australia are not sufficient to enable it to compete with other parts, and any great increase of voluntary emigration cannot be expected”, although it held out hopes that public works by the convicts would improve the colony.⁸¹

It was common knowledge that new immigrants often wanted to leave Western Australia for the eastern colonies. However, they soon found that the journey was much longer than the few hours in a coach or train that they had been led to believe. That many immigrants were misinformed about this

Australia Press, 1987), pp. 184, 186, 188, 191; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 42; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 21-3.

⁷⁶ ‘Second Day’, *Inquirer*, 12 April 1854, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 98-9, 102; Anderson, ‘Women and the Convict Years’, pp. 91-2.

⁷⁸ J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 30 June 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 235-7.

⁷⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 42; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 21-3; Anderson, ‘Women and the Convict Years’, pp. 91-2.

⁸⁰ ‘Correspondence between Bishop Serra and the Local Government’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 June 1856, p. 2.

⁸¹ ‘Committee of the House of Lords on Transportation’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 31 December 1856, p. 3.

suggests that the colony had to be misrepresented for them to agree to take a passage to Western Australia.⁸² A letter to the editor of the *Inquirer* pointed out that immigrant servants should be warned in advance that they were about to travel to a penal colony, but believed that if they were well-informed then they would not object to expirée husbands.⁸³

This lack of appeal to migrants meant that the colony received only the least demanding of women, instead of the types most desired. Irish workhouse women were more accepting of colonial privations, as they were used to lower conditions at home than their English counterparts, and were thus more willing to immigrate to Western Australia.⁸⁴ Police Magistrate Thomas Yule commented that Irish women even “seem to entertain no scruples of delicacy in marrying ticket-of-leave men”.⁸⁵ Englishwomen, by contrast, were less enthusiastic about working in the country, and the Commissioners acknowledged that “few English girls of good character can be prevailed on to emigrate to Western Australia, where wages are much lower than in the other Australian Colonies”. Irish women soon became the stock-standard immigrant servants. When the colony refused to accept any more English workhouse

⁸² ‘Second Day’, *Inquirer*, 12 April 1854, p. 2; Janet Millett, *An Australian Parsonage or, the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia*, Facsimile edn. (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1980), pp. 34-5.

⁸³ ‘Wednesday, March 25, 1857’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 25 March 1857, p. 2.

⁸⁴ Deborah Oxley and Eric Richards, ‘Convict Women and Assisted Female Immigrants Compared 1841 – A Turning Point?’, in Eric Richards (ed.), *Visible Women: Female Immigrants in Colonial Australia* (Australian National University, Canberra: Research School of Social Sciences, 1995), pp. 25-6, 30, 40-3; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 37-8, 41-2; ‘Correspondence between Bishop Serra and the Local Government’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 June 1856, p. 2.

⁸⁵ ‘Committee of the House of Lords on Transportation’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 31 December 1856, p. 3.

women, the Commission wrote that they would “be obliged to look to Ireland to furnish the greater part of the supply of young women”.⁸⁶ And once Governor Hampton requested that Irish women no longer be sent out, the number of single female immigrants declined.⁸⁷ Upon complaining, he was told by the Emigration Commissioners that it was his very stipulation which had caused this.⁸⁸ His dilemma echoes the wider tension between the type of servants wanted and those received.

Australians wrongly believed that it was the reliance on a British-funded Emigration Commission which saw immigrant women of a different type to that most required being sent out. The colonies claimed that the Commissioners were putting British priorities before Australian ones, such as by favouring Irish migrants over the English and Scottish, and by “shovelling out” workhouse inmates instead of encouraging free emigrants.⁸⁹ However, Hamilton argues that it was the colonial desire to have control over their own money which was at the root of these complaints, as half of colonial land sales revenue went to the Emigration Commissioners.⁹⁰ Despite the complaints, the Commissioners actually tried to select women suited to colonial demands, feeling accountable to the colonies which were funding the immigration.⁹¹ Although Western

⁸⁶ Stephen Walcott to Colonial Secretary, 11 November 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 145-6.

⁸⁷ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 36.

⁸⁸ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 38.

⁸⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 26; Hamilton, ‘Tipperarifying the Moral Atmosphere’, pp. 15, 18, 22.

⁹⁰ Hamilton, ‘Tipperarifying the Moral Atmosphere’, pp. 15-6; Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, p. 203.

⁹¹ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 28; Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor*, pp. 196-7.

Australia did not pay for its immigrants during transportation, the Commission still worked to send single women to the colony when they were needed.⁹² In 1858, the colony was even able to specify that the Commission no longer recruit women from English workhouses, after the bad impression that these women made on the *Emma Eugenia*.⁹³ Instead of British plots to send out unwanted immigrants, Western Australia simply received the best women that they could attract under the circumstances.

By the 1890s, these circumstances had improved, and with the colony in a much better shape to attract migrants, it was able to choose the type of servants it wanted. By this time, Western Australia had not been a penal colony for over twenty years, and old distinctions between bond and free classes were being broken up.⁹⁴ Many convicts had immigrated to the eastern colonies, and many more settled down to become respected citizens.⁹⁵ Transportation had also given the colony a well-needed boost from a population increase of imported convicts and free immigrants, and an injection of imperial money. The colony benefitted from the public works produced using convict labour, including roads, bridges, public buildings and jetties.⁹⁶ The 1890s also saw an economic boom after gold was discovered, first in the Kimberly in 1886, and

⁹² Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 14; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 43; Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, pp. 225-6.

⁹³ Stephen Walcott to Colonial Secretary, 11 November 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 145-6; Gothard, 'Pity the Poor Immigrant', p. 101.

⁹⁴ Appleyard, 'Western Australia', pp. 218-9; Erickson, 'Friends and Neighbours', pp. 55-6, Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 162.

⁹⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 81-2.

⁹⁶ Appleyard, 'Western Australia', pp. 213-4; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 87-9.

then at Southern Cross in 1889.⁹⁷ The gold rush attracted many immigrants to the fields, and the population increased 270 percent from 49,800 in 1891 to 184,100 by 1901.⁹⁸ The increased trade to cater for this larger population brought prosperity to the colony.⁹⁹

The booming spontaneous immigration to the goldfields meant that assisted immigration was scaled back.¹⁰⁰ The Immigration Board closed down in 1893, and its reduced responsibilities were taken up by the Colonial Secretary's Office.¹⁰¹ Single female servants were almost the only group to still receive free passages, which shows their worth.¹⁰² The colony was also in such a good position to attract immigrant servants that for the first time it began to charge the women a small fee as a contribution toward their passage. The women who had immigrated in groups selected from 1850s workhouses had all of their costs paid by the imperial government, and in the 1870s and 1880s parties of servants were given entirely free passages by the colonial authorities.¹⁰³ Under the 1889 scheme, the women now had to pay £1 for their kit of utensils and bedding, which they were able to keep.¹⁰⁴ This cost, although only a fraction of the value of the fare, nonetheless served to keep out the very poorest of servants, as only

⁹⁷ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 127, 130.

⁹⁸ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, pp. 4, 115-6, 127.

⁹⁹ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 130-1; Appleyard, 'Western Australia', pp. 218-9.

¹⁰⁰ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 127.

¹⁰¹ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 127.

¹⁰² Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 128.

¹⁰³ 'Refractory Seamen', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 16 January 1852, p. 3; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁴ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 115; 'Correspondence', *Birmingham Daily Post*, January 10, 1891, Issue 10156, British Library Newspapers, Part I.

those who had obtained sufficient work in service to save up the kit money would be able to immigrate.¹⁰⁵ The colony was now less willing to compromise on its immigrant women by allowing them completely free passages, as it could now demand and attract a better class of servants.

Newspaper reports confirm that instead of lacking immigrants because too few wanted to come, the opposite was now true. One *Cornwall* servant was asked by a reporter on arriving if there was “difficulty experienced in obtaining the batch of immigrants required?” She replied “I think that there shouldn't be much trouble in the matter, for there are many girls in England eager to come out to this new land”, adding that more women would have travelled per the *Cornwall* had they not been ill.¹⁰⁶ The immigrants tended to be drawn from the same country areas.¹⁰⁷ So many women were willing to go that, by 1895, the *Inquirer* reported that “the villages from which hitherto there has been no difficulty experienced in securing the girls are almost denuded.”¹⁰⁸

Thus, it can be seen that British women chose whether to immigrate to Western Australia based on its appeal at the time. Despite this, in both the 1850s and 1890s these women were represented as making no such decision to travel under their own volition, as the Emigration Commission and the press

¹⁰⁵ Francis Hart, *Western Australia in 1891* (Perth: Government of Western Australia, 1892), p. 118; Eric Richards, ‘How Did Poor People Emigrate from the British Isles to Australia in the Nineteenth Century?’, *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July 1993), pp. 262-4.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Immigrant Girls Arrival at Fremantle’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 1 October 1897, p. 9.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Immigrant Girls Arrival at Fremantle’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 1 October 1897, p. 9; Ellen Joyce to Mr Shenton, 11 February 1892, Item L094, Acc553, SRO.

¹⁰⁸ ‘General News’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 6 December 1895, p. 6.

portrayed them as passive migrants to be sent out as required. In the 1850s, the Emigration Commission's reports and letters describe the women's voyage using words such as "despatched", "sent out" and "requested".¹⁰⁹ These falsely suggest that there was a ready source of servants on tap, who could be moved to Western Australia when more domestics were needed. The letters state that these supposedly passive women were "provided with passages" and "sent to that colony".¹¹⁰

In the 1890s, with the Western Australian government now paying to draw the women into the colony instead of the British paying to send them there, the press referred to the women as "imported".¹¹¹ One letter to the editor expressed outrage at the "proposal that the Government should import foreign domestic servants."¹¹² Another argued that the government should put more money towards "importing domestic servants".¹¹³ The women were also grouped together as "batches".¹¹⁴ The *Inquirer* wrote in 1895 that "the Government have, we understand, sent to the home country for another batch

¹⁰⁹ Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 15, 1855, BPP Vol. 12, p. 19; T.F. Elliot to the Emigration Commissioners, 9 November 1861, No. 9480, pp. 295-6, Letters from the Secretary of State (Domestic), Colonial Office, Emigration Entry Books of Correspondence, C.O. 385/29, PRO Vol. 865.

¹¹⁰ F. Rogers to the Emigration Commissioners, 1 September 1862, No. 8297, pp. 361-2, Letters from the Secretary of State (Domestic), Colonial Office, Emigration Entry Books of Correspondence, C.O. 385/29, PRO Vol. 865; T.F. Elliot to the Emigration Commissioners, 9 November 1861, No. 9480, pp. 295-6, *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ 'Local and General', *W.A. Record*, 7 December 1895, p. 6.

¹¹² 'To the Editor', *West Australian*, 21 September 1899, p. 6.

¹¹³ 'Domestic Servants', *West Australian*, 30 August 1899, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ 'Local', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 9 July 1901, p. 16; 'The Servant Girl Question', *West Australian*, 25 April 1891, p. 4.

of 100.”¹¹⁵ The *W.A. Record* reported that these “100 more [girls] will be imported as soon as possible”.¹¹⁶ However, this construction of the women by the Commission and the press was incorrect, as the women made a decision to immigrate to Western Australia if they deemed it a sufficiently attractive destination.

Whereas the motivation for providing assisted passages to immigrant servants depended primarily on the government involved, the women’s willingness to immigrate depended on the contemporary circumstances of Western Australia. Only as the colony’s appeal to migrants grew in the 1890s were women of the preferred type prepared to travel in sufficiently large numbers. Before this, the colony had to rely largely on Irish workhouse women, who were the most likely to accept Western Australia’s poor attractions. Despite these differences in servant immigration between the 1850s and 1890s schemes, there was continuity in the women’s experiences, including the journey itself, as seen in the next chapter.

¹¹⁵ ‘General News’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 6 December 1895, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ ‘Local and General’, *W.A. Record*, 7 December 1895, p. 6.

Chapter Two: Protection and Control During the Voyage and in Depot

The experience of immigrant servants throughout the nineteenth century was one of continuously lacking agency in transit and while in depot in the colony. This was due to the controls placed on them by the Emigration Commissioners, Western Australian government, British emigrators, and colonial emigrators, who acted as reception committees. These controls restricted the women's freedom, but were promoted as necessary and important forms of protection. Protective control had existed from the start of the immigration of servants to the colony, despite changes in governments and their views on assisted female migration. It encompassed both the journey and time in depot, and saw the women ordered by a matron and restricted in their activities, space and companions on the ship, with these limitations continuing on arrival through the use of immigrant depots and controlled hiring. In addition to protecting and restricting, controls also served an economic purpose, being used by colonial protectors to favour themselves as employers in the hiring process. Most of the female immigrants accepted the controls, even appreciating them, but found themselves indebted and obliged to those who had assisted them. However, a few attempted to rebel against the protective rules, albeit largely unsuccessfully.

Protection was seen as important for female immigrants, but also served to control them. In travelling alone without their "natural guardians and

protectors", i.e. relatives, especially to a penal colony like Western Australia, they risked their reputations.¹ To maintain their respectability, the presence of a matron and measures to control the women were important, as they were seen as unable to look after themselves; only constant supervision by older and socially superior ladies could protect them.² The United British Women's Emigration Association boasted that "We protect the emigrants from door to door."³ However, these protections were also a means of maintaining discipline and order amongst the women. Matrons had "controlling power", and their charges found themselves restricted in their leisure, movement on the ship, contact with others and range of employment.⁴ The calls for improved depot facilities in both 1850s and 1890s further show that protection was linked to control. In 1849 the Colonial Secretary had ordered that "Control should be exercised over the conduct of the Immigrant girls per 'Mary' whilst in depot".⁵ By 1891 little had changed; a Girls' Friendly Society associate argued that "absolute control over the girls" was necessary.⁶

The lady emigrators of the third wave of servant immigration attempted to take control of the immigration process, especially the protective aspects,

¹ Hammerton, 'Without Natural Protectors', pp. 559-60; Gothard, 'Radically Unsound', p. 393; Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 118-9.

² Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, p. 73; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 89; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1894, p. 14.

³ 'Chips', *The North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 14 June 1894, British Library Newspapers, Part II.

⁴ 'The Immigrant Girls', *Western Mail*, 15 October 1897, p. 27.

⁵ Colonial Secretary to Resident Magistrate Fremantle, 26 October 1849, CSO Vol. 27, No. 1034, p. 316.

⁶ Eliza Salter to Colonial Secretary, 11 March 1891, Item 515, 1891, Acc527, SRO; 'The Care of Female Immigrants', *West Australian*, 17 December 1889, p. 3; 'St. George's Cathedral Parish', *West Australian*, 11 April 1891, p. 3.

which they sought to improve to their design. They maintained that they were the best people to manage protection of female immigrants, because they were women too. Unlike busy, male government officials, middle class ladies from the United British Women's Emigration Association and the Girls' Friendly Society could give personal attention to the emigrants and work closely with them to ensure their quality.⁷ Stories published in Girls' Friendly Society journals and similar literature represented travel as unsafe for single women without protection, and the best protectors were not male civil servants, but lady emigrators. Being older, better educated and from a superior class to the immigrants, these ladies could apparently recognise dangers when their young charges could not.⁸ As men were deemed less trustworthy, due to their ignorance and their potential to be a threat, the emigrators claimed that protection in immigration should rest in their own hands.⁹ They largely succeeded in this, making protection both for and by women in the 1890s.¹⁰ This meant that the immigrant servants became reliant on the emigrators for the protection.¹¹

Despite these efforts by the emigrators to prove themselves indispensable, protection, and its associated control, had actually been part of single female immigration from the very start. They were initially provided by

⁷ Bush, 'Right Sort of Woman', p. 402.

⁸ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, pp. 41, 46-9.

⁹ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 44.

¹⁰ Bush, 'Right Sort of Woman', p. 402; Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 10; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 88.

¹¹ Monk, *New Horizons*, pp. 16-7.

the colonial government and Emigration Commissioners. Hallmarks of this later protection – a matron, segregation and firm discipline kept on board ship, and confinement to a depot, supervision by colonial ladies and controlled hiring on arrival – were all present in the very first party of single female servants, per the *Mary* in 1849.¹² A Mrs Simpson was engaged as matron, receiving a free cabin fare and £21 gratuity in return for satisfactorily supervising the women.¹³ These women were segregated from the other passengers, especially the Parkhurst boys (juvenile delinquents), and this was effected by confining the women to the poop deck when they came up from their quarters. Mrs Simpson was charged with ensuring that the women were “kept in proper order”, and they were “constantly engaged in some profitable employment”, namely sewing, instead of indulging in their own leisure activities.¹⁴ When they arrived, the women were accommodated in a depot, probably a warehouse in Fremantle, and supervised by a committee of colonial ladies, who assisted them in finding employment.¹⁵

Matrons were probably the most important form of protection on the ship, as they helped to enforce the other aspects. They were charged with

¹² *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1889-90, p. 8; Ellen Joyce, *Rules for Emigrant Women Joining Protected Parties under S.P.C.K. Matrons*, Item 80, 1895, Acc527, SRO; Penelope Hetherington, *Paupers, Poor Relief and Poor Houses in Western Australia, 1829 to 1910* (Crawley: UWA Publishing, 2009), p. 25; Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, p. 36; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 187-90.

¹³ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-2; Colonial Secretary to Auditor General, 1 November 1849, CSO Vol. 27, No. 1053, p. 322.

¹⁴ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-3.

¹⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 10, 14; Colonial Secretary to Resident Magistrate Fremantle, 26 October 1849, CSO Vol. 27, No. 1034, p. 316; Colonial Secretary to Mrs Simpson, 26 October 1849, CSO Vol. 26, No. 364, p. 132.

keeping order amongst the single women, preventing them from speaking with other passengers and keeping them in their allotted quarters.¹⁶ School lessons and sewing were directed by the matron.¹⁷ Matrons also had to deal with cases of minor misbehaviour and thoughtlessness, which they tended to take in their stride, and incidents from too many people being cooped up on ship for weeks or months.¹⁸ One woman wrote back to her friends, "Do not give impudent answers to the Matron; think of what she has to put up with, with the responsibility of so many girls."¹⁹ There was also gossip, and another woman asked Ellen Joyce to advise future immigrants that, "if they wish for a happy voyage to put down all tale-bearing ... they will find it is much better, the girls will become more united, and it will end in a pleasant voyage."²⁰

Initially, matrons were chosen on the ship from amongst the older passengers.²¹ The British Ladies Female Emigration Society encouraged the professionalisation of matrons in the 1850s through greater remuneration and the appointment of society-trained matrons, but the Emigration Commissioners did not seem to follow their line of thinking.²² The Commissioners paid small

¹⁶ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 6-8; Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12.

¹⁷ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-2.

¹⁸ Susan Margaret Monk, *Matron's Diary, Gulf of Siam*, 1894, Item 8, Acc504, SRO.

¹⁹ L.F. to MABYS, 3 November 1894, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1894, pp. 19-22.

²⁰ A.T. to Mrs Joyce, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1897, pp. 31-2.

²¹ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 95-6; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, *Annual Report 19, 1859*, BPP Vol. 14, pp. 15-6.

²² British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society Pamphlet, 1 May 1856, CSR Vol. 359, Fol. 109-10; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 93, 95-6; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, *Annual Report 19, 1859*, Vol. 14, British Parliamentary Papers, pp. 15-6.

gratuities of £5 to matrons, and engaged untrained passengers for the position.²³

Twelve women are listed in the *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* as serving as matrons between 1850 and 1886; three were simply servants selected from among the steerage immigrants, and only four matrons were definitely married ladies, probably from cabin class.²⁴ Just one, Maria Shipton, was recorded as making more than one journey as matron.²⁵ Not all matrons during transportation performed well, unsurprising given their lack of training. A sub-matron on the *Clara* was deemed “useless” and denied her gratuity, and after three years as immigration agent, Alfred Durlacher viewed the *Hamilla Mitchell*'s matron as “the first ... who has been fit for the office”.²⁶

The 1890s saw the standard of matrons improve, as these ladies were selected from the United British Women's Emigration Association's experienced corps of matrons.²⁷ They continued to be paid by the colonial government, although trained and appointed by the association, and their gratuities were increased to £25 plus a return steamer passage to England.²⁸ The regular matron to the colony was Miss Mary Monk, who had accompanied

²³ Captain Bruce to Colonial Secretary, 29 September 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 282; Walcott to Colonial Secretary, 19 October 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 295; Lefroy to Colonial Secretary, 27 March 1855, CSR Vol. 331, Fol. 1-2; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 95-6; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 19, 1859, BPP Vol. 14, pp. 15-6.

²⁴ Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*, pp. 123, 990, 1170, 1264, 1271, 1410, 1517, 1578, 1782, 2763, 2806, 2976, 3135.

²⁵ Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*, p. 2806.

²⁶ Walcott to Colonial Secretary, 19 October 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 295; Captain Bruce to Colonial Secretary, 29 September 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 282; Alfred Durlacher to Colonial Secretary, 14 April 1859, CSR Vol. 432, Fol. 14.

²⁷ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 84.

²⁸ *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1889-90, p. 8; Agent General R.C. Starr to Miss M.P. Monk, 7 January 1892, Acc553, *Echuca* 16/2/1892, SRO; Susan Margaret Monk to Colonial Secretary, 20 October 1894, Item L232, Acc553, SRO.

parties to Western Australia prior to 1889 and continued working under the new scheme, supervising at least sixteen of its twenty-one voyages.²⁹ An example of the professionalised matron which the British Ladies' Female Emigration Society had earlier promoted, Monk made a career out of her work as a shipboard matron, listing her occupation in the 1901 English census as "Lady Superintendent of Government Female Emigrants to Western Australia".³⁰ Mary Monk also accompanied other United British Women's Emigration Association parties to various dominions, travelling extensively.³¹

In addition to the presence of a matron, immigrant servants were also kept under control, again for their own protection, by being firmly separated from the crew and other passengers. Contact between them was forbidden.³² The matron of the *Mary* told to ensure "that there is no communication between the Girls and Boys", and from 1894 the immigrant women had to sign their assent to this rule.³³ Opportunities for illicit contact were limited by the single women's quarters being placed at the far end of the ship from the single men.³⁴

In the 1890s, this was further improved as the female servants were the only

²⁹ See Tricia Fairweather and Leonie Hayes, 'Bride Ships in All But Name: Miss Monk and the Servant Girls', archived at Papers Presented by Our Staff at State Library of Western Australia, [slwa.wa.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/60996/Fairweather_Bride_ships_in_all_but_name.doc], accessed on 14 November 2016, p. 7 and 'Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960', *Findmypast*. Article 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 20 January 1898, p. 4 gives the number as sixteen by the *Woolloomooloo*, and Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 103 says Monk accompanied twenty one between 1886 and 1901.

³⁰ '1901 England, Wales & Scotland Census', *Findmypast*.

³¹ *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1891-2, p. 18; *Ibid.*, 1897, p. 18.

³² Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 129-31.

³³ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12; Ellen Joyce, Rules for Emigrant Women Joining Protected Parties under S.P.C.K. Matrons, Item 80, 1895, Acc527, SRO.

³⁴ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 6-8; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 115; Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, p. 6.

steerage immigrants allowed on board.³⁵ The women were confined to their quarters and to the poop deck, away from other passengers.³⁶ The matron and captain also worked to ensure that there was no contact with the crew.³⁷ In a letter to the *Inquirer*, one woman wrote that “Why, one of the officers was suspended from duty merely because he said 'good-day' to one of us!”³⁸ The rules preventing communication and the designation of space on the ships served to separate the single women from the passengers and crew by restricting the women’s contacts and movements.³⁹

Protective control can also be seen in the firm discipline which was kept on the ships. To an extent, all passengers were subjected to discipline by the surgeon, again in the name of protection. Surgeons directed the passengers and crew to dry-scrub their quarters with sand and holystone, use disinfectants, and to air bedding and wash clothes twice weekly, in order to maintain cleanliness and good health.⁴⁰ However, the immigrant women were subjected to discipline beyond this. Their lives were timetabled, rising at seven and cleaning their quarters before breakfast. They could not remain on deck after dark, and had to

³⁵ ‘Notes from London’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 14 December 1899, p. 12.

³⁶ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 117, 131-5; Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12.

³⁷ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12; Susan Margaret Monk, *Matron’s Diary, Gulf of Siam*, 1894, Item 8, Acc504, SRO.

³⁸ ‘The Golden West’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 29 May 1896, p. 12.

³⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, chpt. 5.

⁴⁰ Robin Haines, *Doctors At Sea: Emigrant Voyages to Colonial Australia* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 72-5, 81-2, 127.

be in bed by half past nine or ten o'clock.⁴¹ The women were not even free to choose their own leisure activities, as the authorities worked to keep them engaged with sewing, deemed a suitable if dull occupation for servants.⁴² Sewing materials were always provided, initially by the Emigration Commission and then by the colonial government, which by the 1890s was paying for 200 yards of print fabric per ship.⁴³ This was seen as worth it, as it kept the women "constantly engaged in some profitable employment".⁴⁴

Through these measures, the women were normally kept in order, but when they did misbehave in some way, discipline was usually swiftly re-established. Seven "bad characters" on the *Sophia* were punished by the surgeon, who confined them to a spare cabin, and had some of the hair cut off one woman.⁴⁵ On the *Gulf of Siam* a pair of twins caused trouble for the matron by talking during prayers, moving outside of their allotted space on deck and refusing to rise in the mornings. When they became "unpardonably" rude, the captain and matron arranged for a similar punishment of solitary confinement, locking the twins in a saloon cabin for several days.⁴⁶ The interesting case of thieving on the *Tartar* is recounted by Mrs Millett, where the immigrant women resolved the issue themselves by appealing to the captain. As photographs were

⁴¹ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 119-20; Abstract of the Queen's Order in Council, Passenger Act, 7 January 1864, Item L034, Acc553, SRO; Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, pp. 16, 20-1.

⁴² Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 94-5; 'A Word for the Servant Girls', *Western Mail*, 31 July 1886, p. 21.

⁴³ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 94-5; Monk, *New Horizons*, p. 52; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1889, p. 10.

⁴⁴ Walcott to Mrs Simpson, 3 July 1849, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 11-12.

⁴⁵ Thomas Parr, Surgeon's Report of the *Sophia*, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 34-5.

⁴⁶ Susan Margaret Monk, Matron's Diary, *Gulf of Siam*, 1894, Item 8, Acc504, SRO.

the target of theft, they took all of their photographs to the captain and charged him to lock them away until they landed at Fremantle.⁴⁷

Although on other occasions the women were not punished or prevented from mischief, they still suffered consequences for their misdeeds. Two women on the *Clara* became involved with the captain on the voyage, who promised to find them employment. Neither woman appears to have been punished.⁴⁸ Five years later, order seemingly collapsed on the *Emma Eugenia* amongst a group of English women from St Giles's workhouse, who used "horrid and frightful language", were "lazy" and refused to get out of bed in the mornings, and spoke with crew members.⁴⁹ Night-time visits from the crew were enabled by the want of a lock on the hatch to the women's quarters.⁵⁰ Again, no discipline could be restored, but on both ships the women found that their reputations suffered, which made it difficult for them to find work. The captain wrote of "the bad name the 'Clara' Girls have got", and many were not engaged immediately, with one of the captain's women remaining at least a fortnight in depot.⁵¹ Some Englishwomen on the *Emma Eugenia* also struggled to find employment and were later returned to the stark environs of the Poorhouse as prostitutes.⁵²

⁴⁷ Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, p. 7.

⁴⁸ John Dorpe to Colonial Secretary, 15 October 1853, CSR Vol. 254, Fol. 211-2.

⁴⁹ A. Durlacher to Colonial Secretary, 7 June 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 117-8.

⁵⁰ George Clifton to Colonial Secretary, 7 June 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 124-5.

⁵¹ Peachey to Phillips, 1853, CSR Vol. 254, Fol. 217-17A; *Ibid.*, Fol. 214; *Ibid.*, 3 October 1853, Fol. 218.

⁵² Durlacher to Colonial Secretary, 10 August 1859, CSR Vol. 432, Fol. 33.

The long arm of protective control continued its hold over the immigrant servants after they disembarked in the colony. The colonial government ensured this by providing an immigrants' depot and arranging for colonial ladies to supervise them. A depot was seen as necessary to respectably house the women until they were employed, and a purpose-built place was established within three years, whereas accommodation for male immigrants took much longer.⁵³ The women's depot began life in 1851 as a Servants' Home for ill or unemployed domestic servants, run by a ladies' Friendly Society under Lady Fitzgerald.⁵⁴ The following year it had expanded to house new immigrant servants, and as a depot it became increasingly under the control of the colonial government, which moved it to larger premises on the corner of Pier and Goderich (now Murray) Streets.⁵⁵ There, order was seen as vital, with the *Inquirer* criticising the "discipline ... so lax" in 1852.⁵⁶ The press blamed the government take-over for the breakdown in control, claiming that the running of the home was best left to the ladies' committee which had founded it.⁵⁷ This preference for women to oversee female immigrants later became a hallmark of the United British Women's Emigration Association.⁵⁸

⁵³ Colonial Secretary to Resident Magistrate Fremantle, 26 October 1849, CSO Vol. 27, No. 1034, p. 316; Colonial Secretary to Mrs Simpson, 26 October 1849, CSO Vol. 26, No. 364, p. 132; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 14, 29, 31, 33.

⁵⁴ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 19; Hetherington, *Paupers*, p. 25; Hawes, 'Diary', p. 33.

⁵⁵ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 21-5; Hetherington, *Paupers*, p. 25.

⁵⁶ 'The Servants' Home', *Inquirer*, 17 March 1852, p. 2.

⁵⁷ 'The Servants' Home', *Inquirer*, 17 March 1852, p. 2; 'To the Editor of the Independent Journal', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 23 April 1852, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Bush, 'Right Sort of Woman', p. 402.

The Home remained at Goderich and Pier Streets until 1883. With the prospect of larger parties of immigrant servants to arrive, a new depot was planned and built in the old No. 2 Soldiers' Barracks on South Terrace in Fremantle.⁵⁹ An extra £10,000 was granted to the Immigration Board, on top of its annual £20,000, to pay for the women's costs in depot. There was clearly no question of these women finding their own accommodation under the protective control measures.⁶⁰ Once each party arrived, the women found themselves confronted with a stark interior and a lack of freedom.⁶¹ There was a compound "surrounded by a most forbidding palisade", and the need for locks on the doors "was horribly suggestive of gaol."⁶² The servants could not leave the depot until after hiring day, although in 1894 some *Port Pirie* women circumvented this rule by climbing over the wall to spend their evenings outside of the depot.⁶³ After several men were reported on the balcony of the depot that year, a police watch was also kept over the building.⁶⁴

As in earlier years, colonial ladies were still involved in the care of servants in depot.⁶⁵ This ensured that the female protective control promoted by the United British Women's Emigration Association continued after the

⁵⁹ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 115; 'News of the Week', *Western Mail*, 6 July 1901, p. 56.

⁶⁰ Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 114.

⁶¹ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 168, 170.

⁶² Douglas E. Darbyshire, *In Time for Lunch* (South Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1991), pp. 93, 95.

⁶³ Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, p. 36; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 169.

⁶⁴ J.M. McCarthy to Under Secretary, 20 March 1894, Item L273, Acc553, SRO; *Ibid*, 21 March 1894.

⁶⁵ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 172-5.

matron's duties had ceased.⁶⁶ Reception work was performed by the Girls' Friendly Society, in coordination with the association.⁶⁷ The society had been founded in England in 1875 with strong ties to the Church of England, and worked to assist girls and young women to live Christian lives.⁶⁸ The Western Australian branch had been established in 1888 by Mrs Eliza Salter, who worked to keep in touch with each group of immigrant servants until her resignation due to ill health in 1898, when she was replaced by Mrs O'Grady Lefroy.⁶⁹ Other key figures in the branch were Bishop Parry's wife, Dean Goldsmith's wife, and Mrs Ethel Burt, who all had connections to the St George's Cathedral.⁷⁰

The Girls' Friendly Society worked on the basis of an unequal relationship between members and associates, and the society tried to fit new immigrants into this system. Members were placed under the guidance of an associate, an older woman of high social standing who, as such, held authority over members.⁷¹ Associates could direct members into taking certain places and refusing those which they deemed unsuitable, even if they were more highly paid.⁷² Immigrant servants who were already members were automatically transferred to the care of an associate in the colony, which served to keep them

⁶⁶ Bush, 'Right Sort of Woman', p. 402; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 76.

⁶⁷ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 82-3; G.T. Elliot to McIlwaine, memorandum, 24 June 1901, Item 1406, 1901, Acc752, SRO.

⁶⁸ Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, pp. 7-11.

⁶⁹ Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, pp. 13-4; Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 6; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1899, p. 16.

⁷⁰ Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, p. 14.

⁷¹ Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, p. 11; Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, pp. 18-9.

⁷² Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, 5.

under the wing of the society.⁷³ The society greeted all of the immigrants regardless of membership, welcoming them off the ship, and encouraging them to join.⁷⁴ An invitation to attend Sunday classes was extended, and all were welcome at the 'social' given each time a ship arrived to greet new immigrants and allow old ones to catch up.⁷⁵ Attended by the matron Mary Monk, these socials were also a means for the British emigrants to keep tabs on the old immigrants, as Monk would learn and report back on how these women were doing in the colony.⁷⁶

Girls' Friendly Society members were not only restricted by these watchful eyes, but also were limited in their leisure activities, being encouraged to spend their free time in society-approved activities. There were Sunday classes at the Cathedral, and a recreation room with a piano open every afternoon and evening at the society's St George's Lodge.⁷⁷ Some servants, having emigrated to get more freedom, chafed against the restrictions and inferior position of being in the Girls' Friendly Society and did not keep up their membership.⁷⁸

⁷³ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, pp. 70-1; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1899, p. 16; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 176-8.

⁷⁴ 'The Immigrant Girls', *West Australian*, 14 May 1897, p. 6.

⁷⁵ Minute Book of the Diocesan Council of the Girls' Friendly Society, 1893-1905, ACC 1943A, Battye Library; Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 6; 'Social Notes', *West Australian*, 24 July 1900, p. 6.

⁷⁶ Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 6.

⁷⁷ Minute Book of the Diocesan Council of the Girls' Friendly Society, 1893-1905, ACC 1943A, Battye Library; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1899, p. 16; Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, pp. 15-6.

⁷⁸ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 177-9.

In both decades, colonial ladies and the government were able to control the hiring process, lowering the wages of servants. This benefitted colonial ladies because they were also employers, whereas British emigrators did not have this conflict of interest between helping servants and trying to engage them.⁷⁹ The value of servants in the colony was undercut by importing more of them, and so they had to accept lower wages, which suited their employers. Anderson writes that servants had “little or no bargaining power” over their wages.⁸⁰ In the 1830s and 1840s, before the immigration of parties of servants, their wages usually ranged between £12 and £20 per annum.⁸¹ But these could rise as high as £30 or £36.⁸² Once regular parties of servants arrived, these figures declined. The very first group in 1849 had “the wholesome effect of reducing the wage of domestic servants” to £7 to £10 a year.⁸³ Wages then remained around £10 to £12 for the 1850s.⁸⁴ Not only was the average wage lowered a little, but the upper limit was greatly reduced, being capped at no

⁷⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 201-2.

⁸⁰ Anderson, ‘Women and the Convict Years’, p. 92.

⁸¹ ‘The Western Australian Journal. Saturday, June 16 1838’, *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, 16 June 1838, p. 94; ‘The Western Australian Journal. Saturday, December 21, 1839’, *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, 21 December 1839, p. 202; ‘XIV. On Labour and Emigration’, *Inquirer*, 14 April 1841, p. 3.

⁸² William Tanner to mother, December 1831, in Statham (ed.), *The Tanner Letters*, p. 27; ‘The Western Australian Journal. Saturday, January 21, 1843’. *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, 21 January 1843, p. 2.

⁸³ J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 5 November 1849, CSR Vol. 192, Fol. 147-8.

⁸⁴ Erickson, ‘Friends and Neighbours’, p. 50; ‘Domestic Sayings and Doings’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 6 May 1853, p. 2; J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 30 June 1853, CSR, Vol. 270, Fol. 235-7; Immigration Agent to Colonial Secretary, 18 November 1856, CSR, Vol. 359, Fol. 101-2; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 17, 1857, BPP Vol. 13, p. 36.

more than £15 or £18 and thus effectively halving the maximum amount which a good servant could earn.⁸⁵

By the 1890s, emigrators were also reducing initial wages for servants. Being isolated from the outside world in the depot by the authorities and colonial ladies, new servants were kept ignorant of the wages which they could command, whereas Girls' Friendly Society associates knew exactly what a fair wage was, as they kept notes on where each immigrant servant found work and their rate of pay.⁸⁶ The immigrants were obliged to accept lower than average wages, reinforced by Ellen Joyce's letter stating that that "*you are not worth them [higher wages] on landing*" [original emphasis].⁸⁷ The women could be consoled by the fact that pay tended to increase after several months of giving satisfaction, and that, if not, they would be able to give notice and leave for a better-remunerated position.⁸⁸

But not only did colonial ladies and the government control initial wages, they also determined for whom the new immigrants could work, naturally favouring themselves. This reduced the number of possible

⁸⁵ J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 30 June 1853, CSR, Vol. 270, Fol. 235-7; Immigration Agent to Colonial Secretary, 18 November 1856, CSR, Vol. 359, Fol. 101-2; *Information for People Leaving Great Britain 1854*, Vol. 14, facsimile edn. of May 1854 *Colonization Circular* (Hampton, Victoria: MacBeth Genealogical Books), pp. 5, 10.

⁸⁶ Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 187-90; Minute Book of the Diocesan Council of the Girls' Friendly Society, 1893-1905, ACC 1943A, Batty Library; Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, pp. 5-6.

⁸⁷ Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 5.

⁸⁸ Letter in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1892-93, pp. 17-8; Rose E.M.D. to Miss Lefroy, in *Ibid.*, 1894, pp. 19-22; H.R. to Mrs Joyce, 28 February 1895, in *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 26-8; S.F. to Mrs Joyce, 31 April 1896, in *Ibid.*, 1896, pp. 31-4; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 187-91.

employers, forcing the servants to accept those who chose them. Hotel owners and publicans were not allowed to engage new servants at the express wish of Ellen Joyce.⁸⁹ Descriptions of the hiring process in newspapers suggest that it was the employers who did the choosing and not the servants. The women were “critically scrutinised by about 150 or 200 ladies, who remark audibly upon the points of the new arrivals subjected for hire”, with the process like “the squatter picking out the best workers from a herd of two-year-old cattle.”⁹⁰ Especially as not all servants were engaged on hiring day, they had to accept the mistress who picked them.⁹¹

This pool of mistresses was further reduced by the favouritism shown to ladies involved in the reception process. They could gain early admittance to the depot on hiring day, with the *Western Mail* writing that “Leaders of society have even been known to employ ‘backdoor’ influence to ... make their selections sure.”⁹² Society ladies included those from the Girls’ Friendly Society, and in 1901 depot superintendent McIlwaine complained about the registrar of

⁸⁹ Under Secretary to H.W. Hancock, 22 April 1897, Item 1130, 1897, Acc527, SRO; A. Peacock to O. Burt, 26 November 1895, Item L296, *Ibid*; Lilian Hart to Under Secretary, 25 November 1895, *Ibid*.; Ellen Joyce to Mr Shenton, 11 February 1892, Item L094, Acc553, SRO.

⁹⁰ ‘News and Notes’, *West Australian*, 27 May 1896, p. 4; ‘The Immigrant Girls’, *Western Mail*, 15 October 1897, p. 27.

⁹¹ Only those from the *Gulf of Taranto*, ‘Hiring Female Immigrants’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 March 1893, p. 10, the *Banffshire*, ‘News And Notes’, *West Australian*, 6 August 1900, p. 5, and the *Perthshire* ‘Items of News’, *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 13 July 1901, p. 4 are mentioned being hired at once. A letter from L.F. to MABYS, 3 November 1894, in *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1894, pp. 19-22, stated that six out of the forty-nine women were not hired on the first day.

⁹² ‘News and Notes’, *West Australian*, 27 May 1896, p. 4; ‘The Immigrant Girls’, *Western Mail*, 15 October 1897, p. 27.

the society, Mrs Lefroy, being granted early access to the women.⁹³ This had been on the grounds of reception work, but while there she engaged two women as servants. McIlwaine also considered Mary Monk to be “exceeding her duty” in corresponding with other ladies seeking servants, giving them “undue advantage”.⁹⁴ Mere months later, Mary Monk was again accused of favouritism when the *West Australian* reported the complaint that “The matron on the ship seemed to engage [the servants] on the voyage for her friends”.⁹⁵ The influence of those involved in reception, however, worked both ways. The immigration agent found servant Maggie Kelly a good place in Perth, because they both came from a similar part of Scotland! She was able to work for the Colonial Secretary, and as a cook instead of being a mere general.⁹⁶

These many controls placed upon immigrant servants, both in transit and in depot, were largely accepted by the women. As protective control had always been part of servant immigration to Western Australia, it was taken for granted.⁹⁷ Because they knew that it would cease once they were hired and left the Home or depot, restrictions could be tolerated as a short-term expedient.⁹⁸ On a more selfish note, the protections served to better ensure that each party of servants had a good reputation, which was important when they tried to find

⁹³ ‘The Immigration Scandal’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 22 April 1891, p. 5; Seymour, *Century of Challenge*, pp. 14-5.

⁹⁴ McIlwaine to Under Secretary, 19 June 1901, Item 1406, 1901, Acc752, SRO.

⁹⁵ ‘Parliamentary Pars’, *West Australian*, 30 August 1901, p. 6.

⁹⁶ Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, pp. 36-7.

⁹⁷ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 141.

⁹⁸ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, pp. 114-5.

employment. Mistresses were less likely to want to engage women from a ship with a bad name.⁹⁹ Even without “buying into” the idea that travel was inherently dangerous for single women alone, the servants could still appreciate the efforts taken on their behalf by the Emigration Commissioners, governments, matrons, emigrators and reception workers.¹⁰⁰ In 1898, one woman wrote that “for [Miss Monk] and the captain they cannot be praised enough... everything was for the girls.”¹⁰¹

These women were made to feel indebted to those who had provided them with this assistance.¹⁰² By taking the free fare offered by the colony, the women were obliged to remain in the colony and work as servants.¹⁰³ In the 1890s, they even had to promise in their application that they would stay in Western Australia for at least twelve months after their arrival.¹⁰⁴ And as they were brought to the depot on disembarking, they would automatically be put up for employment on hiring day. Some chafed against the sense of obligation, such as Mary Corbett, who arrived in 1892 and argued that it was wrong that she and the other immigrants should be treated like receivers of charity for accepting assisted passages. They were not “worthless creatures” lucky to get a free fare and now beholden to the colony for paying for them, she wrote to the

⁹⁹ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 92.

¹⁰⁰ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 64; Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 91.

¹⁰¹ M.J.T. to Mrs Joyce, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1898, pp. 26-7

¹⁰² Gothard, 'Pity the Poor Immigrant', p. 114.

¹⁰³ Gothard, 'Pity the Poor Immigrant', p. 114.

¹⁰⁴ Annie Eliza Allen, Application Form for Free Passage, to Agent General, 13 March 1895, Item L177, Acc553, SRO.

Colonial Secretary. Instead, they were imported for free because they would be good workers, and as such had no need to justify the expenses incurred by the colony in importing them.¹⁰⁵

In addition to the authorities, in the 1890s the women also felt obliged to the emigrators for their assistance. The United British Women's Emigration Association had given them practical advice, helped to fill out forms, provided second-hand clothes for those who did not have the minimum clothing requirement and supplied a trained matron, usually Mary Monk.¹⁰⁶ The servants felt indebted to this organisation for its efforts, and expressed this by writing back to organising referee Ellen Joyce or to secretary Grace Lefroy.¹⁰⁷ These letters were requested by Joyce, and express guilt if they were written late.¹⁰⁸ They also show that the servants tried to assist the association in turn by describing the condition of the domestic service market, such as in stating that general servants were the type most in demand.¹⁰⁹ By helping the emigrators, not only did the servants appear grateful, but they also represented themselves

¹⁰⁵ Mary Corbett to the Colonial Secretary's Office, 13 June 1892, L111, Acc553, SRO.

¹⁰⁶ Heath-Stubbs, *Friendship's Highway*, p. 73; *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1891-92, pp. 8-9; *Ibid.*, 1889, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 1900, p. 19.

¹⁰⁷ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁸ Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 12; E.g., H.R. to Mrs Joyce, 28 February 1895, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1895, pp. 26-8.

¹⁰⁹ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 103; Letter in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1892-93, pp. 17-8; Rose E.M.D. to Miss Lefroy, in *Ibid.*, 1894, pp. 19-22; H.R. to Mrs Joyce, 28 February 1895, in *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 26-8; S.F. to Mrs Joyce, 31 April 1896, in *Ibid.*, 1896, pp. 31-4; L.F. to MABYS, 3 November 1894, in *Ibid.*, 1894, pp. 19-22; A.T. to Mrs Joyce, in *Ibid.*, 1897, pp. 31-2; C.A.L. to Mrs Joyce, in *Ibid.*

as useful participants in a reciprocal relationship, rather than simply as receivers of charity.¹¹⁰

However, other immigrants rebelled against the protection and controls placed upon them. There were petty attempts to get around the rules, such as sneaking cigarettes or saying a few words to a crew member.¹¹¹ More significant were cases when groups of women refused to obey rules and were insolent, such as the *Sophia* and *Clara* servants, the English *Emma Eugenia* party and the twins on the *Gulf of Siam*. As shown, these attempts to get around the restrictions tended to backfire, as the women were subjected to firm discipline or else struggled to find respectable work as their reputations were in tatters.¹¹² However, the women on these ships had worked to seize some power for themselves, instead of remaining passively under the control of matrons, surgeons, governments and emigrators, which shows that not all of the immigrant servants were content to accept protective control.

Both in transit and in depot, immigrant servants tended to be subjected to protective measures, which although they could appreciate still served to restrict and control them. The forms that this took – matrons, segregation, discipline, depots and controlled hiring – had been part of servant immigration

¹¹⁰ Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p. 112.

¹¹¹ Catherine Page, diary transcript, p. 2; 'The Golden West', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 29 May 1896, p. 12; Maggie Kelly, diary transcript, p. 22.

¹¹² Thomas Parr, Surgeon's Report of the *Sophia*, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 34-5; Susan Margaret Monk, Matron's Diary, *Gulf of Siam*, 1894, Item 8, Acc504, SRO; Peachey to Phillips, 1853, CSR Vol. 254, Fol. 217-17A; *Ibid.*, Fol. 214; *Ibid.*, 3 October 1853, Fol. 218; A. Durlacher to Colonial Secretary, 7 June 1858, CSR Vol. 408, Fol. 117-8; Durlacher to Colonial Secretary, 10 August 1859, CSR Vol. 432, Fol. 33.

to Western Australia since it began in 1849, and were not simply means for new emigrants such as Ellen Joyce to take further control of, and add to, female migration. Although there were changes between the 1850s and 1890s, such as the improvement in the calibre of matrons, the increased segregation of emigrants on 1890s ships, or the new attempts to extend control by the British emigrants and Girls' Friendly Society in the 1890s, there was overall continuity in protective control. This included the aspect of economic self-interest, which saw colonial emigrants controlling the hiring process to benefit themselves as employers. Upon being hired, the servants were then transferred to the further controls which were part of nineteenth-century domestic service.

Chapter Three: Subordination and Resistance in Service

Themes of controls and restrictions in domestic service, similar to the immigrants' journey, remained reasonably consistent throughout the nineteenth century. Once single female immigration had undercut the value of servants from the 1850s, these women had little bargaining power against their employers, despite the overall continuing trend of a servant shortage. Long hours, live-in work and variable wages saw servants rely on the generosity of mistresses for adequate time off, accommodation, pocket money, help with chores and kindness or respect. This constructed domestic service as paternalistic, with employers responsible for their menials' welfare. Servants were also established as the social inferiors of their mistresses through this paternalism and the use of deference markers designed to create distance between family and maid. Restrictions on servants were largely supported by the colonial laws and newspapers. However, there were some forms of resistance, especially in the 1890s, where servants attempted to leave their constraints behind. These forms included writing their complaints to the press, insolence in service, leaving a position, taking work where they wanted, and leaving service altogether to get married.

Unlike in England, where there were be large households with a hierarchy of servants, each with their own specialised duties, nineteenth century Australian homes usually only had one servant, the general. Western

Australia was no exception.¹ General servants, similar to maids-of-all-work, were responsible for all of the domestic tasks.² Grellier's case study of 1859 York shows that most servant-employing households only had one domestic, and none had more than two.³ Although there were some larger households, such as Kitty Page's place in 1901 on St George's Terrace where she was one of three servants, generals were common.⁴ About half of the applications for servants during the 1890s specified that a general servant was required, and two-thirds of the March 1892 *Echuca* women were engaged as generals.⁵

Servants found themselves working long hours with limited time off, so that they were almost constantly on duty. A general's workload was heavy by modern standards, consisting of tidying, cleaning, cooking, serving, laundry, and possibly childminding.⁶ Seventy-hour weeks were not uncommon, with the women rising at six to begin their daily duties.⁷ These included all manner of cleaning, including blackening grates, polishing brass, dusting furniture and sweeping carpets, before lunch.⁸ The meals had to be prepared and served, and

¹ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 30.

² Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 32.

³ Grellier, 'The Family', p. 506.

⁴ Beverly Kingston, 'Poor Mary Ann', *Refractory Girl*, No. 7 (November 1974), p. 7; Grellier, 'The Family', p. 506.

⁵ Correspondence – Assisted Immigrants, 1891-1901, Items L188-9, L236-65, L276-7, L289-92, L294-6, Acc553, SRO; Passenger Lists and Matron's Journal for *Echuca*, 1892, Acc503, SRO.

⁶ 'Domestic Servants', *West Australian*, 21 September 1899, p. 6; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 32.

⁷ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 162-4.

⁸ 'The Servant Girl Question', *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, pp. 38-40; Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 140-1.

washing up done afterwards.⁹ After lunch, a general could usually have some free time until she needed to begin dinner.¹⁰ However, she would still be on-call, ready to answer the door or be summoned by the bell.¹¹ Dinner was served at six or seven o'clock, and a servant might not retire until ten in the evening.¹² Mondays or Tuesdays were washday, when the boiling, blueing, rinsing, wringing and mangling of laundry took the entire day, with ironing left until the next day.¹³ One servant told the *West Australian* that she regarded her seventeen and a half hour day as typical, having to rise at five to begin her work.¹⁴

These long hours of being on-call were enabled by the live-in nature of domestic service, which also made servants reliant on their employers for board and lodging. Accommodation was not always generous and could vary by household. Servants often slept in the kitchen instead of having their own room, as not all homes were built with a maid's room.¹⁵ In 1894 Walter Scott of Mount Barker wrote in his request for an immigrant servant that she would have to sleep in the kitchen until he could build a separate room for her.¹⁶ Maids might also share a room with other servants, or with the children of the

⁹ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 140-1.

¹⁰ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 162-4.

¹¹ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 140-1.

¹² Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 162-5.

¹³ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 162-4; 'The Servant Girl Question', *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, pp. 32, 37-8.

¹⁴ 'The Servant Girl Question', *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6.

¹⁵ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 229-30; Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, p. 60.

¹⁶ Walter Scott to Under Secretary, 9 March 1894, Item L261, Acc553, SRO.

house.¹⁷ The food provided for servants was similarly variable. Some domestics were not given the same meals as the family, instead having inferior quality food, or else rations doled out in small portions.¹⁸ One letter writer to the *West Australian* complained that “In some houses the maids get what is too stale for the dining-room.”¹⁹

Wages were another factor which depended largely on an employer’s generosity. Although regular imports of servants had lowered the maximum wage in the 1850s, annual wages could still vary by up to eight pounds.²⁰ They also differed based on the type of servant, with cooks earning more than generals, and nursemaids less. By the 1890s, the average wage for new generals was £2 per month, but cooks could demand twice this sum.²¹ Wages also often rose after several months in one position.²² Being live-in work, a servant’s pay was less significant than that of workers who had to provide their own board and lodgings.²³ The expense alone of feeding a servant could equal the amount

¹⁷ ‘The Servant Girl Question’, *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 39.

¹⁸ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 54.

¹⁹ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 23 September 1899, p. 10.

²⁰ Erickson, ‘Friends and Neighbours’, p. 50; ‘Domestic Sayings and Doings’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 6 May 1853, p. 2; J.D. Wittenoom to Colonial Secretary, 30 June 1853, CSR Vol. 270, Fol. 235-7; Immigration Agent to Colonial Secretary, 18 November 1856, CSR Vol. 359, Fol. 101-2; Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Report 17, 1857, BPP Vol. 13, p. 36; *Information for People Leaving Great Britain 1854*, pp. 5, 10.

²¹ Employment Engagement Forms, 1 April 1892, Item L002b, Acc553, SRO; Correspondence – Assisted Immigrants, 1891-1901, L188-9, L236-65, L276-7, L289-92, L294-6, Acc553, SRO; ‘Situations Vacant’, *West Australian*, 21 April 1896, p. 5; ‘Situations Vacant’, *West Australian*, 5 August 1899, p. 8; ‘Situations Vacant’, *West Australian*, 6 November 1899, p. 8.

²² Letter in *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1892-93, pp. 17-8; Rose E.M.D. to Miss Lefroy, in *Ibid.*, 1894, pp. 19-22; H.R. to Mrs Joyce, 28 February 1895, in *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 26-8; S.F. to Mrs Joyce, 31 April 1896, in *Ibid.*, 1896, pp. 31-4.

²³ Davidoff, ‘Mastered for Life’, p. 22.

paid to them as wages.²⁴ As servants were able to save a lot of money by not having to pay for their food and accommodation, their wages took on a “pocket money” feel.²⁵ They could save it, or splurge it on excitements such as fashionable clothes.²⁶

Another aspect of service which depended on the employers was the assistance with chores offered by the family. Mistresses tended to contribute to their servants’ work, as in the earliest colonial times, due to the still-present servant shortage. These ladies usually took on the light or skilled work such as dusting, cooking and sewing, or perhaps looked after the children.²⁷ Help might also come from the daughters of the house, although this was not a given. Colonial-born women were seen as less capable of domestic work than their British counterparts, due to their free lifestyle and focus on “fashionable accomplishments” instead of domestic training.²⁸ But as servants became less common, the daughters could increasingly find themselves performing unpaid household work.²⁹ However, some families refused to lift a finger to help their servants. One general wrote to the newspaper that “I never had any assistance,

²⁴ See J.D. Wittenoom to T.N. Yule, 21 August 1850, CSR Vol. 209, Fol. 49-50 and Hart, *Western Australia in 1891*, p. 124, which show that in 1850 the cost of feeding a servant in depot amounted to £1 per month, which was the same as the average wage for a general, and by 1891 the food would cost about £1.6.3, which equalled two thirds of a general’s wage.

²⁵ Davidoff, ‘Mastered for Life’, p. 22.

²⁶ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, pp. 50-1, 97.

²⁷ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 18; Kingston, ‘Poor Mary Ann’, p. 7; Ruth Barton, ‘Domestic Help: Daughters, Servants and Domestic Work in Western Australia, 1900-1960’, *Studies in Western Australian History*, No. 14 (1993), p. 24.

²⁸ Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, p. 89; ‘The Servant Girl Difficulty Again’, *Western Mail*, 15 February 1890, p. 24; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, pp. 30-1.

²⁹ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 34; Barton, ‘Domestic Help’, pp. 18-20.

in a family of eight persons.”³⁰ Another complained that in her last place

“Boarders, son-in-law, daughters, won't so much as pour out their own tea.”³¹

Help from the family was not a certainty for overworked servants.

Colonial newspaper articles suggest that the welfare of servants largely depended on their mistresses' actions, and that these mistresses had a paternalistic duty to be kindly towards their servants. Articles gave advice on treating staff well, with one suggesting that domestics should be provided with leisure activities beyond the proper but dull sewing.³² The *Western Mail* pointed out that it was unfair for servants to have less time off for exercise than the daughters of the house.³³ Even when out of the house, servants were often still forbidden to see followers. An article recommended that mistresses could better supervise their domestics' love lives by abandoning the “no followers” rule and making followers welcome in the house, so that they could be sized up.³⁴ Lastly, at a time when servants complained that they were treated like machines, a copy of an English article reminded mistresses that “your servants are God's creatures as well as yourself”.³⁵

In addition to being made dependents on their employers, servants were also established as their social inferiors through the use of deference in

³⁰ ‘The Servant Girl Question’, *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6.

³¹ ‘The Servant Girl Question’, *Westralian Worker*, 25 October 1901, p. 2.

³² ‘A Word for the Servant Girls’, *Western Mail*, 31 July 1886, p. 21.

³³ ‘The Servant Girl Question’, *Western Mail*, 30 July 1897, p. 59.

³⁴ ‘A Word for the Servant’, *W.A. Bulletin*, 26 April 1890, p. 5.

³⁵ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 23 September 1899, p. 10; ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6; ‘The Domestic Servant Problem’, *Western Mail*, 13 July 1901, p. 74.

domestic service. Deference markers emphasised the social distances between mistress and maid when there was no opportunity to establish physical distance.³⁶ These markers included uniforms, address and even diet. A uniform of a cap and apron showed that a servant was not part of the family.³⁷ Mistresses encouraged their staff to dress down even when not on duty, to make this differentiation clear.³⁸ Servants also had to address their employers respectfully. Australian mistresses were more likely to be “Mrs” than “madam”, as in England, but this was still a deferential manner of address, while generals were called by their first names.³⁹ Servants were to answer bells, even in a house small enough for voices to carry, work in silence and not speak unless spoken to.⁴⁰ Even diet could be used to create social distance. McBride writes that mistresses could give their servants different, inferior quality food than the family, to act as a separation between family and servants.⁴¹ These markers made servants aware of their employers’ superior social position.⁴²

Servants found that their work, like the protective controls of immigration, was restrictive, limiting their time off. Their holidays were usually

³⁶ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 31; Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, p. 14.

³⁷ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 95.

³⁸ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 241.

³⁹ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 244; ‘City Police Court’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 4 November 1891, p. 5; ‘Charge against a Domestic Servant’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 30 June 1893, p. 5; ‘Master and Servant’, *Daily News*, 28 May 1897, p. 3; ‘Interesting Case’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 11 June 1897, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, p. 14; Davidoff, ‘Mastered for Life’, p. 27.

⁴¹ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 54.

⁴² Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 236-7, 242-5; Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, p. 14.

a half-day on Sundays and one whole day per month.⁴³ Two servants wrote back to the United British Women's Emigration Association that they were able to attend church on Sunday afternoons, although clearly the mornings were spent working.⁴⁴ On weekdays, although there were opportunities for breaks during the day and free time in the afternoons and evenings, servants were still on-call for as long as they remained in the house.⁴⁵ The women might be permitted to go out in the evenings after serving dinner, but this would only be for a couple of hours as they had to return by around ten o'clock.⁴⁶ This time off would also not be regular, making it difficult to meet with friends.⁴⁷ Servants could not usually have their friends come round to visit, making generals further isolated in households where they were the only servant.⁴⁸

The control of employers over their servants was supported by the colonial masters and servants acts, and the courts which administered them. The 1842 Breach of Contract Act allowed workers who absented themselves from service to be imprisoned for up to three months, whereas masters who defaulted on pay were only to be fined.⁴⁹ Amendments to the act in the 1880s allowed for workers to be fined instead, but the imprisonment of women under

⁴³ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 163; Davidoff, 'Mastered for Life', p. 30; McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ Letter from a London general, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1892-93, pp. 17-8; Letter from A.M. to Miss Lefroy, in *Ibid.*, 1894-94, p. 17

⁴⁵ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, pp. 162-4.

⁴⁶ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 162.

⁴⁷ Davidoff, 'Mastered for Life', p. 20.

⁴⁸ Davidoff, 'Mastered for Life', p. 21; McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 56.

⁴⁹ Remedy for Breach of Contract, 6 Victoria No. 5, 25 August 1842, SLP.

the act was only prohibited in 1892.⁵⁰ One servant let down by the courts which administered the act was Fanny Rose. Brought to court in 1893 for absenting herself from service one afternoon, she had been fired on the spot and then demanded several weeks' payment in lieu of notice. Although she did not have to pay charges, the court did not order the payment she requested, effectively supporting her employer's decision to sack her on the spot for no good reason.⁵¹

Other servants were only saved from the law by the generosity of colonists, not all of whom supported the strict masters and servants acts. When the newly arrived servant Carrie Hall was taken to court in 1891 by her employer for leaving without notice, the law required that she be imprisoned when she was unable to pay a hefty £4 fine.⁵² She was only saved from jail by a whip-around in the local hotels and coffee houses to pay her fine.⁵³ Some colonists were also willing to subscribe towards Aggie Kutledge's fine in Albany six years later. Charged with leaving her employer's service, it was found that she had been grossly overworked, but had still given and worked out her notice. Luckier than Carrie Hall, Kutledge was not fined as her employer's case was dismissed, to applause from the gallery. This shows that

⁵⁰ The Masters and Servants Amendments Act, 1882, 46 Victoria No. 11, 21 September 1882, SLP; The Masters and Servants Amendments Act, 1886, 50 Victoria No. 20, 20 August 1886, SLP; The Masters and Servants Act, 1892, 55 Victoria No. 28, 18 March 1892, SLP, all archived at the State Law Publisher, [https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_11022_homepage.html], accessed on 24 October 2016.

⁵¹ 'Charge Against a Domestic Servant', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 30 June 1893, p. 5.

⁵² 'Perth Police Court', *Daily News*, 21 April 1891, p. 3; J.C.H. James to Colonial Secretary, Remarks in Explanation of the Heavy Sentence Passed on Carrie Hall, 8 July 1891, Item L193, Acc553, SRO.

⁵³ Gothard, 'Protecting Labour', p. 42.

although the law often favoured employers, some Western Australians were on the side of the servants.⁵⁴

The control of employers over their servants was also supported by some colonial newspapers, usually the more conservative ones such as the *West Australian* and the *Daily Mail*. However, the majority encouraged an inequality in address, referring to servants by their Christian names, and sometimes informal names as above: “Carrie” for Caroline, “Aggie” for Agnes and “Fanny” for Frances.⁵⁵ Employers, by contrast, were referred to more respectfully as “Mr” or “Mrs”.⁵⁶ Newspapers also repeated the employer class’s anxieties over “servant-galism”, an apparent growth in the willingness of servants to stand up for their rights.⁵⁷ Being “scarcely worth their salt”, they apparently insisted upon high wages and favourable terms, but then did not deliver, instead “gadding about”.⁵⁸ “Servant-galism” had probably spread from the eastern colonies, peaking in Western Australia between the 1880s and 1900s.⁵⁹ Seen as a threat to keeping servants in their place, it was mocked by the conservative press, such as the *Daily News’s* laughter at a “freak of

⁵⁴ ‘Interesting Case’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 11 June 1897, p. 5.

⁵⁵ ‘Perth Police Court’, *Daily News*, 21 April 1891, p. 3; ‘Interesting Case’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 11 June 1897, p. 5; ‘Charge Against a Domestic Servant’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 30 June 1893, p. 5.

⁵⁶ ‘City Police Court’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 4 November 1891, p. 5; ‘Master and Servant’, *Daily News*, 28 May 1897, p. 3; ‘Alleged Breach of Agreement’, *Albany Advertiser*, 29 March 1898, p. 3.

⁵⁷ Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, p. 10; ‘Thursday, April 30, 1891’, *W.A. Record*, 30 April 1891, p. 7; ‘The Perth Letter’, *Victorian Express*, 2 May 1891, p. 5; ‘Servant Galism’, *West Australian Sunday Times*, 27 May 1900, p. 7.

⁵⁸ ‘What Are We To Do For Servants?’, *Western Mail*, 20 February 1886, p. 19; ‘Servant-Galism’, *Daily News*, 8 November 1884, p. 3.

⁵⁹ ‘The Perth Letter’, *Victorian Express*, 2 May 1891, p. 5; Digitised Newspapers, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 27.4.17 from [<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>].

legislative absurdity” in a New Zealand parliament bill designed to give servants a compulsory half-day holiday each week.⁶⁰

And while newspapers made jokes about servants as inept newly-arrived Irish girls both unused and unsuited to domestic service, mistresses were usually cast in the more flattering role of long-suffering ladies who had to try and correct their maids’ numerous mistakes.⁶¹ Only cartoon mistresses unable to control their servants were liable to be ridiculed. These were women hen-pecked by their bullying cooks, ignorant of running a house or controlling servants, or else spending all their time hopelessly shouting at a maid who would just go her own way and ignore them.⁶² Failings of servants were sometimes blamed on the mistress as her failure to command respect and keep her staff in their place.⁶³ A letter published in the *West Australian* complained that “Many of the employers have neither system nor order, therefore are not capable of directing a staff of servants.”⁶⁴ Those mistresses unable to order and control servants were not given the deference typically shown to mistresses in the press.

⁶⁰ ‘Emigrant Girls’, *Western Mail*, 15 June 1895, p. 22; ‘Domestic Service’, *Western Mail*, 21 May 1892, p. 27; ‘Alleged Breach of Agreement’, *Albany Advertiser*, 29 March 1898, p. 3; ‘Monday, August 24, 1896’, *Daily News*, 24 August 1896, p. 2.

⁶¹ ‘Bridget’s Substitute’, *Northam Advertiser*, 25 May 1901, p. 1; ‘The Secret of Her Success’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 8 December 1893, p. 4; ‘The Power of Education’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 26 November 1901, p. 3.

⁶² ‘Illustrated Humour’, *Daily News*, 10 March 1894, p. 4; ‘A Just Complaint’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 15 June 1899, p. 3; ‘Her Own Fault’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 14 May 1901, p. 3; ‘Contrition’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 19 July 1900, p. 3; ‘Points’, *Daily News*, 20 December 1897, p. 2; No Title, *Victorian Express*, 11 September 1891, p. 2.

⁶³ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, pp. 20-1.

⁶⁴ ‘The Servant Question’, *West Australian*, 7 May 1900, p. 3.

Despite the paternalistic controls of service, there was some defiance by servants to the power of mistresses, which usually took the form of passive resistance. One such action was writing their grievances to the press. This only dated from the 1890s, as before this time letters to the editor from domestic servants were not published.⁶⁵ The eighteen letters written before 1902 all contain complaints, from the lack of time off, to cramped and dingy bedrooms, to the lowly social position servants occupied.⁶⁶ The letters also show that servants who felt overworked and put-upon did not believe that they owed any loyalty to their employers to keep silent. One servant protested to the *West Australian* that stingy mistresses expected first-class meals from inferior ingredients, and suggested that “a girl would stay longer if she were treated like a human being instead of a machine”.⁶⁷ This was echoed by another servant stating that “I would do anything for a mistress who treated me as if I were made of flesh and blood like herself, but [not] if she treated me like a machine, made to work as long as it was wound up for”.⁶⁸

Servants could act impertinent and disobey rules. Davidoff writes of the “high art” of “sulking, mishearing, or semi-deliberate spoiling of materials, creating disorder, wasting time, deliberate ‘impudence’ or ‘answering back’” by

⁶⁵ ; Digitised Newspapers, Trove, National Library of Australia, accessed 28.4.17 from [<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>].

⁶⁶ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 27 January 1898, p. 3; ‘Social Position of Servants’, *West Australian*, 21 September 1898, p. 6; ‘The Social Position of Servants’, *West Australian*, 19 September 1898, p. 6; ‘Domestic Servants’, *West Australian*, 7 September 1899, p. 7; ‘Domestic Servants’, *West Australian*, 18 September 1899, p. 3.

‘Holidays for Domestic Servants’, *West Australian*, 6 February 1901, p. 6.

⁶⁷ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 23 September 1899, p. 10.

⁶⁸ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6.

English servants.⁶⁹ When a woman was sacked in 1893, she refused to leave until she was paid her wages, and according to the *Inquirer* was “excessively impertinent, refusing to leave the room ... refusing to do any work, and not answering the bell”.⁷⁰ One servant refused to tell her employers where she had gone on her day off, politely stating that “she ought to be allowed to go about as the other servants did, unasked”.⁷¹ Another “became insolent, and repeatedly transgressed the rules of the house” after a housekeeper was employed to direct her. She “refused to clean windows, or to take any orders from her [the housekeeper]”.⁷² Maids could go against their employers’ orders in their manner of dress, saving their wages to buy extravagant clothes in order to keep up with their friends instead of dressing down as instructed.⁷³ They might also be found dressing up in their mistresses’ gowns when alone in the house.⁷⁴

Another form of resistance was ‘moving on’, which was very popular. Leaving a position freed a servant from the family and their demands, and asserted her independence from them.⁷⁵ Moving on was also a means of expressing dissatisfaction with a place, and a chance to find higher wages or better conditions elsewhere.⁷⁶ A letter to the *West Australian* stated that “nowhere do the girls receive less consideration than here, and I am not

⁶⁹ Davidoff, ‘Mastered for Life’, p. 28.

⁷⁰ ‘Charge Against a Domestic Servant’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 30 June 1893, p. 5.

⁷¹ ‘Alleged Breach of Contract’, *West Australian*, 11 April 1900, p. 9.

⁷² ‘Master v Servant’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 20 May 1898, p. 10.

⁷³ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 95; Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 241.

⁷⁴ ‘Contribution’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 19 July 1900, p. 3; ‘Woman’s World’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 November 1899, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Hamilton, ‘No Irish Need Apply’, pp. 14-5; Davidoff, ‘Mastered for Life’, p. 27.

⁷⁶ McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*, p. 109; Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 175-6.

surprised that they leave service at the first opportunity.”⁷⁷ Unfortunately, as servants usually had to accept the first offer instead of hold out for the best position once they had left a place, they were not always able to find higher wages.⁷⁸ The turnover for leaving service was rapid, with the sources agreeing that servants moved placed often.⁷⁹ One letter written back to the United British Women’s Emigration Association stated that “There were a great many changes at first”, with a cook having already moved and a housemaid planning on moving.⁸⁰ Another wrote that she had left her first place after only several months to get more money elsewhere, while a third considered sticking out a place for a whole twelve months to be an achievement.⁸¹

Another form of resistance for servants was taking work where they wanted, instead of where the colonial employers had greatest need of them. This latter was usually the country, which was seen as isolated and boring by servants. Kitty Page preferred to take a position in Perth, and a servant who did work in the country wrote back to Britain than “I am rather dull, as it is so very quiet; if you want to live a quiet life, come out here and keep me company.”⁸²

⁷⁷ ‘Domestic Servants’, *West Australian*, 23 September 1899, p. 10.

⁷⁸ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 69.

⁷⁹ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 121; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, pp. 16-8; Gothard, *Blue China*, pp. 190-1.

⁸⁰ E. McG. to Miss Monk, 25 November 1898, in *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1898, pp. 26-7.

⁸¹ Letter from a servant, in *Annual Report of the United British Women’s Emigration Association*, 1894, pp. 19-22; H.R. to Mrs Joyce, 28 February 1895, in *Ibid.*, 1895, pp. 26-8.

⁸² Catherine E. Page to her mother, 15 March 1901, MN 2179, ACC 5960A/2, Battye Library, archived at the State Library of Western Australia, [http://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa_b1943665_1], accessed on 24 August 2016; Letter from an

The towns, Perth and Fremantle, offered more positions for servants, and paid better than the country.⁸³ As a result, servants preferred these places, and country employers struggled to attract them.⁸⁴ In 1854, fifty seven percent of women compared to just thirty percent of men were living in the towns.⁸⁵ When the *Port Melbourne* docked at Albany instead of Fremantle in 1896, only three of the women took one of the many offers of employment from the ladies of Albany, the rest preferring to travel up to Perth.⁸⁶ For the 1850s, only the use of country hiring depots distributed large numbers of servants to rural employers, but these were closed due to cost-cutting measures in 1857.⁸⁷

Although servants tended to prefer the towns to the country, the exception was the goldfields in the 1890s. Leaving settlers in town to work and marry on the fields was a form of resistance new to this decade. Although immigrant servants were specifically warned against going to the goldfields by the emigrators, they were drawn there regardless.⁸⁸ There was strong demand for servants on the fields, and it was acknowledged that they could earn more there than in town.⁸⁹ Three situations vacant columns in the *West Australian* between 1896 and 1899 show that the average weekly wage for generals was

Echuca servant, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association, 1891-92*, pp. 19-20.

⁸³ Fitzpatrick, 'The Unimportance of Gender', pp. 160-1; Gothard, 'Wives or Workers', p. 156.

⁸⁴ 'King George's Sound', *Inquirer*, 15 June 1853, p. 2.

⁸⁵ Anderson, 'Women and the Convict Years', p. 85.

⁸⁶ 'General News', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 20 November 1896, p. 13.

⁸⁷ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 45, 54.

⁸⁸ 'The Cornwall's Emigrants', *Daily News*, 29 September 1897, p. 4; Joyce, *Letter to Girls*, p. 7.

⁸⁹ 'Labour in Western Australia', *The North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 17 March 1896, British Library Newspapers, Part II; 'The Cornwall's Emigrants', *Daily News*, 29 September 1897, p. 4.

19/1 in town but 24/2 in the country, while cooks could expect wages almost seven shillings higher on the fields than in town.⁹⁰ The popularity of the goldfields meant that the towns suffered a depletion of servants, especially as the fields offered a range of prospective husbands, with men outnumbering women six to one in some places.⁹¹ The new arrivals knew this, with one quoted as saying "Oh, the goldfields; if I can only get there soon ... They are all men up there".⁹² One servant who made a goldfields match was Maggie Kelly, who had taken work at a hotel in Boulder, where she married Irish miner James Kane.⁹³

A more permanent means of moving on was indeed to leave service and get married. This was the natural conclusion to being a servant, as domestic service was seen as a temporary employment, transitioning between leaving home and marriage.⁹⁴ Nineteenth century women assumed that they would marry; service was a poor second with a lower social status than wedlock.⁹⁵ Indeed, most women in Western Australia did marry: about two-thirds in 1851 and four-fifths in 1854.⁹⁶ However, women could not expect advantageous marriages, despite their shortage in comparison to men. Most had to marry within their own class or below, with Anderson estimating that only about

⁹⁰ 'Situations Vacant', *West Australian*, 21 April 1896, p. 5; 'Situations Vacant', *West Australian*, 5 August 1899, p. 8; 'Situations Vacant', *West Australian*, 6 November 1899, p. 8.

⁹¹ 'Domestic Servant Problem', *West Australian*, 1 March 1901, p. 2; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 166.

⁹² 'The Immigrant Girls', *Western Mail*, 15 October 1897, p. 27.

⁹³ Dale, 'Tapestry', pp. 40, 44.

⁹⁴ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 260.

⁹⁵ Higman, *Domestic Service in Australia*, p. 260; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 6; Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, pp. 217-22.

⁹⁶ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, p. 25; Grellier, 'The Family', p. 483.

fifteen percent of Western Australian women were able to marry upwards in the early 1850s.⁹⁷

In the 1850s, immigrant servants were expected to marry in the colony, and lived up to these expectations, marrying reasonably quickly, although not straight away. Newspaper articles had written of the women as future wives and mothers, who would encourage men to settle down in the colony.⁹⁸ Half of the twenty-one servants from the 1849 *Mary* were married by 1851 and almost all by the following year, showing that they had time to work in service before leaving to be wed.⁹⁹ The party of women from the *Palestine* in 1853 has been thoroughly researched by the Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project team, who have found marriages for thirty-four of the roughly forty-four women. Only three married in the year they arrived, but one third of the party married the following year, and almost all of the remaining women were wed within the next four years.¹⁰⁰ Despite the term “bride ships” for these parties of female immigrants, the *Palestine* women show that most immigrants did not

⁹⁷ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, p. 29; Anderson, ‘Women and the Convict Years’, p. 88.

⁹⁸ ‘Refractory Seamen’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 16 January 1852, p. 3; ‘The Inquirer’, *Inquirer*, 13 July 1853, p. 2; ‘Domestic Sayings and Doings’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 4 November 1853, p. 2.

⁹⁹ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁰ Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine*, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project, 2017.

rush into marriage as soon as they arrived, but worked in service before marrying reasonably soon.¹⁰¹

Many, perhaps around half, of the 1850s immigrant servants married convicts.¹⁰² At least twenty of the fifty women sent to the Toodyay hiring depot in its first year married into the bond class, as did two-fifths of the 1852 *Mary* women.¹⁰³ At least ten *Palestine* woman also married transportees.¹⁰⁴ The life of a convict's wife was not always happy, as Mrs Millett pointed out in the 1860s, with a potential religious divide between a Church of England husband and Catholic wife, drunkenness in the husband, and a loss of social status for the wife in marrying a convict.¹⁰⁵ This religious divide had seen five *Palestine* women having two wedding ceremonies, one of each denomination.¹⁰⁶ Crime was commonplace among ex-convicts, who were often ostracised by society, with their wives sharing the stigma of being bond class.¹⁰⁷ Some women also found themselves in bigamous marriages, to convicts with wives still living in England.¹⁰⁸ One of the reasons for immigrating servants in the 1850s was for them to act as wives and moral guides for the transportees, and by the end of

¹⁰¹ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 12; Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine*, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project, 2017.

¹⁰² Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 85.

¹⁰³ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 138, 151.

¹⁰⁴ Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine*, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project, 2017.

¹⁰⁵ Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, pp. 335-8.

¹⁰⁶ Erickson (ed.), *The Bicentennial Dictionary*; Paula Kennedy and other researchers, *Names of Orphan Girls, Palestine*, Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project, 2017.

¹⁰⁷ Erickson, *Bride Ships*, p. 82; Erickson, 'Friends and Neighbours', p. 55.

¹⁰⁸ Stannage, *The People of Perth*, pp. 102-3; Millett, *An Australian Parsonage*, p. 334; Erickson, *Bride Ships*, pp. 43-.

transportation some colonists felt guilt at having introduced these women, often ignorant of their purpose, to such lives.¹⁰⁹

The 1890s, like earlier times, also saw immigrant servants keen to leave service to marry. The women expected to find husbands in the colony; unsurprising given the still-high number of single men in Western Australia.¹¹⁰ One new arrival in 1897 was recorded as saying, “Oh, look at that long fellow. He must be an Australian. I’m sure to marry someone like him. They’re all tall out here”.¹¹¹ Some women planned on improving themselves through marriage. A *Port Phillip* woman stated that the typical immigrant woman was “getting to a land where she decidedly hopes to better her position, and — get a husband”, adding that “I intend to get married as soon as I can”.¹¹² Another wrote that the women had “mostly left home to better ourselves by marriage.”¹¹³

Again, servants married after first working in service, although still reasonably soon.¹¹⁴ Of the fourteen probable marriages of women from the March 1892 *Echuca*, most occurred between 1892 and 1896, with the average date being mid-1896: about four years after arrival. Of those from the *Port Pirie*, arriving in July 1894, most are clustered around 1896 and 1897, but range from 1894 to 1907. Only one took place in the year of arrival, with the average time

¹⁰⁹ Anderson, ‘Women and the Convict Years’, pp. 96-7, 104-5; ‘To The Editor of the Independent Journal’, *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 12 June 1857, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ Gothard, *Blue China*, p. 205; Vanden Driesen, *Essays on Immigration Policy*, p. 166.

¹¹¹ ‘The Immigrant Girls’, *Western Mail*, 15 October 1897, p. 27.

¹¹² ‘The Golden West’, *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 29 May 1896, p. 12.

¹¹³ ‘To the Editor’, *West Australian*, 13 June 1895, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter*, p. 30.

elapsed before marriage being three years.¹¹⁵ Women from the March 1896 *Port Phillip* also averaged about three years between arrival and marriage. Just under two-thirds of the probable marriages for all of these women actually took place in the first three years.¹¹⁶ These data suggest that the servants, as in the 1850s, married soon although not at once. However no matter how late they left it, servants leaving to marry were a constant complaint for employers throughout the century. Mistresses had to seek a new maid and train her, knowing that as more women left service, the shortage of domestics would only worsen.¹¹⁷

Therefore, in both the 1850s and 1890s servants were usually at a disadvantage in domestic service, being placed as the dependent inferior in a relationship which was constructed as paternalistic yet actually also controlling, and which was supported by the colonial laws and newspapers. The women could resist, but usually only passively, such as by acting up or moving on. These circumstances were continuous throughout the century, although letter-writing to the press and moving to the goldfields for higher wages were new forms of resistance in the 1890s. The women usually spent several years in service before moving on to married life.

¹¹⁵ Western Australian Online Indexes, Births, Deaths and Marriages, archived at Department of the Attorney General, [http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/default.aspx], accessed on 17 January 2017; Passenger List, *Port Phillip* 17/3/1896, Acc553, SRO.

¹¹⁶ Western Australian Online Indexes, Births, Deaths and Marriages, archived at Department of the Attorney General, [http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/default.aspx], accessed on 17 January 2017; Passenger List, *Port Pirie* 24/5/1894, Acc553, SRO.

¹¹⁷ Alford, *Production or Reproduction*, p. 175; 'York', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 17 August 1855, p. 3; 'Cargoes of Servant Girls', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 15 September 1898, p. 35; 'Chamber Of Commerce Conference', *West Australian*, 20 July 1901, p. 10.

Conclusion

This thesis shows that there were some differences in servant immigration to Western Australia between the 1850s and the 1890s. The type of women who came to the colony changed, from largely Irish women selected from workhouses between 1849 and 1863, to mostly English and Scottish women with experience as servants from 1889 to 1901. This change in female immigrants was caused by another difference between the decades, that of the colony's position and ability to attract migrants, which greatly improved over time. The type of women was not affected by the change in governments directing immigration and their motives behind it. Although the authorities may have preferred certain types of servants, it was only in the 1890s that they could attract them.

There were also continuities in the women's experiences from the 1850s to 1890s, despite the change in these women and the authorities in charge. Throughout the nineteenth century, immigrant servants to Western Australia found restrictions placed upon them by imperial and colonial authorities, and by the agencies such as the Emigration Commission and the United British Women's Emigration Association which assisted them. Controls were placed on single female immigrants on the ship, in the depot and in service. Established as protective measures for the journey, these protective controls of a matron, segregation, discipline, confinement to a depot, reception by colonial ladies and

controlled hiring remained strong throughout the century. Instead of only improving in the 1890s under the auspices of the United British Women's Emigration Association, protective controls were established before the association became involved in Western Australian immigration, although the association did work to improve the calibre of matrons. Work by emigrators had begun in the 1850s with colonial ladies receiving the immigrants and supervising their hiring, which led to a conflict of interest for those ladies who were both protectors and employers.

Restrictions on the women continued through to domestic service, where servants were made dependent on their employers for time off, accommodation, adequate pay, assistance and kindness, due to the power which individual mistresses had over these factors. Servants were treated as subordinate to their employers, with this social distance marked by means of deference and supported by the colonial laws and press. There were some differences in servants' experiences between the 1850s and 1890s, relating mainly to means of resistance. In the 1890s, servants could write to the press to complain or go to the goldfields for better-paid work in houses or hotels. These opportunities were not available before, although servants always had the options of moving on or leaving service to marry.

Many of the servants married, usually reasonably soon after entering the colony. This is treated here as the end of the journey which had begun when

these women set out from Britain as emigrant servants, although marriage did not necessarily mean an end to limitations being placed on colonial women's lives. However, at the point of leaving service for marriage, the immigrant servants were no longer immigrating or servants, having passed from the control of colonial authorities and employers into private life.

Appendix

Table I. Ships with parties of assisted immigrant servants, 1849-63.

Ship	Arrival	Number of Female Servants	Total Number of Single Women
<i>Mary</i>	25 October 1849	21	
<i>Sophia</i>	27 July 1850		91
<i>Mary</i>	26 March 1852		49
<i>Raleigh</i>	31 May 1852		42
<i>Travencore</i>	13 January 1853	115	132
<i>Palestine</i>	28 April 1853	56	96
<i>Sabrina</i>	13 June 1853	c.100	159
<i>Clara</i>	19 September 1853	130	173
<i>Victory</i>	24 March 1854		103
<i>Esmerelda</i>	Oct 1854		85
<i>Berkshire</i>	14 March 1855		102
<i>Shanghai</i>	7 November 1856	30	48
<i>City of Bristol</i>	8 August 1857		115
<i>Emma Eugenia</i>	25 May 1858	118	139
<i>Hamilla Mitchell</i>	6 April 1859	114	134
<i>West Australian</i>	20 October 1859		119
<i>Escort</i>	26 December 1860		180
<i>Mary Harrison</i>	24 June 1862		182
<i>Burlington</i>	8 April 1863		92
<i>Fena</i>	17 July 1863		28
<i>Tartar</i>	12 December 1863		32

Source: Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, Annual Reports 9-33 , 1851-73, BPP Vol. 11-8; Colonial Secretary's Office Correspondence, Acc36 1848-59, Acc49 1848-59; Erickson, *Bride Ships*; Mountbellew Workhouse Restoration Project researchers, especially Paula Kennedy; 'Extract of a Report of the Emigration Commissioners to Herman Merinvale, Esq., dated Emigration Office, 17th September, 1855', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 June 1856, p. 2; 'The Independent Journal', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 21 January 1853, p. 2.

Table II. Ships with parties of assisted immigrant servants, 1889-1901.

Ship	Arrival	Port of Arrival	Number of Female Servants
<i>Nairnshire</i>	5 October 1889	Fremantle	
<i>Wilcannia</i>	11 December 1889	Fremantle	
<i>Gulf of Martaban</i>	11 April 1891	Fremantle	
<i>Echuca</i>	29 March 1892	Fremantle	45
<i>Echuca</i>	9 October 1892	Fremantle	
<i>Gulf of Taranto</i>	12 March 1893	Fremantle	49 or 47
<i>Port Phillip</i>	25 September 1893	Fremantle	
<i>Port Victor</i>	15 March 1894	Fremantle	50
<i>Port Pirie</i>	10 July 1894	Fremantle	48
<i>Gulf of Siam</i>	7 October 1894	Fremantle	49
<i>Nairnshire</i>	12 July 1895	Fremantle	
<i>Warrigal</i>	24 November 1895	Albany	49
<i>Port Phillip</i>	22 May 1896	Fremantle	48
<i>Port Melbourne</i>	15 November 1896	Albany	49
<i>Devon</i>	4 May 1897	Albany	
<i>Cornwall</i>	28 September 1897	Fremantle then Albany	40 or 42
<i>Woolloomooloo</i>	19 January 1898	Fremantle	50
<i>Cornwall</i>	17 June 1898	Fremantle	46
<i>Banffshire</i>	11 July 1900	Fremantle	47
<i>Surrey</i>	25 January 1901	Fremantle	50
<i>Perthshire</i>	3 July 1901	Fremantle	45

Source: Fairweather and Hayes, 'Bride Ships', p. 7; William Dale to Colonial Secretary, 15 March 1894, Item L270, Acc553, SRO; L.F. to MABYS, 3 November 1894, in *Annual Report of the United British Women's Emigration Association*, 1894, pp. 19-22; 'General News', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 23 March 1892, p. 2; 'General News', *Daily News*, 28 February 1893, p. 2; 'News of the Week', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 10 March 1893, p. 24; 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 6 March 1894, p. 4; 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 11 July 1894, p. 4; 'Local and General', *W.A. Record*, 2 November 1895, p. 7; 'Voyage of the Port Phillip', *Western Mail*, 29 May 1896, p. 18; 'General News', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 20 November 1896, p. 13; 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 29 September 1897, p.4; 'Immigrant Girls Arrival at Fremantle', *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 1 October 1897, p. 9; 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 20 January

1898, p. 4; 'Arrival of Immigrant Girls', *Bunbury Herald*, 18 June 1898, p. 3; 'Arrival of Immigrants in the S.S. Banffshire', *Daily News*, 11 July 1900, p. 3; 'Seeking New Homes', *West Australian*, 26 January 1901, p. 6; 'Local', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 9 July 1901, p. 16.

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Abbreviations

BPP British Parliamentary Papers
CSO Colonial Secretary's Office Outward Correspondence
CSR Colonial Secretary's Office Inward Correspondence
PRO Public Record Office, UK
SLP State Law Publisher
SRO State Records Office, Western Australia

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