

‘A Model Among Towns?’: A Study of Progressivism in Launceston During the Interwar Period

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Abstract

Progressivism is a term describing an array of secular, transnational reform coalitions which emphasized government interventionism and reliance on expertise, when attempting to solve the largely urban problems presented by industrialisation. Progressivism emerged during the economic unrest of the last decade of the nineteenth century, reaching its peak by the end of the First World War and subsequently enjoying resurgence as a result of the sustained effects of the Great Depression during the mid-1930s. Following the armistice, popular attention across Australia began to turn away from a necessary focus on the demands of the war towards a determined consideration of the problems presented by the need for reconstruction and the continuing improvement of society.

By 1919, thanks to highly innovative successive local governments, Launceston specifically had become remarkably well appointed for an Australian, regional city. However, like all urban population centres of the period, it still experienced the typical problems of the industrialised world: a sizable and permanent under-class that lived with entrenched poverty, long-term unemployment, insufficient educational opportunities and high rates of both preventable diseases and infant mortality. In Launceston during this period, Progressives emerged who were convinced that improving the urban environment was the key to resolving these issues. Many of their 'scientific' approaches to the new challenges of the industrial age had only just begun to filter into the collective consciousness of Launceston's middle classes. Although diverse in nature, Launceston Progressives during the interwar period shared a common belief that by reshaping the lower orders in their own image, they alone could rescue them from ignorance, poverty and disease. By utilising a variety of approaches and under their guidance, resident Progressives hoped that Launceston would then truly become what C. E. W. Bean insisted was a noble and achievable goal: 'a model among towns'. Municipalisation characterised the first stage of Progressivism in the city. During the interwar period, the Progressive charge was led by the professional elite of the city. Later, a coalition of businessmen sharing a decided ethic of civic engagement and altruism, helped to sustain and develop the local movement. The Great Depression at least created a

suitable environment for an upsurge in Progressive resolve and activity, just as it did on the international stage.

The thesis positions the Launceston experience of Progressivism within the context of the international historiography on the issue. Through the utilisation of local government records and contemporary newspapers, the course of Progressivism in Launceston is then found to mirror the evolution and fate of the wider, transnational movement. The Launceston experience of Progressivism then is confirmation of the pervasive global scope of several core convictions shared by Progressives. This thesis utilises a thematic approach, wherein each of the four key aspects of Progressivism as they manifested themselves in Launceston during the interwar period are separately analysed. Launceston Progressives began to turn to the new ‘scientific’ methodologies of both the traditional and the emerging professions for solutions. Town planning and sustained infrastructure developments were fundamental elements of the Progressive approach. The new bureaucratic orientation would ensure that the city could operate more efficiently. Increasing levels of social justice within the city also became an achievable goal. Specifically, Progressives concentrated on improving general access to professional services and education programs aimed at improving health outcomes. These coalitions were to be driven by a new, heightened sense of civic altruism. As a consequence, new Progressive coalitions began to form and actively seek the reorganisation of society at all levels. Launceston was, truly, a genuine example of Progressivism on the periphery.

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Abbreviations

AMIEU	Australian Meat Industry's Employee Union
AOT	Archives Office of Tasmania
BHA	Baby Health Association
CHO	Chief Health Officer
CMO	City Medical Officer
CTA	Commercial Travellers' Association
CWA	Child Welfare Association
ehp	Electric Horse Power
HCC	Hobart City Council
IIPA	Invermay and Inveresk Progress Association
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
LCC	Launceston City Council
LFTL	Launceston Fifty Thousand League
LGH	Launceston General Hospital
LHSP	Launceston Historical Society Papers and Proceedings
LMB	Launceston Marine Board

LTLC	Launceston Trades and Labour Council
LTPA	Launceston Town Planning Association
LTS	Launceston Temperance Society
MHA	Member of the House of Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
NTTPA	Northern Tasmanian Town Planning Association
QVM	Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery
SLIA	South Launceston Improvement Association
SPCA	Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
STTPA	Southern Tasmanian Town Planning Association
tb	Tuberculosis
TCS	Tasmanian Cremation Society
THRAPP	Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings
THS	Tasmanian Historical Studies
TSIA	Tasmanian Suburbs Improvement Association
UCTA	United Commercial Travellers' Association
UTAS	University of Tasmania

UNSW University of New South Wales

WEA Workers Education Association

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: Literature Review

1.1.1: Rationale for Research – Positioning the Thesis

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the city of Launceston, Tasmania, had developed an international reputation as being unusually modern for a small, regional city.¹ The city had also enjoyed a long history of reformism, providing the scene for important contributions to both the temperance and anti-transportation movements.² By 1900, Launceston provided potentially fertile ground for Progressivism, as it possessed a rich history of reformism, a decided culture of civic pride and engagement, and had also displayed a predilection for large-scale municipal interventionism. While some work has been done charting and analysing the history of the development of the city's local government and its municipalisation phase, little attention has been given to its subsequent history of

¹ Henry Reynolds has commented that municipal services such as water and electricity were evident early by world standards and that the city was also culturally vibrant in relation to its diversity and strong institutions. See: Henry Reynolds, 'Foreword', in P. A. C. Richards, B. Valentine & T. P. Dunning, eds, *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston* (Launceston, 2006), p. xxi. There are several references which evidence this view. In 1898, English trade unionist and Fabian Socialist Alderman of the London County Council while on a lecture tour, noted at a Mayoral reception in Launceston that he could suggest little improvement and that the city appeared to be a heaven to him. He contrasted it with the state of most other colonial cities, including Hobart. See: *Examiner*, 5 March 1898 no pagination (n. p.) as cited in Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?: Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875 -1914* (Hobart, 1995), p.30. On the occasion of the centenary of the settlement of Launceston in 1906, the Editor of the Hobart newspaper the *Mercury* offered the following tribute: 'Launceston has numerous literary, social, charitable, religious and scientific societies, and altogether at the end of its first century possess all the equipment of an enlightened and progressive city.' See: *Mercury*, 17 March 1906, n. p. In 1910 the Editor of Adelaide newspaper, the *Advertiser*, in a discussion of progressive Australasian cities lists Launceston in the same breath as Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington. See: *Advertiser*, 29 November 1910, p. 8. This acclaim was sustained as the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Harold Gengoult-Smith, on visiting the city for the first time in twenty years congratulated the Council on its progressive qualities. See: *Mercury*, 5 January 1934, p. 5. Please note that all primary and secondary references cited in other works have been personally viewed. Citing their original use has been practised as a courtesy and to ensure that proper credit is given to the previous researcher/historian.

² Dan Huon has argued that the contribution of Northern Tasmania (and Launceston in particular), to the early reformist campaigns has been traditionally undervalued. See: Dan Huon, 'By Moral Means Only: The Origins of the Launceston Anti-Transportation Leagues 1847-1849', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings (THRAPP)*, 44, 2 (June 1997), p. 92.

Progressivism.³ The role that Progressivism played in the development of the city, and the nature and course of the wider movement in the interwar period, are issues that are far less acknowledged or understood.

Progressivism was a political reformist movement made up of smaller coalitions which championed diverse but often interconnected issues. It spread across the world between the years 1890 to 1920. It also arguably enjoyed resurgence during the Great Depression. On the whole, it left a tangible legacy in the form of a general acceptance of the need for an emphasis on expanded, interventionist state or federal government policy, as well as reliance on professional expertise to realise the ultimate goal of a harmonious society.⁴ Daniel T. Rodgers has insisted that Progressivism as a phenomenon, extended right up to the outbreak of the Second World War.⁵

This thesis is essentially a transnational study, which uses the history of Progressivism in the regional city of Launceston, Tasmania, during the interwar period as its case study. Traditionally, historical studies of Progressivism in the United States have demonstrated a national or state/regional emphasis.⁶ Focusing the lens of academic enquiry onto a specific city is arguably an underused approach in transnational history, although it often forms the basis for international

³ The most significant contributions have been provided by historians Michael Roe and Stefan Petrow. Their relevant works are detailed and discussed in section 1.1.2.

⁴ Linda Gordon, 'If the Progressives Were Advising Us Today, Should We Listen?', *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 1, 2 (April 2002), pp. 110-11.

⁵ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (London, 1998), p. 485. From an Atlantic perspective, Rodgers views First World War as an interruption, settlement schemes and the 'New Deal' phases as high points and the Second World War as a watershed in the sense that it was the 'closing of the American's Atlantic social-political era.' David W. Gutzke also asserts that at least in Britain, the course of Progressivism ran its course between 1870 and 1939. This is qualified by the view that the pub reform movement was one of the last significant phases of 'British Progressivism' operating until approximately 1960. See also: David W. Gutzke, 'Historians and Progressivism', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), p. 18 & David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (Dekalb, Illinois, 2006), p. 17. It is my contention that the Progressive experience in Launceston generally echoes the Rodgers interpretation of global Progressive trends.

⁶ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877-1920* (New York, 1967) is a classic study with a national focus. Meanwhile, David Thelen, *The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900* (Columbia, Missouri, 1970) is a typical example of a state orientated study of Progressivism.

comparative studies.⁷ However, several transnational historians have based aspects of their analyses of Progressivism around the basic city unit.⁸ Progressives themselves, assessed the success of reforms or made comparisons between similar initiatives, based on the concept. This was a natural reflection of the contemporary understanding of the interrelationship between Progressivism and the process of municipalisation.⁹

Previous historical analysis of the city of Launceston during the interwar period has been conducted through primarily state or national frameworks, effectively serving to obscure Progressivism as an issue.¹⁰ Transnational history has been defined as ‘the study of the ways in which past lives and events have been shaped by processes and relationships that have transcended the borders of nation states.’¹¹ Admittedly the study reflects an exclusively one-way movement of ideas, but as a study of Progressivism on the periphery, the history of Launceston still attests to the power of such ideas to transcend national boundaries, specifically during the interwar period. This has been done in two ways: through comparison of reform ideas and initiatives between Launceston and other Progressive cities around the world, and alternatively through identifying direct influences.¹² By assessing the nature,

⁷ Ann Curthoys & Marilyn Lake, ‘Introduction’, in Ann Curthoys & Marilyn Lake, eds, *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra, 2005), p. 6.

⁸ For instance, Daniel T. Rodgers makes the observation that ‘what Birmingham and Glasgow were to the UK. Frankfurt and Düsseldorf were to Germany.’ See: *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 123. Glasgow is Hamish Fraser’s primary case study among several other city units in ‘Municipal Socialism and Social Policy’, in R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger, eds, *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* (London, 1993) pp. 258-80.

⁹ In 1905, nominee for the position of Mayor of Chicago Edward Dunne, claimed that he wanted to make the city a ‘second Glasgow’. Similarly, Woodrow Wilson often referred to the same city as a Progressive model. See: Bernard Aspinwall, ‘The Civic Ideal: Glasgow and the United States, 1880-1920’, in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), p. 78.

¹⁰ John Reynolds, *Launceston : History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969). This book is constructed around a linear economic framework. The history of the city during the wider period of 1870-1940 has received some attention in the form of books and articles from such esteemed historians as Lloyd Robson, Richard P. Davis and Michael Roe. But even their academic work has been largely written within the state and national and state paradigms. Stefan Petrow’s work provides the best attempt at placing the history of the city in some kind of an international context, but in terms of his work on Launceston, it has been focused more on single issues such as health or housing and not specifically on analysing Progressivism in the city in a wider sense. Please refer to the bibliography for an exhaustive list of the most relevant articles and books by that core group of Tasmanian historians.

¹¹ Curthoys & Lake, *Connected Worlds*, p. 5.

¹² David W. Gutzke has argued that there are two main ways of demonstrating links between Progressive movements across national borders: the comparative approach (draw parallels between similar reform activity) and demonstrating direct transnational influences. I have resorted to both, but the emphasis has consistently been, if possible, on the latter. See: David W. Gutzke,

direction, fate and legacy of Progressivism in Launceston during the interwar period, the thesis will serve a dual purpose: improve understanding of the Progressive movement within the confines of the city, as well as attest to the power and global scope of Progressive ideas.

1.1.2: Principal Secondary Texts – Key Influences on the Thesis

What was Progressivism? David Thelen in his article ‘Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism’, published in 1969, called for a much more inclusive definition of the typical Progressive, and dismissed the use of behavioural theory in history in general. To Thelen it was a general ‘moral indignation’ against the behaviour of corporations and corrupt politicians that united American progressives to intervene on a plethora of issues of common concern rather than social tensions.¹³ Thelen’s vision of Progressivism then was a typically ‘neo-progressive’ one. David M. Kennedy has used this term to describe the paradigm shift from the focus on essence to context in the study of the phenomenon.¹⁴ Shelton Stromquist later described that approach as a shift in focus from the ‘sociological attributes of the Progressives themselves to the political processes that generated reform.’¹⁵ Martin J. Schiesl in his book *The Politics of Efficiency* also alerted scholars to the danger of utilising a bland definition of participants in Progressivism, noting that to some, reform was a ‘road to respectability.’¹⁶ But any considered analysis of Progressivism in Launceston could only conclude that it consisted of an array of ‘top-down’ coalitions.

‘Progressivism in Britain and Abroad’, in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, pp. 24-5.

¹³ David Thelen, ‘Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism’, *Journal of American History*, 56, 2 (September 1969), pp. 323-41. Thelen does appear to establish that at least in Wisconsin, there was no direct link between class and political orientation based on correlating occupational details with voting patterns in the state legislative assembly. He concludes: ‘The profiles from Wisconsin and elsewhere reveal empirically that the origins of progressivism cannot be found by studying the social backgrounds and tensions of progressive leaders.’

¹⁴ David M. Kennedy, ‘Overview: The Progressive Era’, *Historian*, 37, 3 (May 1975), p. 453, 465.

¹⁵ Shelton Stromquist, ‘The Crucible of Class: Cleveland Politics and the Origins of Municipal Reform in the Progressive Era’, *Journal of Urban History*, 23, 2 (January 1997), p. 193.

¹⁶ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America, 1900-1920*, (London, 1977), p. 3.

In his recent book on Progressivism, *Pubs and Progressives*, David W. Gutzke offered a more succinct and satisfying definition of the concept of Progressivism:

Progressivism is best understood as a series of local protest movements based on shifting, short lived coalitions that united individuals of dissimilar social backgrounds. Neither coordinated into a national movement nor united on an agreed agenda, Anglo-American Progressives nevertheless responded with common motivations – moral indignation, a desire for social justice; guilt; or fear of disorder, upheaval, or national deterioration. Characteristics of Progressivism were its cross-class alliances to achieve broader goals, reliance on scientific methodology, cult of efficiency, and eagerness to experiment. Pragmatists, not ideologues, Progressives saw the individual as the product of the environment, which they wanted changed to reshape behaviour. These condescending middle- and upper-class reformers fully expected to impose their values on working-class inferiors. Progressives offered moral uplift, order, discipline, and environmentalism as antidotes for urban problems, and social justice as a new standard of fairness for class reconciliation.¹⁷

This is a very concise and perceptive definition of a mercurial phenomenon, and it applies just as accurately in an Australian context. It is also a definition that recognises the class component of Progressivism, although it was characterised by ‘cross-class alliances’. Gutzke’s interpretation recognises that Progressivism was a middle and upper-class movement which experienced qualified success but only occasional widespread support amongst the working classes. I will demonstrate that this definition fits the Launceston experience of Progressivism.

In attempting to define my own specific model of Progressivism and the typical Progressive in Launceston of the first half of the twentieth century, I have drawn strongly on the ideas of Michael Roe. Tim Rowse has argued that Michael Roe did not fully clarify the common themes associated with Australian Progressivism in his book *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960*. However a number of key issues did emerge.¹⁸ Michael Roe himself

¹⁷ David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives*, p. 17.

¹⁸ Tim Rowse, ‘Review of Nine Australian Progressives’, *American Historical Review*, 94, 4 (October 1989), p. 1158. Rowse listed the following ‘common denominators’: tendency to champion the common good versus interest; valuing strong states directed by great leaders and guided by experts; ambivalent about democracy; belief in racial destiny through national

characterised the movement in Australia as an essentially bourgeois one, exhibiting a strong belief that the future could be molded by shaping the environment, and in pursuing that task, one that gave a prominent role to the state. According to Michael Roe, Progressivism differed from the traditional moral reform movements more in 'mode' than in content, as a sort of 'radical conservatism': the achievement of conservative ends by radical means. The Progressive ideal was efficiency, one they asserted in a highly aggressive fashion. It was also a movement with a darker side in that there was a decided element of racial paranoia inherent in it: the movement almost totally consisted of middle-class, white, male, Protestants, who while wearing a 'veneer of altruism' in their war to save capitalist society from itself, also sought to protect themselves from extreme elements, above and below.¹⁹

Throughout the thesis a distinction is made between progressives and *Progressives*. Sidney Pollard in his book *The Idea of Progress: History and Society* uses the idea of a 'pyramid of the believers in progress' in order to make several distinctions between those who subscribe to what became a core belief of the Western world between 1750 and 1900. At the base he categorises those who simply believe that the apparent technological advancement of civilisation will improve the wealth and general material conditions of human existence. In the middle of the pyramid lay those who have some faith that mankind will be able to refine its social and political organisations so as to guarantee greater equality and freedom. At the top of Pollard's pyramid are those that believe progress will improve the very character of man. This thesis therefore makes a blatant distinction between 'progressivism' (a simple emphasis on material advancement which one would find at the base of Pollard's pyramid) and 'Progressivism' (a political/cultural phenomenon which inherently expresses a faith in the possibility of improving the general human condition to be found nearer to the top of Pollard's pyramid) and uses capitalisation to mark the difference to avoid confusion.²⁰ Progressives then shared the faith in the

endeavour, passion for nature and efficiency. While the Great War fragmented the movement, the result was an increase in state intervention into public health and family centred policies.

¹⁹ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960*, (St. Lucia, 1984), pp. 1-15.

²⁰ Sidney Pollard, *The Idea of Progress History and Society* (Ringwood, Victoria, 1968), pp. 11-2. While Pollard does not directly discuss the Progressives, it is significant that in his book he describes a challenge to the concept of progress since the despair following the First World War (p. 185). This coincided with a period throughout the Western world when Progressivism began to

material benefits of science and technology with everyday progressives, but on the whole rejected the progressive preoccupation with the virtues of the passive state. Progressives should then be commonly placed in the middle to the top of the Pollard's conceptual pyramid as they displayed an inherent faith in the possibility of improving the human condition on several levels. Robert Nisbet in his work *the History of the Idea of Progress*, refers to a 'New Liberalism' apparent during the classic Progressive period which placed interventionism directed by social scientists at the frontline of the battle to improve social and economic progress. As a result, in an American context, both the Roosevelt and Wilson administrations encouraged progress through direct political interventionism.²¹

An appreciation of the key philosophical shifts during the nineteenth century is central to explaining the nature of Progressive thought as it developed before 1900. In *Nine Australian Progressives* Roe acknowledges the role of William James and his theory of Pragmatism in the development of this process. James' rejection of absolute truths seemed to pave the way for a more organic approach to life in direct opposition to the mechanistic approach inherited from the enlightenment.²² Robert H. Wiebe notes in his book *The Search for Order*, the importance of the fluidity of such an approach in developing the bureaucratic approach that was so much a key element to the Progressives attempt to rationalise society. According to Robert H. Wiebe, John Dewey's development of many of James' ideas, blended with his natural emphasis on the importance of practice above theory (and indeed rejecting many traditional western philosophical dualisms), helped to provide Progressives with a philosophy that justified their push to make 'individuals the plastic stuff of society'. I have incorporated this emphasis by Michael Roe on the importance of the pragmatic tendencies of the Progressives ('treating truth as a process instead of an essence, and knowledge as the continual testing of hypotheses against life's facts') as a core component of my own model of Progressivism in Launceston.²³

lose its appeal. However this thesis will show that it was not until the early/mid-1920s that Progressivism began to attract broad appeal and effect cultural changes in Launceston, Tasmania.

²¹ Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (London, 1980), pp. 300-4.

²² Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, pp. 4-5.

²³ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), pp. 151-2. As Wiebe explains, James was primarily concerned with the 'psychic' state of the individual and indeed, the elite/exceptional individual as the primary target of his pragmatism.

In order to develop a fully-rounded interpretation of Progressivism in Launceston, it has been necessary to acknowledge the darker aspects of the phenomenon. Again in *Nine Australian Progressives*, Michael Roe appears to have been very aware of the darker side of the Progressives: a preoccupation with the health and purity of the race often translated into an appreciation for the notion of eugenics. Michael Roe claims that this explained the emphasis on the health and welfare of mothers, babies and children; it was in fact an expression of their collective concern for the European race. This concern manifested itself as everything from a measured concern for vital health reform to castration of the unfit and selective breeding. Michael Roe acknowledges that Progressivism worked to both 'liberate and constrain'. This 'liberal-authoritarian duality' is identified by Michael Roe and he explains that the movement simultaneously 'invoked liberation and order, democracy and elitism, change and continuity, welfare and asceticism, worship of both technology and Nature'. While he notes that this has led some to deny the 'validity of the concept', it can be explained by its complex philosophical foundations in that it sought 'to claim the virtues of rationality, but at heart to be emotive and mystical'.²⁴

Municipalisation was to be the first manifestation of the Progressive interventionist spirit to emerge in Launceston. It had begun in the middle of the nineteenth century and had taken deep root by its end. This impression is legitimised to some extent by the works of historians, Robert H. Wiebe and Daniel T. Rodgers. Robert H. Wiebe in his book *The Search for Order* argues that at least in relation to American urban Progressivism, it was the new focus on municipal reform in the late nineteenth century which laid the foundations for wider Progressive reform.²⁵ The link between the origins of Progressivism and municipal reform is also a core concept explored in Daniel T. Rodgers' book *Atlantic Crossings*: he insists that municipalisation was the first 'Atlantic-wide progressive project'.²⁶ The transformation of Launceston into a modern city was roughly concurrent with the increasing popularity of ideas relating to the achievement of efficiency through the adoption of professional and scientifically informed administrative techniques by

²⁴ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, pp. 12-4.

²⁵ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 166-7.

²⁶ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 159.

the 'state', as embodied by the system of local government. From the outset though, this devotion to intervention and expertise was tempered by a well-ingrained strain of economic restraint, which often undermined the potential effectiveness of the measures introduced.²⁷

Stefan Petrow has prepared the most directly relevant historical work on the unique municipal development of the city of Launceston. In his comparative work, *Sanatorium of the South: Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914*, Stefan Petrow contrasts the commitment of its administration with that of Hobart, concluding that the former was more ambitious during the period in relation to municipal reformism.²⁸ As a primarily administrative historian, his work on Launceston has been mainly concerned with assessing the effectiveness of local government, albeit within a wider historical context. An examination of the role of political Progressivism in Launceston's development then has not formed a central part of Stefan Petrow's overall historical analysis.²⁹

²⁷ Anne McLaughlin, 'Launceston', in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart, 2005), pp. 207-9. Within this very basic entry on Launceston, the classic progressive era of roughly 1890-1920, is covered by the first two paragraphs of the second column on p. 208. That material, combined with other entries in the same edited work, does build up an impression of Launceston as a peculiarly Progressive city. See also: Marian Walker, 'Launceston Fifty Thousand League', p. 209; Peter Mercer, 'The National Trust of Australia (Tasmania)', p. 250; Stefan Petrow, 'Progress Associations', p. 291. Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, pp. 25-88, (basically 'Part 2: Launceston 1886-1914') establishes Launceston's credentials as a progressive City in relation to general public health policy up to 1914. John Reynolds, *Launceston*, pp. 126-9, details the glory of the Samuel Sutton led progressive era of the 1890s. This period saw the establishment of the QVM, the building of the Albert Hall and the holding of the 1891/2 International Exhibition, the institution of a deep drainage system and most importantly the construction of the Cataract Hydro-electric scheme and the subsequent realisation of street lighting.

²⁸ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, pp. 25-50.

²⁹ In relation to Launceston, Petrow's focus on assessing the quality of local governance is also evident in the following articles: 'The Best Governed City in Australia: Launceston 1885-1914', *Launceston Historical Society Papers and Proceedings (LHSP)*, 2 (1995), pp. 49-70 & 'Municipal Heaven: Launceston 1853-1914', *LHSP*, 15 (2003), pp. 16-25. He does though, deal with the issue of Progressivism transplanted from the United States, as a political ideology, in his article: 'Progressivism in Australia: the Case of John Daniel Fitzgerald 1900-1922', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 90, 1, (June 2004), pp. 53-74. He has also considered Progressivism in his analysis of urban planning in Hobart. In his article, 'Making the City Beautiful: Town Planning in Hobart c. 1915 to 1926', *THRAPP*, 3, 36 (September 1989), p. 99, Petrow uses Hobart as a case study to illustrate his argument that town planning in Australia was largely a failure before the Second World War. But he also notes that the town planning movement was part of a larger Progressive movement: 'As with other Progressives, town planners wished to mitigate the evils of an unbridled policy of laissez-faire by greater government intervention in all spheres of Australian life including the environment'. Emphasis, but not capitalisation, added.

While the Progressives themselves are understandably the focus of any academic analysis of Progressivism, the thesis will also attempt to acknowledge the importance of opposition to Progressive reform. Robert H. Wiebe's *The Search for Order* dealt with the tendency of Progressives to alienate large sections of society.³⁰ Michael Roe in *Nine Australian Progressives* also argues that the Progressive enthusiasm for the First World War, which inadvertently led to severe social, political and economic disruption, also resulted in the gradual rejection of their reformist ideas.³¹ David Thelen commented in his book on Progressivism in Wisconsin, *The New Citizenship*, that traditionally, in Progressive scholarship, there has been a focus on reform rather than reaction: the efforts of the anti-reform section of the community have arguably not received the attention they deserve.³² This thesis will argue that among the educated classes, it was both those possessing more radical ideologies and more hardline conservative ideologies that provided sustained resistance to the wider movement in Launceston. The true obstacle though, as in all the countries that enjoyed a Progressive phase, was of course, working-class apathy.

This thesis will follow the emerging tendency to emphasise the analysis of an integrated array of reform initiatives in a single study, as demonstrated most recently again by Daniel T. Rodgers' *Atlantic Crossings*.³³ In his review of *Atlantic Crossings*, Michael B. Katz noted that such issues as municipal infrastructure, town planning and unemployment relief have been traditionally analysed independently.³⁴ Australian historical studies of Progressivism in the main, with the exception of Michael Roe's biographical approach, have focused on individual

³⁰ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 212-3.

³¹ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 315.

³² David Thelen, *The New Citizenship*, p. 4.

³³ The most pertinent example is Daniel T. Rodgers' *Atlantic Crossings* which casts a wide net in terms of Progressive themes partly as a consequence of its transnational methodology. Issue discussed include: urban planning, labour legislation, public and private relief of poverty etc. It is much more common for an Australian analysis to focus on a single issue, such as education or health reform.

³⁴ Michael B. Katz, 'Review of *Atlantic Crossings*', *American Historical Review*, 104, 4 (October 1999), pp. 1331-2.

issues. This has served as a barrier to developing a more integrated conception of the nature of Australian Progressivism at both the local, state and national levels.³⁵

The city is the fundamental unit of analysis of this thesis. Carl Abbott's *Boosters and Businessmen*, published in 1981, demonstrated how effective the city orientated approach can be in historical studies: in that book he examined the nature of popular economic thought in four Midwestern cities between 1840 and 1860.³⁶ John Louis Recchiuti's *Civic Engagement Social Science and Progressive-Era Reform in New York City* in turn examined New York's role in the latter part of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century, as an 'incubator' of ideas that contributed to the new social sciences that were to help fuel Progressivism.³⁷ While Progressive ideas crossed international boundaries and influenced the cultural landscape of the city, they were often modified before being tested in their new environment. While in the case of Launceston, the transnational transmission of Progressive ideas was almost totally one-way, we find that individuals and coalitions did enjoy a direct role in filtering and synthesising them before championing their application.

In regards to examining business progressivism more specifically in Launceston, Simon Harris' doctoral thesis, 'Selling Tasmania' completed in 1991 (although dealing mostly with boosterism's influence on the Tasmania tourist trade) has been of substantial benefit to development of this thesis. One of the central premises of 'Selling Tasmania' is establishing the importance of considering the role of the lobbyist or the propagandist when examining the events and wider trends pertinent to political and economic history. His thesis also provides some examination of the tension between self-interest and civic voluntarism as a motivation for Progressive activity amongst the business community. The thesis has also provided a valuable

³⁵ A prime example of such a (still essential) single focus history would be Grant. W. Rodwell's *With Zealous Efficiency: Progressivism and Tasmanian State Primary Education, 1900-1920* (Darwin, 1992).

³⁶ Carl Abbott, *Boosters and Businessmen Popular Economic Thought and Urban Growth in the Antebellum Middle West* (Westport, 1981), p. 6.

³⁷ John Louis Recchiuti, *Civic Engagement Social Science and Progressive-Era Reform in New York City* (Philadelphia, 2007), p. 1.

initial grounding in the, to date, much neglected history of the Launceston Fifty Thousand League (LFTL).³⁸

At the core of Progressivism was an impulse to rationalise society, mostly through the institution of the newly developed bureaucratic orientation which emphasised such values as ‘continuity and regularity, functionality and rationality, administration and management’.³⁹ The implied goal was the creation of a universally efficient society. Michael Roe correctly draws attention to the difficulty in defining exactly what ‘efficiency’ meant. In fact he concisely explains the problem in the following way: ‘In effect, it becomes synonymous with whatever was virtuous in progressive eyes, and so to define it is to define progressivism – a game of peering into face-to-face mirrors’.⁴⁰ Robert H. Wiebe provides some clarification. In his book *The Search for Order*, Robert H. Wiebe argued that while there were few exact definitions of ‘frictionless bureaucracy’ (characterised by order and efficiency) and little instruction on how it was to be achieved, he did identify two basic aspects: adjusting interactions according to the wishes and needs of the people involved (hence the influence of pragmatism) and regulating society’s movements to produce maximum returns for a minimum outlay of time and effort.⁴¹

The ideas of Frederick Winslow Taylor had as much a pervasive effect on Progressivism as it did on the organisation of labour within the capitalist economic system. Scientific management was devised as a means of improving labour efficiency by applying the methods of science to the workplace.⁴² Harry Braverman in his work *Labor and Monopoly Capital* reflects the contemporary view that the

³⁸ Simon Harris, ‘Selling Tasmania Boosterism and the Creation of the Tourist State 1912-1928’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Tasmania, 1993, pp. 322, 334. Discussion of the LFTL is scattered throughout the thesis but they feature most prominently in section 5.2.2

³⁹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 295.

⁴⁰ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 11.

⁴¹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 154-5.

⁴² Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915) born Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, rejected the career in law his father had chosen for him, and completed an apprenticeship as a machinist. He rose from qualified machinist to gang boss and it was in that capacity that he first started to develop his ideas regarding the scientific management of labour. He became convinced that true control was not derived just from discipline but also by having a ‘grip on the actual processes of labor’. Braverman identified three basic principles in his theories: disassociation of the labour process from the skills of the workers, conception and execution as separate spheres of work, use of monopoly over knowledge to control each step of the labour process and its mode of execution. See: Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1974), pp. 91-100.

approach was not in truth scientific but in reality a method for the ‘explicit verbalisation of the capitalistic mode of production’ disguised as science.⁴³ Regardless of the validity of its scientific credentials, it was regarded highly by Progressives and applied to a range of fields and disciplines in order to solve fundamental problems confronting society. Progressives appreciated Taylorism less in terms of its capacity to provide a rigid rule-book on how to maximise efficiency in the work place, but rather as an example that quantitative methods could properly facilitate a ‘scientific’ orientation to reform. This thesis will demonstrate that in the context of Launceston, a modified version of Taylorism influenced policy in several areas including health and administration.

Robert H. Wiebe makes another contribution by providing a historical explanation for the link between the emerging professions of the age and the new bureaucratic orientation. As many occupations were professionalised and new professions emerged, Wiebe explains that there was a gradual realization that even across the various professional fields (including law, education, social work and medicine) there was a common language of rationality and mutual concerns. Bureaucracy was to be the instrument through which the new middle-class professionals were to fulfil their destiny and remodel society on scientific principles.⁴⁴ In relation to Progressive Launceston, the thesis will show that organisational reform was led by same-minded professionals who shared ideas and were encouraged by reforms that were truly international. This principle of the ‘internal dynamics’ of professionals driving the Progressive engines of reform is an important concept upon which the thesis relies for its coherence.⁴⁵

Organisational historians have identified two core problems with the Progressive pseudo-scientific approach to administrative reform. Robert H. Wiebe, once more in *The Search for Order*, argues that organisational Progressives often believed that

⁴³ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, pp. 85-7. According to Braverman’s critique, Taylor’s scientific management approach demonstrated some naive assumptions of human nature, antagonised labour and was eventually succeeded by more empathic theories as functional foremanship and incentive pay schemes. In his rather bleak analysis of the world of production, Braverman argues that Taylorism and its successors continue to dominate the capitalist system noting that its fundamental teachings have become ‘the bedrock of all work design’.

⁴⁴ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 111-32.

⁴⁵ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, p. 3.

once all citizens had surrendered to rationalism that there would be no disagreement over policy. This was a result of a false belief that politics and ambition could actually be separated from the development of policy and its institution.⁴⁶ In his book *The Politics of Efficiency* published in 1977, Martin J. Schiesl drew attention to another naive assumption: the Progressives believed in the validity of a ‘rational, monocratic system of firmly arranged levels of hierarchical authority flowing from superior to inferior roles’, which unfortunately did not recognise that in a typical workplace there is always a degree of interdependency between experts and less skilled workers.⁴⁷

The success of the organisational Progressives of Launceston was variable and obstructed in part by these assumptions. The downfall of Launceston’s City Manager, F. W. Nicholl was closely related to his failure to grasp two principles: no organisation could operate in an entirely top-down manner and no policy on any issue could enjoy universal acceptance, regardless of how scientifically it was conceived. This thesis will argue that the most successful organisational reformers, arguably Launceston’s two long serving City Medical Officers of the period – L. Grey Thompson and James Pardey – were more successful in securing reform, because they did not make the same assumptions. They were certainly more diplomatic than Nicholl. Their mutual qualified success and longevity reflected the fact that they were more peripheral than Nichol in relation to the power structure of local government. Their departments were also small and their overall direct influence over policy was minor. They were mostly informed advisors with little power. There is no evidence that there was any resentment held towards them on the part of the aldermen or general staff.⁴⁸

There are several histories that have provided basic vital historical content and historiographical guidance for the development of the thesis. Lloyd Robson’s *A History of Tasmania, Volume II: Colony and State from 1856 to the 1980s* first published in 1987, has provided an authoritative touchstone, particularly in relation

⁴⁶ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 161-2.

⁴⁷ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 189-90.

⁴⁸ For a more detailed contrast please refer to the sections 2.2.2 & 4.2.3. Thompson and Pardey were respected, wise men who were easily ignored or deflected. Nicholl was an insistent Progressive.

to general political history when it has been necessary to relate the topic to wider historical issues.⁴⁹ John Reynolds' *A History of Launceston* published in 1969, was useful in the initial stages in providing a practical and general overview of the history of the city.⁵⁰ In terms of helping me to better understand the field and afterwards position the thesis in relation to the broader American historiography on the topic of Progressivism, William G. Anderson's article, 'Progressivism: An Historiographical Essay' published in 1973, and Daniel T. Rodgers's article 'In Search of Progressivism' published in 1982, have provided sound guidance.⁵¹

The identification of a suitable methodological approach and the selection of an optimum period for the study of Progressivism in Launceston were critical preliminary steps in the preparation of the thesis. John Rickard's *Australia: A Cultural History*, provided an excellent example of how a thematic approach can facilitate a 'freer' study which seeks to extend understanding of the 'evolving values, beliefs, rites and customs' of a particular society, as opposed to a more linear, chronologically based one. His book concentrates on the cultural changes which took place in Australian society at a national level in the first half of the twentieth century.⁵² Australia became an increasingly urbanised and industrialised society during the interwar period and as a consequence, many of the core elements of its national culture and identity were being redefined.⁵³ It was logical then,

⁴⁹ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania Volume II: Colony and State from 1856 to the 1980s*, (Melbourne, 1987); Lloyd Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania* (Melbourne, 1985) and Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, 2nd ed. (Hobart, 2005) have all been convenient and trustworthy academic comforts.

⁵⁰ I would class John Reynolds' *Launceston*, as a social-economic history and any reference to the link between political activity in the city and any wider cultural phenomena appear to be minimal. It is unreferenced but well written. It provides a good guide to important events relating to the city up to 1969.

⁵¹ William G. Anderson, 'Progressivism: An Historiographical Essay', *The History Teacher*, 6, 3 (May 1973), pp. 427-52 & Daniel T. Rodgers, 'In Search of Progressivism', *Reviews in American History*, 10, 4 (December 1982), pp. 113-32.

⁵² John Rickard, *Australia: A Cultural History* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. xi-xii.

⁵³ Manning Clark notes that while approximately thirty five and a half per cent of the population resided in capital cities in 1906, by 1940 it was forty seven and a half per cent. Clark's view of Australian society in the interwar period appears to have been a malleable one. Increased urbanisation and industrialisation had led to mass entertainment and information which in turn fed fears of American cultural imperialism. The formation of the Australian Broadcasting Commission appears to have been an attempt to counteract this influence. Meanwhile a rising generation of intellectuals and artists were increasingly challenging a traditionally puritanical and philistine culture. See: Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Sydney, 1980), pp. 229-30. In relation to the development of the Australian identity, Russel Ward argued that the myth of the Australian bushman was an expression of a movement designed to help romanticize imperial expansion as well as being a useful vehicle through which to encourage nationalist sentiment. See:

given the previous attention devoted to various aspects of Progressivism in Launceston up to the First World War, that these two decades would be selected as providing the most fertile ground for analysis of this topic.

1.1.3: Primary Sources

The design of this thesis has been strongly influenced by the views of contemporary Progressive Australian intellectuals. C. E. W. Bean's Progressive manifesto *In Your Hands, Australians*, was an attempt to incite Progressive passions following the First World War. In many ways an Australian exceptionalist, Bean attributed many of the emerging reformist ideas simply to the influence of the war, although many of the social and political trends he describes were firmly entrenched before the outbreak of the conflict. Still, his book is a pure, almost encyclopaedic, expression of popular Progressive thought translated into an Australian context at the outset of the interwar period.⁵⁴

Meredith Atkinson's *The New Social Order: A Study of Post-War Reconstruction*, voices the same sentiments as Bean's book, albeit in a more academic framework. Like most mainstream Progressives, Atkinson advocated a gentle reformist approach aimed at 'securing a state of greater liberty, enlightenment and happiness of every individual'. As a Progressive, Atkinson was typically ambivalent towards democracy, recognising that the qualified version that existed in his lifetime was

Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966), p. 227. In turn, Richard White has argued that while the cultural baggage of its immigrants and the views of its intelligentsia/artists are influential in the formation of a country's national identity. The period between the late nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century best illustrates the influence of the economic ruling class. White observed that the view of Australia as 'young, white, happy and wholesome and needing protection' which had formed before World War One, was intensified by the subsequent idealization of the 'digger'. This view was reflected in much of the federal legislation of the period, which attempted to deal with collective fears of Asia and Communism. The depression though, damaged confidence in the idea of Australia as a young nation with unlimited potential. The battle over the design of the Australian national identity between pastoral and manufacturing interests then (the ideal of the bushman versus the tanned, masculine, urban lifesaver for the mantle of the real Australian) intensified during the interwar period. See: Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1680-1980* (Sydney, 1980), pp. ix-x, 140-57.

⁵⁴ C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands, Australians*, (Melbourne, 1918). The book consists of twenty-six small chapters. From the perspective of this thesis the most significant are: Chapter IV 'The Towns', pp. 21-6 and Chapter XIII 'The Great Cities' pp. 62-73. Throughout the book Bean voices his views on such Progressive concepts as the importance of urban planning, education, the health of the children and good interventionist government.

merely a device designed to prevent ‘mob-rule’ rather than facilitate it. Encouraging ‘efficient citizenship’ (wherein the mass of citizens were fit, functional and conformist) was the essential ingredient rather than universal franchise.⁵⁵ Importantly, stability and prosperity were achievable through the reformation of the economic system, not by its abolition. The ideal society according to Atkinson could be created through the achievement of an ‘industrial democracy’ (full employment and satisfactory pay being the main features) and typically the state had a pivotal role to play in its creation. Atkinson’s vision appears to have been an expression of a typically modernist teleological view which insisted that it was the ultimate destiny of humanity to evolve into a classless, ‘super-race’. The key to achieving that goal appears to have been to embrace a scientific approach in to human endeavours and to convert the masses into accepting that philosophy. To Atkinson, only New Zealand was more deserving of the title of ‘social laboratory of the world’, by virtue of gentle legislative reforms. This general rejection of individualism and acceptance of the central role of the state in creating the new social order suggested that Australia as a nation might lead the way towards a utopian future.⁵⁶

In many ways the city manager form of government was an attempt to apply both bureaucratic and business principles to achieve a scientific form of local government. Harry Aubrey Toulmin Junior’s *The City Manager a New Profession*, provides a detailed international historical context for the experiment in Launceston.⁵⁷ A specific contemporary example of an attempt to remodel local government on these principles is provided by Charles E. Rightor’s study of the institution of the city manager form of government in Dayton, Ohio entitled *City Manager in Dayton* and published in 1919. It is to be revealed in this thesis that the reforms there were to provide at least a partial model for a similar experiment in Launceston between 1921 and 1922, when there was an attempt to at least partly

⁵⁵ Peter Haeusler, ‘Progressives and the Janus Face of Efficient Citizenship, Meredith Atkinson and Australian Democracy’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 42, 1 (1996), pp. 25-35. Haeusler argues that Atkinson’s vision of ‘efficient citizenship’ involved a ‘highly sanitised’ interpretation of democracy that did not incorporate the principle of mass participation. Leadership was not for amateurs but for those best equipped to serve in that capacity.

⁵⁶ Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order: A Study of Post-War Reconstruction* (New Town, 1919), pp. 2, 15, 28, 37-9, 273-5.

⁵⁷ H. A. Toulmin Jnr., *The City Manager: A New Profession* (New York, 1917).

substitute it for the Mayor-Council system. Therefore that book (although hardly objective) provides the archetypical template for the city manager model and a good guide to the similarities and differences in the subsequent Launceston hybrid form. The typical reforms dictated by this trend involved: tightening the control of both the Commissioners and City Manager over fiscal policy, an emphasis on employing experts in key positions, having policy determined by scientific research, an overall general administration in order to eliminate waste by imposing such practices as central audited purchasing.⁵⁸

The most significant archive of primary resources relating to this research project has proved to be the Launceston City Council (LCC) records held by the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM), and to a lesser extent by the Archives Office of Tasmania (AOT). These include various administrative files and reports (including records of meetings, letters of correspondence, collected statistical data etc.), which have allowed me to trace and analyse the activities and beliefs of those who administered the city during the relevant period. Most crucial to the project have been the annual *Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports* dating from 1898 to 1945 (which include separate reports from the City Engineer, City Electrical Engineer, City Medical Officer and other departmental heads).⁵⁹ These records have provided core administrative, demographic and general statistical data helping to map out a coherent trail through the voluminous correspondence records available for the period.

⁵⁸ Charles E. Rightor, D. C. Sowers & W. Matscheck, *City Manager in Dayton Four Years of Commission-Manager Government, 1914-1917; and Comparisons with Four Preceding Years Under the Mayor-Council Plan, 1910-1913* (New York, 1919), pp. 20-3, 171-2, 191. The book was written by Rightor based on collaborative work with Sowers and Matscheck. In the book Rightor remarks on the clear demarcation of responsibilities between the Commissioners and the City Manager, which although having to be fine tuned generally, intimated that the City Manager was subservient to the will of the Commissioners. Within the framework of that model, the City Manager had total autonomy in regard to his individual departments (an issue which was not to be transferred as clearly to the Launceston hybrid model). In contrast, the Launceston City Council chose to retain their won positions as elected, voluntary aldermen rather than opting for a smaller board of elected but professional commissioners. Rightor's book is hardly an objective account however, as its first chapter is titled: 'How Dayton Got Good Government' (!).

⁵⁹ As the three major collections of annual mayoral and departmental reports utilised for this thesis are all incomplete and include various editions with varied content and page numbering, I have ensured that the home collection (either LLLS, QVM or UTAS) are listed with each specific reference.

As this is a thesis chiefly concerned with a significant cultural shift in relation to values and beliefs, and to some extent the influence of those on the development and institution of public policy in Launceston, the role of the LCC is central to the analysis. From 1853, public policy in the city has been largely determined by the LCC. By the time Launceston was declared a city in 1889, the authority and capacity of the local council was well established. To a lesser extent, the Launceston Marine Board (LMB) also determined policy - Progressive or not - and that too has been taken into consideration. During the period covered by this thesis, the LCC was lobbied and influenced in its determination of public policy by four basic groups: the State Government, the media, business/professional groups and the general population. Even private initiatives had to be approved by the LCC and so to some extent it was involved in all Progressive activity that occurred within the city. Particularly with regard to infrastructure investment, the LCC was often the only body with both the authority and resources to act on certain problems. In a legislative sense it was responsible for a greater range of issues than it is as a municipal authority today, including the prevention and care of infectious disease, roads and welfare relief. During the interwar period, the aldermen of the LCC acted increasingly as a filter for the transnational reform ideas being absorbed by its largely professional population of local Progressives. Some of the central Progressive voluntary organisations to emerge in Launceston during this period were the LFTL, the reformed Tasmanian Cremation Society (TCS) and the Launceston Town Planning Association (LTPA). To a large extent it is the debate rather than the execution of policy that is crucial to this thesis. A policy does not have to have been initiated to be relevant, only considered. In fact, often, what did not happen is just as relevant as what did.

The plentiful records of the LCC then, have formed the reference spine of the thesis. My method has been to closely study the annual mayoral addresses and departmental reports for the stated period and then use them as a guide as to what issues or events to examine in more precise detail through the use of the correspondence files that are available in the QVM. One particular danger is presenting the LCC as an amorphous, collective entity. However this is to some extent unavoidable: much of the debate leading up to a resolution was not recorded or at least not retained and the LCC over many decades appears to have been an

organisation that preferred to present a united front on most issues. One of the exceptions of course is the divisive city manager experiment between 1921 and 1922 and some pencilled intimate exchanges between aldermen are extant. In the main there is little record of debate, only resolutions and this limits the potential to expand on differences of opinion amongst the various generations of city fathers. Also, while this thesis relies heavily on mayoral addresses and departmental reports, it has had to be considered that the LCC applied political spin to its public version of events to help place themselves in the most positive light. This re-emphasises the importance of consulting specific correspondence files which often help to uncover the 'real story' behind the official sanitised version. It will be seen that some policy decisions were flawed or failed in delivery, and if mentioned in an annual address, I believe were not referred to again in retrospect.⁶⁰

In addition to the records of local government, local newspapers have provided a more community orientated window on events in the city of Launceston during the period and compliment the more administrative view provided by the records of the LCC. It is clear that the editorial views of the *Examiner* were very Progressive and encouraged discussion and action on relevant issues. Letters to the Editor also provide a rare glimpse of community views on issues of concern to Progressives.

As this is primarily a history concerned with the nature and success of Progressive ideas as they manifested themselves in Launceston, there is a danger that what may have been created could be interpreted as an elitist account of the period. The types of records on which I have been most dependent are those made and maintained by local government, manned by the elite of society. Even the local press in Launceston during the period, was overwhelmingly conservative and less than sympathetic to the concerns or ideas of the working classes.⁶¹ Progressivism

⁶⁰ The best example of this sanitization or blatant re-writing of history is the failure to mention the position of City Manger in the centenary special on Municipal government in Launceston published in *Examiner*, 7 March 1953, n. p. Next to the article on past and present Town Clerks there is a suspiciously large advertisement suggesting that the article was edited or an accompanying article on the position of City Manager (who in a legislative sense did enjoy all the powers of the Town Clerk) was possibly removed at the Council's insistence.

⁶¹ Animosity was more rampant in the local press towards the activities of the labor movement, perhaps best demonstrated in the wharf strike in Launceston in August 1890. See: *Launceston Examiner*, 26 August 1890, n. p., as cited in Henry Reynolds, 'The Island Colony, Tasmania: Society and Politics 1880-1900', p. 215. Antagonism towards anything that might be considered

in Launceston however was a movement dominated by the educated and wealthy. The main focus of the thesis has been on how such ideas were transplanted, cultivated and realised in practice. There are very few records which document the experiences and beliefs of the lower orders. My methodology has been highly empirical but I have still attempted to utilise any indication of working-class reaction to Progressive reforms. I have acknowledged in several instances that the working-class clearly did not always share the same values and beliefs as the higher orders and therefore have imbued them with some sense of agency.⁶² Aside from ideological resistance from both the right and the left spectrum of politics, working-class attitudes did provide one of the most important sources of resistance to Progressive reforms, even if it was just simple apathy.

socialist in nature on the behalf of the LCC continued into the interwar period. Neil Batt mentions the peculiar antipathy of the Nationalist dominated LCC towards unemployment relief programs during the Great Depression. See: Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', *THRAPP*, 25, 3 (September 1978), p. 51.

⁶² One example of this may be the detrimental effects of the home visits conducted by the child health nurse on behalf of the LCC and the Child Welfare Association during the period. Please refer to section 5.2.1.3. As discussed, there is no direct evidence of any resentment towards the home visits of the Clinic Nurse but secondary reading has indicated that in some cases they may not have been welcomed and that they may have also contributed to the breaking of intergenerational support networks.

1.2: Methodology

1.2.1: A Model of Progressivism in Launceston

As discussed, one of the key methodological necessities in the production of this thesis has been to develop a personal model of Progressivism in Launceston. My own model is an amalgam of previous work blended with some modest refinements of my own invention. Progressivism in Launceston in the first half of the twentieth century, was at any given time, a loose confederation of interests, sharing the core assumption that there was a need to create a more efficient and stable society through the means of sometimes elaborate intervention guided by reliance on scientific expertise. Essentially a bourgeois movement as defined by Michael Roe, occasionally it did enjoy mass working-class support which characterised its most successful phases. Still it was certainly led by the educated, or at least propertied, elite, which sought to exert a moulding influence over the masses. It must be stressed though, that they were not moralists, but rather pragmatists.⁶³

Reflecting the course of the wider, transnational movement, Progressivism in Launceston between 1889 and 1939 experienced three distinct phases. The first wave consisted of a brand of social politics motivated by the 1890s depression and encouraged by the fruits of municipalisation. They focused on reforming the urban environment for the benefit of the lower orders and indirectly, society as a whole. These early Progressives valued university trained experts and scientific approaches to the emerging urban problems of modern industrial society. The second wave of Progressives in Launceston proved to be largely organisational reformists drawn from the professional and business classes after 1920. Their emphasis was encouraging greater efficiency and economy within the various levels of the administrative systems that allowed society to function. The horrors of the Great

⁶³ J. S. C. Elkington was a prominent Australian Progressive whose major achievement was to establish medical inspection and awareness in schools. Michael Roe observed that despite his high moral standards, in relation to prostitution he preferred *expertise*. That was a pragmatic sentiment that could never have been shared by more morally charged reformers such as the WCTU. See: Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, pp. 98, 107. For a more detailed contrast between local moral reform movements and the more secular, impersonal Progressives, please refer to section 2.1.3.

Depression largely acted as an impetus for the third phase. The Progressivism that emerged after 1929 in Launceston, proved to be a synthesis of the first two phases: while organisational reform remained an important element, their success was once again measured by the degree of social stability and well-being that could be achieved.

1.2.2: Key Research Questions

This thesis then, will consider the following clustered research questions:

- Who were the Progressives in Launceston? Did their membership change over time? Was the local movement made up of a set of co-ordinated coalitions or disparate ones? Did their membership reflect the international trends? Who opposed the local Progressives and why?
- What were the central causes that Progressives in the city pursued? How closely did they reflect the concerns of the international movement? Did their agenda connect directly with that of the international movement?
- What course did Progressivism take in Launceston? Did it reflect the overall course of the international movement?
- What were the main achievements of the Progressives in Launceston? In what senses did they fail? Did they create a tangible legacy? Did Launceston actually become a ‘model among towns’?

1.2.3: A Thematic Approach

In pursuit to the answers to these key questions, I have decided on the adoption of a thematic approach.⁶⁴ Having become quite familiar with Progressivism in the

⁶⁴ In regards to developing a thematic approach, and specifically in regards to identifying Progressive themes to apply to a study of the phenomenon in Launceston during the interwar period, the work of urban planning historians Pierre Clavel and Denise R. Nickel has proved useful. Although their focus had been in part on analyzing the nature and extent of municipal progressivism in American cities (although they did incorporate wider Progressive themes such as alternative redistributive policies and mass political participation), they were able to provide me with a way of breaking typical Progressive activity within an urban unit, down into separate

United States and the United Kingdom, a preliminary study of the nature and development of Progressivism in the city allowed me to identify four central themes inherent to the city in the Interwar period. These are:

- (1) The sustained attempt by the local administration to achieve a general improvement of the urban environment, despite wider economic concerns.
- (2) Evidence of the 'new bureaucratic orientation', particularly in regards to reforming the operations of local government.
- (3) The existence of political, professional, community and/or business coalitions at the local level that champion pro-growth, but particularly Progressive ideas.
- (4) The general incidence of redistributive economic programs operating at the local level with the aim of securing social justice.

These themes have been synthesised from the work of several historians on the subject of Progressivism, all previously discussed. Firstly Daniel T. Rodgers' identification of municipalisation as the first international Progressive project and his recognition that Progressivism as a phenomenon extended to the outbreak of the Second World War, has been central to their formulation. The influence of Robert H. Wiebe's definition and emphasis on the importance of the new bureaucratic orientation and the role of the professions in regards to their transmission and development should be obvious. They also recognise the importance of Stephen Harris' identification of an increasing sense of 'civic duty' inherent to the business community of Launceston. David W. Gutzke's definition of Progressivism cuts through all the themes. He classified them as reformists belonging to multiple coalitions, who shared the belief that improving the environment was the key to reshaping behaviour. Progressivism manifested itself as an umbrella movement

components and a terminology through which to describe those elements. Clavel looked at five American cities in the 1970s and 1980s of which he noted that 'many of their programs had a populist tone reminiscent of the great democratizing movements of the period around the turn of the century'. In attempting to answer the question what makes a progressive city, he developed a theoretical structure for progressive politics which identified factors permitting substantive government and mass participation in local politics. See: Pierre Clavel, *The Progressive City: Planning and Participation, 1969-1984* (New Jersey, 1986), p. 1. Nickel in turn acknowledged her debt to Clavel and described four sets of conditions analogous to the emergence of progressive development policies. See Denise R. Nickel, 'The Progressive City?: Urban Redevelopment in Minneapolis', *Urban Affairs Review*, 30, 3 (January 1995), pp. 355-77.

made up of often single issue coalitions. These coalitions though shared a coherent ideology, intent on creating a healthier, more just and efficient society. His interpretation then has particular relevance for the third theme. Without totally rejecting the post-Thelen rejection of social role theory, David W. Gutzke exhibits the wisdom to accept that Progressivism was indeed a diverse set of coalitions largely made up of middle and upper-class reformists who shared a common moral indignation at the social evils that had been exacerbated by industrialisation and depression and who were intent on establishing new bench-marks of social justice, at least sufficiently enough to ensure class cohesion.

1.2.4: Approach to Primary Research

In the course of my research I have consulted three separate collections of the LCC's *Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports*, as all are incomplete. The QVM Collection was consulted for the years 1896 to 1926 and the Launceston State Library Collection was utilised for 1913 and the remainder of the period between 1927 and 1945, although several individual years held by the University of Tasmania Library and used initially for the sake of convenience (1912, 1914, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1921, 1922, 1924, 1925, 1927, 1945).⁶⁵

Local newspapers published during the interwar period have been visually scanned from January 1919 to December 1939. Inconsistently, pagination was recorded for the first decade but not the second – this was an early oversight as I worked backwards. Again the Local Studies Library at the Launceston branch of the State Library was utilised for this purpose as it holds an exhaustive microfilm collection of these sources. Since both local newspapers exhibited a conservative editorial slant, I have concentrated on the *Examiner* (as it alone runs the entire period) and visited the *Daily Telegraph* when I deemed it necessary to examine a specific event

⁶⁵ While many reports are duplicated across the collections, they were clearly produced concurrently in two different formats. Several of the QVM's holdings are simply newspaper cuttings retained between 1896 and 1904, the rest are held in small collected editions. The Launceston State Library editions are collected in a similar way but are considerably larger. The result is that the page numbering between collections can vary, although the content is identical. In order to allow other academics or researchers to consult these sources efficiently, I have therefore included specific collection details with each footnote.

in closer detail. In pursuit of more obscure local information I have also utilised the Australian Newspapers Online Service operated by the National Libraries of Australia which provides a digitised run of many Australian newspapers including virtually every edition of the *Mercury* published from 1860 to 1964. Several persons of interest relocated or returned to the mainland and therefore several mainland papers could also be easily searched for references to their subsequent careers and fates. This was also a convenient way to canvass national media attention on issues relating directly to Launceston.⁶⁶

1.2.5: The Structure of the Thesis

The central concern of the second chapter, ‘The Roots of Interwar Progressivism in Launceston’, is to define and account for, the emergence of Progressivism in the city between 1889 and 1918. The first section provides some concise historical background, including an account of the emergence of a self-reliant culture. Several differences and similarities between the early moral reformist movements and the latter Progressive movement are then discussed. The section then turns its attention to discussing how a developing culture of civic engagement and altruism helped to foster the process of municipalisation. A link between a successful municipalisation phase and the rising ambitions of local Progressives is then established. Furthermore, it is argued that the depression of the 1890s focused the attention of the middle-class on the neglected issue of entrenched poverty in the city and in turn promoted the development of an ‘alternative social economy’. The second section explores the four basic themes identified as characterising Progressivism in the city between 1889 and 1918: the degree of emphasis by local government on the development of infrastructure and services, the emergence of the new bureaucratic orientation, the role of coalitions and the professional dynamic, the emphasis on social justice over equality. Each of these provides the basis for the further micro-analysis of Progressivism in Launceston during the interwar period over next four

⁶⁶ This resource is an excellent research tool for all historians researching and writing Australian history, particularly for the local historian, as issues and identities of interest are often invisible in most secondary sources and some local records are sometimes difficult to locate or access. See: <http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

chapters.⁶⁷ In the concluding section, a coherent account and explanation for the emergence of Progressivism in the city is presented. Furthermore several ‘international’ characteristics of Progressivism, shared by the local coalitions are outlined for the first time: the focus on improving the urban environment, the adherence to ‘bureaucratic’ approach, the tendency to alienate, the importance of the professional dynamic, the darker side of the phenomenon, the key role of civic altruism and a preference for improved social justice over equality. All of these threads, to varying degrees, cut across the four thematic chapters and form the basis of the final analysis in chapter seven.

There is an evident pattern to the design of the core chapters of the thesis. These chapters seek to examine the same period (1919-1939), each with a different thematic focus: the emphasis on urban improvement, evidence of an appreciation for and the implementation of the new bureaucratic orientation, the importance of coalitions to Progressivism, identifying levels of intervention aimed at improving levels of social justice. All of the main thematic chapters are divided into three distinct section types. The introductory sections detail what evidence of this thematic aspect of Progressivism was evident in Launceston during the period. Once the examples of issues and agendas directly relevant to that theme are identified, they are outlined to some extent and positioned within a wider (state, national and international) historical context. The middle sections provide case studies that facilitate detailed analysis and discussion of specific examples from the local experience of Progressivism which best represent the specified theme. The case studies reveal the demographic properties of the coalitions which make up the wider movement, their motivations, successes and failures. There is distinct emphasis in these sections on detailing factors which encouraged and others that obstructed, Progressivism in the city. The third and concluding sections typically provide an opportunity to correlate and summarise any observations made in the first two sections, which it is estimated may contribute to eventually satisfying the

⁶⁷ Like Michael Roe in a recent work, I am unapologetic about providing some necessary historical context to my study. While admitting that he broke no new ground in regards to the amount of Tasmanian political history, he argued that ‘without such context the whole project lost sense.’ See: *Albert George and Stymie Gaha: World Wise Tasmanians* (Hobart, 2008), p. 2. The research potential of the early history Progressivism in Tasmania between 1889 and 1918 has hardly been exhausted and this is attested to by the amount of primary source documents it was necessary to reference in this section.

established research questions. This involves the identification of at least one core thread of Progressivism, all of which will form the basis for the final construction of a portrait and discussion of Progressivism in the final chapter.

The third chapter entitled 'Building and Maintaining a Progressive City, 1919-1939', seeks to examine and explain the actual emphasis placed by local government on improving the urban environment through developing local infrastructure and services in that period. In the preliminary section there is provided a brief economic and demographic portrait of the city in 1919. The critical role of the *Examiner* as an important catalyst for Progressivism in Launceston is then discussed. Then degrees of co-ordination between the wider agenda of the Progressive movement and the editorial orientation of the paper are explored. Then there is a discussion of the reasons for the increasing emphasis by the LCC on the economy over valid expenditure on proper maintenance and improvement. This trend is examined through an analysis of three crucial reform projects which despite calls from Progressives to act, failed to materialise by 1939: municipal housing, comprehensive sewage treatment and flood protection schemes. The performance of the LCC during this period is contrasted with that of the LMB. In the case study section, the thesis examines the implementation of three successful Progressive infrastructure reforms: a water filtration plant, a new city abattoir and a city crematorium. While all appear to endorse the Progressive credentials of the LCC within the interwar period, closer examination reveals that at least in one case there was a secondary motivation, and it was also hindered by the increasing emphasis on restricting expenditure. In the final section the central argument presented is that while local government had in the past embraced municipalisation to great effect, it was to ironically become the major obstacle to the infrastructure and services reforms proposed by the emerging Progressive coalitions of the city. It is further asserted that all three major Progressive infrastructure reforms realised during the period were somewhat begrudging achievements and not any indication that the LCC had embraced the 'alternative social economy'. While several others were derailed by a combination of adverse economic and political circumstances, it is clear that the main reason was ideological: an increasing attachment to fiscal orthodoxy.

The fourth chapter, entitled 'The Search for Efficiency, 1919-1939', represents an attempt to examine and explain the influence the new international bureaucratic orientation on the development and course of Progressivism in the city of Launceston during that era. The preliminary section begins by defining the 'new bureaucratic orientation', identifying it as an approach utilised largely by organisational Progressives, which emphasised the value of adopting a scientific methodology and expert advice in attempting to solve specifically administrative, but generally urban, problems. There is also a discussion of the influence of the heightened international awareness and recognition enjoyed by the city following the First World War. This is followed by three subsections that explore the influence of the 'new bureaucratic orientation' on three core Progressive concerns: town planning, health policy and local government reform. The main case study of this chapter is an account and analysis of the city manager experiment of 1921-1922. The thesis provides a revisionist interpretation of the short-lived experiment. It is argued that despite its brevity and abrupt end, it was in many respects a success. The experiment indeed had a long lasting influence on the operation of local government in the city. In the final section of this chapter, the benefits and disadvantages of the 'new bureaucratic orientation' are reflected on in both a local and international context. It is argued that the efficiency of local government in Launceston was vastly improved and had the experiment continued, the benefits may have continued to increase exponentially. At the same time, the city manager experiment also highlighted disadvantages evident in the international movement, particularly the tendency for Progressives in their zealous pursuit of reform, to alienate other sections of society and in the long-term, undermine their own achievements.

The fifth chapter, entitled 'A City of Coalitions, 1919-1939', explores the importance of professional and business coalitions in relation to the process of cultivating an active Progressive culture within the city. In the first section, some attention is given to exploring the phenomenon of the Progressive coalition in the city. The professional dynamic is revealed as having been vital to their formation, coherent ideology of radical conservatism and their ability to maintain their activism. In an age of general reform coalitions, Progressive coalitions are identified as being characterised by their adherence to the cult of the expert and

their embrace of the 'alternative social economy'. This section also introduces the concept of there having been three basic phases of Progressivism in the city: the first characterised by a 'humanitarian' strain instigated by a general 'moral indignation' amongst elements of the professional middle-class towards the suffering caused by the depression of the 1890s and energised by municipalisation; the second dominated by an impersonal bureaucratic strain led by a new generation of organisational Progressives drawn largely from amongst the political and business classes; the third characterised by a return to an emphasis on a social agenda as a result of the Great Depression and championed by an amalgam of prominent members of both the professional and business classes. The second section provides two case studies: the Launceston Child Welfare Association, later the Baby Health Association (CWA/BHA) and the LFTL. While these were distinct movements with different immediate aims, it is demonstrated that both organisations shared a coherent wider agenda. The final section again attempts to correlate several critical observations on the nature of the movement that contribute towards the construction of a detailed portrait of Progressivism in Launceston during the interwar period. It is argued that the CWA/BHA was best representative of the first phase of Progressivism in the city. The LFTL in contrast, was born during the demise of the second and evolved to symbolise the synthesised nature of the third.

The sixth chapter, entitled 'Calls for a Fair Go, 1919-1939', investigates the influence of Progressivism on welfare policies and programs in the city during the interwar period. Particular attention is given to the period of high unemployment that immediately followed the Great Depression. Firstly the influence of Progressivism on welfare provision in the city is placed in the context of current scholarship. While the history of welfare provision in Launceston during the first half of the twentieth century, does indeed reflect the traditional 'modernisation theory', it is argued that the interwar period more specifically demonstrates the more contested shifting boundary over the question of provision and more importantly the divisions it often created within the ranks of the social elite. The Launceston experience of welfare is then placed in proper historical context, particularly in regards to the influence of the English parish charity system. The revolutionary influence of the American New Deal on the policies of the Ogilvie

State Government and their influence on the response to poverty and unemployment in Launceston are also discussed. The case study provided in this chapter involves an examination of the federal, state, local government and community responses to the unemployment problem in the city of Launceston following the onset of the Great Depression. This facilitates several significant observations concerning the role of Progressivism in influencing official responses to the crisis. Initial orthodox economic and political responses were inadequate and the spectre of radicalism forced the Nationalist government to be innovative. The evolution of the work relief program was a difficult one and the final compromise design was realised under the direct supervision of Chief Secretary Claude James (who had been the Alderman primarily responsible for the design of the City Manager system trialled in Launceston) in 1933. For pragmatic reasons, the state had to provide the majority of the funding, while the LCC mostly administered the projects. In the final section of the chapter, again several observations are correlated into important concluding points. The ideological divisions among the social elite over the issue of the preferred mechanics of welfare provision initially obstructed an effective response by state and local authorities to the unemployment crisis. Progressive politics directly influenced the final design of the work relief program instituted by the Nationalists. Like their international counterparts, local Progressives favoured local government taking a central interventionist role in the provision of welfare, while at the same time utilising existing charity networks. The true aim of the Progressives was the achievement of social stability (not equality) so as to protect the status quo by modifying rather than rejecting the essence of capitalism. The work relief program became the first of a large number of ongoing state building projects designed to energise the economy and provide necessary employment by the subsequent Ogilvie State Government. However, while this level of intervention was an anathema to most mainstream Progressives, these projects laid the foundations of the welfare state which adequately addressed the majority of their concerns and was to make their movement all but redundant within a decade.

The seventh and final chapter of the thesis, entitled 'An interpretation of Progressivism in Launceston during the Interwar Period', attempts to clearly articulate the main threads of Progressivism in the city that have been identified

throughout the body of the thesis and utilise them to answer the key research questions. The preliminary section firstly provides an economic and demographic overview of Launceston in 1939. Designed as a counterpart to the one included at the outset in the third chapter, it reflects the similar tenuous economic situation the city found itself in during 1919 and almost a generation later in 1939. The main focus of this section though is a discussion of the effect of, and reasons for, the end of radical conservatism in the city, evidenced by the whole-scale return to conservative political and economic orthodoxy in local government. Despite having helped to inspire Progressives through their municipalisation phase, the LCC became their greatest reform obstacle. Local government came to reject the ‘alternative social economy’ outright. Several central characteristics of Progressivism in Launceston are all revealed to be connected to transnational precedents. Particularly, their role in fostering or obstructing Progressivism in Launceston is discussed. The final section then represents an opportunity to utilise the characteristics and general observations identified throughout the thesis to directly answer the research questions, specifically providing an answer to the question as to whether or not as a result of Progressivism, Launceston truly became a ‘model among towns’.

Chapter 2: The Roots of Interwar Progressivism in Launceston, 1889-1918

2.1: Introduction to Progressivism in Launceston

Launceston developed the life, the institutions and the manners of a small city. It always had the pretensions to be more than a country town. It was urban and sought to be urbane. The city fathers were unusually ambitious and often creative.

- Henry Reynolds, 'Foreword', *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston*.¹

2.1.1: A Brief Historical Summary of the Settlement of Launceston

The process of European settlement began in 1798 when explorers Bass and Flinders were sent to determine if there was a strait between the mainland and Tasmania (then known as Van Diemen's Land). During their survey they landed a few miles in from the mouth of the Tamar River and named the area Port Dalrymple. A colonisation fleet soon followed in 1804, commanded by Lt. Col. William Dalrymple which initially established itself at the site later known as George Town. The settlement was removed to York Town some weeks later. Having sent an expedition down the Tamar to explore, the decision was made to establish the primary settlement at the confluence of the North and South Esk Rivers in 1805, which was initially named Patersonia. Its title was later changed to Launceston after the birth place of Governor King, a township in Cornwall, England. For much of its early history the city was administered by military officers and served fundamentally as the Northern hub of an open prison. Much of the initial attractions of the site would have been the mildness of its climate, access to abundant sources of fresh water and the plentiful fertile land which was situated on

¹ Henry Reynolds, 'Foreword', in P. A. C. Richards, B. Valentine & T. P. Dunning, eds, *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston* (Launceston, 2006), p. xxi.

an ancient flood plain.² Gradually the demographic patterns altered, encompassing an increasing amount of emancipated and free settlers. Distanced from the seat of government that became Hobart Town in the South, the citizens of the settlement arguably developed a highly independent character. The city became a focal point of the anti-transportation campaigns of the 1840s and 1850s. Following the initiation of municipal government in 1853, the settlement rapidly advanced in relation to infrastructure. The suitability of much of the land for industrial development and its proximity to a functional port aided the development of the town. It also benefited greatly from the mining boom of the 1870s and 1880s and its central business district and older suburbs which now brim with Victorian architecture is a testament to the local wealth generated in that period.³

Launceston was officially made a city in 1889 and over the next quarter century became one of the most advanced cities in the Southern hemisphere. At that time the city occupied an area of 3,340 acres, 125 streets and 3,500 buildings.⁴ The mining boom between 1870 and 1891 had ensured that the annual rateable value of the city actually doubled.⁵ Economic prosperity had brought with it an increase in population (from 10,668 to 17,906 in the same period) and a therefore a subsequent increase in service demands. Around 1890, ratepayer bodies appeared eager to move the attention of local governments from the moral debate on liquor regulation to issues with a more secular tone (such as infrastructure reform and the link between the urban environment and health).⁶

² QVM LCC3: 19/3.1 *Industries* – G. H. Hirst and Co. (1921-1922), Letter from the City Manager to Messrs George H. Hurst and Co. Ltd., Wollen Manufacturers, Batley and Savile Town, Dewsbury, England, 24 January 1922. These advantages are listed in the cited letter.

³ Anne McLaughlin, 'Launceston', in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart, 2005), pp. 207-9. See also: John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969), pp. 1-37. For a general and contemporary overview of the city, please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938'.

⁴ Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 years of local government in Launceston', *LHSPP*, 15 (2003), p. 56. This was the 'Launceston Corporation Act 1888'.

⁵ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?: Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914* (Hobart, 1995), p. 36.

⁶ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia: Launceston 1885-1914', *Launceston Historical Society: Occasional Papers*, 2 (1995), pp. 51, 63-4.

2.1.2: A Self-Reliant City

From the very beginning of European settlement in the Launceston area, the value of self-reliance became a crucial aspect of the settlement's cultural identity. The failure of Governor Arthur's Water Supply Scheme for Launceston from the South Esk at Evandale in 1837 would have reinforced the idea amongst the more civic minded of the community, that if such a scheme was ever going to be realised it would have to be a result of local political action.⁷ It was well recognised by the middle of the nineteenth century, that it was very difficult to have government works realised anywhere in the North. The Tamar Street bridge was one example of a much needed, major infrastructure project, which was only realised through local capital investment.⁸ Municipalisation must have appeared to have been the obvious answer for a neglected district with a deep belief in self-reliance. Indeed Stefan Petrow makes a direct connection between Launceston's peculiar modernity and the fact that a culture of 'self-reliance' grew out of its geographic isolation and neglect by successive colonial governments.⁹

2.1.3: Moral Reform Movements

The foundations of Progressive social politics in Launceston were to be partially laid by the colony's early moral reformers. The temperance and anti-transportation

⁷ Simon Harris, *A Magnificent Failure: Governor Arthur's Water Supply Scheme for Launceston from the South Esk at Evandale: 1835-7, A Report for the Institution of Engineers (Tasmania) and the Evandale Bicentenary Group* (Hobart, 1988), pp. 95-8. The main reason for the failure of the project appears to have been that Launceston residents were not prepared to subsidise private landowners for the use of their land in the scheme as they saw it as providing them with free improvements. The Government were going to charge all private landowners a seven per cent rate on the annual value of their properties in order to fund the scheme. However after the passage of the Water Act in 1852 giving the LCC the power to borrow £10,000 for that purpose, a scheme was completed already by 1857. The fact that the cost for the scheme was covered by Council revenue suggests that it was more the arrangement rather than the proposition of directing public money towards the scheme to which the population (at least the enfranchised section) objected.

⁸ In fact a Mr. John Griffiths (Shipbuilder) was given extensive grants of lands in what was then known as 'the swamp' and later became Inveresk and its embankment area, by the State Government in return for constructing a bridge across the North Esk River on favourable terms. The bridge opened in 1834 and operated until 1899 when it was replaced. The bridge had by then become the responsibility of the local council, the structure having been already extensively reworked in the 1870s. See: Lyn Newit, *Convicts and Carriageways: Tasmanian Road Development Until 1880* (Hobart, 1988), p. 124.

⁹ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', p. 57.

movements that formed during the colonial period were both offshoots of the ‘moral enlightenment’. This was a ‘trans-national’ philosophy which grew increasingly popular in the nineteenth century, desiring the moral regeneration of society. Like many of the later Progressives, preoccupied with rectifying social ills, those of the moral enlightenment strove to improve the condition of the lower classes. Temperance was a bastion of that international movement.¹⁰

The first Launceston Temperance society (LTS) was active in 1836 and it quickly gathered support as the local face of an overtly moral movement. One of the initiatives of the Society – aside from meetings and pledge signings – was the organisation of alternative recreational ideas, such as temperance coffee and tea houses.¹¹ However their didactic moralism often resulted in accusations of wowserism and alienated them from mainstream support. Even at the peak of their popular support in January 1843, when the Launceston branch comprised of 600 members was joined by various regional branches and the St. Joseph’s Society in a march through the streets of the city, the event was savagely mocked by the Editor of the *Launceston Courier*.¹² Part of the problem was that it was a movement based on a specific value system that was not supported by theology.¹³ The movement effectively stalled by 1847, and soon after any press support that existed for teetotalism and temperance gradually faded. However an upsurge in public interest in the anti-transportation cause in the late 1840s, combined with the social effects of the gold rushes in the mainland, did translate into a degree of ongoing residual support which lasted for several years.¹⁴ The movement was never truly successful:

¹⁰ Rod Kilner, ‘Temperance and the Liquor Question in Tasmania in the 1850s’, *THRAPP*, 20, 2, (1972), p. 93.

¹¹ Michael Roe, *Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia, 1835-1851* (Parkville, Victoria, 1965), p. 166.

¹² *Launceston Courier*, 2 January 1843. The St. Joseph’s Society was operated by a Catholic order, which prescribed to a more stringent pledge than the LTS, although they were publicly accepted by the later organisation. See also: *Launceston Courier*, 26 November 1842.

¹³ Rod Kilner, ‘Temperance and the Liquor Question in Tasmanian in the 1850s’, p. 86. Aside from enjoying minimal biblical validation, the temperance cause also appeared to deny the doctrine of free will which infuriated many Protestant churches.

¹⁴ *Launceston Examiner*, 12 April 1847: advert for a public meeting inviting ‘Tradesmen, Mechanics, and Others of the Town of Launceston’ to a public meeting to be held on Monday evening, 19 April 1847 at the Infant School Room, Frederick Street. The meeting was reported on in *Launceston Examiner*, 21 April 1847. The highlight of the meeting was an address by Richard Dry. In fact the links between the temperance and anti-transportation movements were so strong during that period that the mass, working class populated meetings for both, took place in the same venue: the Frederick Street Infant School.

the *Licensing Acts* of 1854, 1856 and 1858 were only regulatory and not prohibitive, in part due to a powerful publican lobby.¹⁵

The history of the anti-transportation movement based in Launceston during the late 1840s, reflects several core characteristics of the later Progressive movement. Perhaps by necessity, it possessed a highly stratified and formally organised nature. Like Progressivism in its most successful phases, it was comprised of widespread working-class support base and an elite, middle or professional-class leadership. The Launceston Association for the Promotion of Cessation of Transportation, formed at a popular meeting of the Cornwall Hotel Assembly Rooms on 3 April 1847. It was a meeting attended by leading Northern Pastoralists including Joseph and William Archer, James Cox, as well as leading Launceston politicians and professionals such as Richard Dry and the Anglican Rector of St. John's Church, Doctor Browne. They assumed the reigns of the movement and in turn formed a committee that sought first hand testimony twice weekly and presented a report in May of that year on the subject of transportation. The Committee efficiently presented its report on 10 May 1847.¹⁶ The movement also utilised the services of the London Agency's advocate John Alexander Jackson (former Colonial Secretary and Treasurer of South Australia), to pursue their cause in Whitehall.¹⁷ Like the later Progressives, the anti-transportationists were also strongly contested. In the case of the anti-transportationists, it was their moralism rather than cold pragmatism, which raised mainstream concerns. Local historian, Anne McLaughlin, has argued that it is probable that the local pro-transportation movement, who expressed concerns about the "exaggerated and biased views of convicts' wickedness and lawlessness", were actually as numerous and as vocal as the anti-transportationists themselves.¹⁸

¹⁵ Wendy Rimón, 'Temperance', in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart, 2005), p. 360.

¹⁶ *Launceston Examiner*, 12 April 1847.

¹⁷ *Launceston Examiner*, 12 May 1847.

¹⁸ Anne McLaughlin, 'Against the League: Fighting the 'Hated Stain'', *Tasmanian Historical Studies (THS)*, 5, 1 (1995-6), pp. 76-7. For example, Botanist Ronal Campbell Gunn was also a fellow subscriber to the London Agency, and protested against the decision to utilise Jackson to promote the objects of a petition to abolish transportation. See: *Launceston Examiner*, 26 May 1847.

The first truly transnational, moral reformist organisation to take permanent root in Launceston was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Ian Tyrrell described the international movement as "overtly political and based on "applied Christianity" which served to link Church-based evangelicalism to feminism. Tyrrell argued that in relation to its origin: "The WCTU long drew its sustenance from the late nineteenth-century flowering of the American middle-class evangelical culture of domesticity and social reform."¹⁹ While the WCTU resembled the later Progressives in several important ways, theirs was a predominately morally motivated movement.²⁰ As a moral movement they assigned the blame for all of the social ills evident in modern society to inner, character failings rather than the environment. An unattributed passage in an issue of the Australasian WCTU periodical, the *White Ribbon Signal*, entitled 'Moral Laziness', expresses this central difference with the later Progressive movement:

One of the sure fruits of selfishness, and itself the foundation of cruelty and abuses, is blindness to personal responsibility. The person who recognises, and intelligently acts upon, the fact of personal responsibility in the affairs of the community in which he lives is the one at whose door gratitude for corrected evils will one day lay its splendid tribute.²¹

Established in the state in 1885, the organisation was to become the most sustained arm of the temperance movement, based on the argument that alcohol was the source of most evils in society and with the aim of achieving prohibition on a global scale.²² In Tasmania, the WCTU was also able to tap into the traditional support for temperance reforms which had previously been a male dominated area.²³

¹⁹ Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930*, (London, 1991), pp. 2, 286.

²⁰ More specifically, Tyrrell observes a shift within in the transatlantic movement around 1902-1904 from an overtly Christian and moral focus to a more secular and politically orientated one as reflected in the interaction between the US and UK branches. See: Ian Tyrrell, 'Transatlantic Progressivism in Women's Temperance and Suffrage', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), p. 138.

²¹ AOT NS337 Records of the Womens' Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/88, The *White Ribbon Signal*, the Official Organ of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of New South Wales, 'In Memoriam Number' for the late Mrs. Jessie Rooke, XIV, 5, 1 February 1906. Emphasis added.

²² Renee Jordan, 'The Woman's Christian Temperance Union', in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart, 2005), pp. 387-8.

²³ Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania 1885-1914', unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 2001, p. 11.

The links between the WCTU and Launceston were very strong during its early history in the state, and its membership appears to have been drawn from across the respectable classes. Early leadership for the Union was to emerge from Launceston. The second President of the Tasmanian WCTU was a Grace Soltau of Launceston. Her husband was a Baptist Preacher and they had moved to Launceston in the 1880s. She established the city's first successful rescue home. After relocating, she was succeeded in 1898 by another middle-class woman from Launceston, Annie Blair.²⁴ The organisation provided an important social family for the women and a means through which they could extend themselves beyond the domestic sphere. For these respectable women, historian Renee Jordan has argued that the difference their association with the WCTU would have made in their lives would have been "immeasurable".²⁵

The WCTU proved itself to be a highly interventionist organisation. However their motivation differed wildly from the Progressive movement. Theirs was a morally charged movement, with an agenda that was as equally evangelical as it was reformist. Lessons for Chinese immigrants were provided by the WCTU in both Launceston and Burnie between 1896 and 1899. The motivation for this form of outreach appears to have been to make poor Chinese men more susceptible to conversion to Christianity.²⁶ While a key part of their mission was to act to protect the most vulnerable members of society, the Christian moralism that informed their approach often appears to have been counter productive. Arguably the most significant reform the WCTU campaigned for was the passage of the *Neglected*

²⁴ Vicki Pearce, 'A Few Viragos On a Stump: The Womanhood Suffrage Campaign in Tasmania 1880-1920', *THRAPP*, 32, 4 (December, 1985), p. 159 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 9.

²⁵ Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', pp. 50-1. For instance when Mrs. Breeton-Braham was elected local president of the Launceston branch in April 1905, she was also the state anti-gambling and evangelistic superintendent for the year. She also went on a tour of the New West Coast between May and July 1906 to promote the WCTU. This was a level of social engagement that would have otherwise not have been conceivable for the wife of a businessman. See: AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/74, Launceston Branch Minute Book, entries for 18 April 1905; AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/75, Launceston Branch Minute Book, entries for 24 April 1906 & 20 November 1906; *Tasmanian Post Office Directory* 1899 (for occupation of Mr. Breeton-Braham).

²⁶ AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/5, Minutes of the Annual Convention, pp. 29-30 & AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/6, Minutes of the Annual Convention, p. 30 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 33.

Children and Youthful Offenders Act in 1896. This led to the establishment of the Neglected Children's Department. The WCTU supported the practice of taking the children of alcoholic women into care. However their agenda was purely morally informed and directed, with little practical consideration for long-term effects. There were public concerns expressed at the time that such extreme forms of intervention may have been doing more harm than good.²⁷

Like the Progressives, the WCTU embraced and endorsed the adoption of a social economy as opposed to a purely political one. The WCTU shared the focus of the Progressives on the health and well-being of women and children but its motivations appear to have contrasted. While the Progressives were concerned about the ongoing success and stability of the race and society, the WCTU was preoccupied with imposing standards of morality and protecting the vulnerable.²⁸ Along with other feminist reformers, the WCTU became a national force in influencing political policy on the local, state and federal levels. The Victorian branch successfully lobbied for amendments to the *Crimes Act* which increased the age of consent from twelve to sixteen years as well as categorising incest as an offence. Overall, its collective vision was what Marilyn Lake has termed an 'ethical state'. But there was always a constant moral dimension to its struggle, for while it supported sex education for children, unlike the Progressives it opposed the regulation of prostitution.²⁹ Still, while the WCTU pursued social reform through the legislative process as passionately as the Progressives, it was generally more ambitious in its calls for more direct government intervention for the sake of protecting the interests of women and children.

²⁷ Even at the time, the Act was seen by parliament as dangerous legislation that would interfere with the civil liberties of citizens. See: *Mercury*, 19 August 1896, n. p., as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', pp. 42-4.

²⁸ While the Progressives were concerned with increasing the population levels in the 'empty empire', the WCTU were advocating chastity between poor couples who could not properly afford to rear children! Women were viewed as victims of the sexual appetites of men rather than alternatively the vehicles for the sustained health and prosperity of the Anglo-Saxon race. While many of their concerns overlapped, their motivation and ideal visions appear to have been different. See: 'Our Empty Empire A Plea for Parenthood' by Dr. C. W. Saleeby, Edinburgh, Vice Chairman of the National Council of Public Morals as published in *Examiner*, 24 October 1919, p. 8 & Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (St. Leonards, 1999), p. 33.

²⁹ Marilyn Lake attributes the WCTU and the larger, post-suffrage era feminist movement with influencing the introduction and design of the welfare state. See: *Getting Equal*, pp. 11, 13, 24, 39, 95.

There was still a pragmatic dimension to the WCTU agenda though, which was analogous to the Progressive movement. Between 1893 and 1899 (when the National Council of Women was founded), the WCTU was the only organisation in Tasmania that lobbied for female suffrage.³⁰ In 1895, the Launceston branch of the WCTU collected signatures for petitions on the subject of female suffrage to be presented to both houses of State Parliament.³¹ A later petition presented to the Legislative Council, in 1897 contained 2280 state-wide signatures.³² To the WCTU, gaining the right to vote primarily represented an opportunity to exert a direct, moral influence on the legislative process. The issue of emancipation appears to have been secondary.³³ In the minute book covering the meetings held by Launceston branch during 1903, the successful reform to the *Constitution Act* is only referred to in the hope that women would exercise their right and privilege in forthcoming elections.³⁴

The history of the Tasmanian branch of the WCTU also alludes to how such large scale organisations inadvertently led in some senses to the birth of organisational theory. The Tasmanian branch was reorganised during a visit from the inaugural

³⁰ Vicki Pearce, 'A Few Viragos On a Stump', p. 153 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 22.

³¹ AOT: NSS337 Records of the Womans' Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/6, Minutes of the Annual Convention, p. 22 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners' pp. 25-6.

³² UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania*, 1896, Vol. XXXV, Paper No. 68, 'Women's Franchise Petition', as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 26. n. b. I personally referred specifically to UTAS Ltn Serial 328.94601 5b, to consult **all** printed Parliamentary papers referred to in this thesis.

³³ Marilyn Lake argues that to the WCTU, suffrage was the 'political power necessary to secure their major goal of "the protection of the home"'. She also observes that some members of the WCTU disapproved of enfranchised women standing for parliament. A central argument of the book is that historically within the feminist movement in Australia, there was an 'oscillation' within the wider movement between demands based on assumptions of "sameness" and those based around concerns related to assumptions of 'difference'. The impression given is that the feminist movement in a larger context, experienced internal tensions over the nature and degree of emancipation sought. As a movement, just like Progressivism, feminism has never enjoyed a fully homogenous ideology. See: Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal*, pp. 25, 281.

³⁴ Renee Jordan refutes the traditional historical argument that the lack of celebration of the reform meant that the WCTU were apathetic towards female franchise. It is her argument that it was a hard fought campaign but one based more on practical concerns rather than the mainstream feminist demands for equality. She explains: "Once the franchise was gained, the WCTU moved straight into other, more important aspects of its work." Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', pp. 29-30. See: also AOT: NSS337 Records of the Womans' Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/74, Launceston Branch Minute Book, entry for 15 September 1903 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 21. A personal viewing of the minutes for that meeting confirmed the matter-of-fact manner in which the achievement appears to have been welcomed. A letter from a Mrs. Wilkins was read on the issue 'urging all the members to exercise their right and privilege in the coming federal election.'

President of the newly federated Australasian WCTU, Jessie Ackermann, in 1892. On her visit Ackermann found that the initial enthusiasm had waned.³⁵ The highly structured nature of the organisation allowed the WCTU branches to operate effectively across the globe and from 1893; the organisation began to have a direct influence on the operation of Tasmanian society.³⁶ Each branch had a President, vice-president, recording and corresponding secretaries, and treasurer, all elected annually. Each department also had a superintendent. Senior to all Presidents was the Australasian President, who oversaw all branches. Every state held local conventions every year. Branches held monthly meetings. Triennial conventions were held Australia-wide. Biennial world conventions held in America and England with WCTU delegates present from all over the world.³⁷ The activities of the WCTU appear to have followed a particular pattern: identify an area of concern, investigate to see if there are grounds for concern and then appeal through appropriate channels.³⁸

The reforming influence of the WCTU in Tasmania however, was to prove quite limited. It is doubtful that the WCTU had a direct influence on the decision of the Legislative Council to extend the franchise to women in 1903. This has traditionally been attributed to the fact that the franchise had been extended to women in Federal elections.³⁹ The WCTU lobbied vigorously for Tasmanians to have access to “local option”. This measure ensured that any particular region, district, or settlement could by virtue of legislation determine what kind of regulation it required.⁴⁰ The

³⁵ Ian Tyrrell argues that Jessie Ackermann (1857?-1951), despite the fact that her death went almost unnoticed by the Union in 1951, made an integral contribution to the early success of the WCTU in Australia. There is some uncertainty of her exact birth year and place in the United States. Ackermann was the classic evangelical missionary who claimed in later life to have circumnavigated the world eight times. Like all missionaries her health suffered and that combined with clashes with the international WCTU leadership contributed to her eventual withdrawal into obscurity. She was later honoured by the Australian WCTU with a memorial membership in 1962. See: Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World Woman's Empire*, pp. 81, 97 and also, Ian Tyrrell, 'Ackermann, Jessie A. (1857? – 1951)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography Supplementary Volume*, (Melbourne, 2005), pp. 2-3.

³⁶ Vicki Pearce, 'A Few Viragos On a Stump', p. 151 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 4.

³⁷ Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 4.

³⁸ Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 17.

³⁹ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania Volume II Colony and State from 1856 to the 1980s*, (Melbourne, 1987), p. 239.

⁴⁰ The final version of the Licensing Act, 1908, was particularly mild in that the 'no licence' clause was eliminated by amendment (which would have allowed prohibition for in a local option

WCTU, in part, succeeded in having the *Licensing Act* of 1889 passed by State Parliament. This reform allowed ratepayers to lobby to have a licence refused if they could prove that a publican was not fit to hold one.⁴¹ Some of the other measures taken by the WCTU against the consumption of alcohol included the establishment of coffee rooms, and campaigning for the removal of fermented wine in communion services and a lowering in the number of public houses.⁴² The WCTU (along with the wider Tasmanian Temperance Alliance) did not ever achieve prohibition in Tasmania. The organisation was to prove instrumental in achieving early closing times for pubs and bars via a plebiscite in 1916 across four states, although Tasmania was the first state to revert in 1937.⁴³ Many of their efforts bore early success, but this was often followed by a distinct tapering off in interest and activity.⁴⁴ In keeping with a wider, Tasmanian trend, the concept of local option did not enjoy wide-spread support in Launceston: entries on the issue in the WCTU minute books for Launceston in 1906 and 1907 reflect general disappointment at how badly the local option was received.⁴⁵

The overall influence of the WCTU on the social development of Tasmanian society was to prove to be a finite one. Gradually, more secular feminist reform organisations that emerged in the post-suffrage era such as the National Council of Women gave middle-class women a voice on the issue of social reform.⁴⁶ However,

district). See: David C. Cooney, 'Local Option in Tasmania: The Temperance Question 1884-1908', unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 1973, p. 72.

⁴¹ Stefan Petrow, 'Andrew Inglis Clark as Attorney-General', in R. Ely, ed., *A Living Force: Andrew Inglis Clark and the Ideal of Commonwealth* (Hobart, 2001), pp. 57-8 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 18.

⁴² Coffee rooms were opened in Burnie, Campbell Town, and Launceston but they did not last long. They were successful up to 1897. By 1896, fermented wine was still being used in Anglican services throughout the state. Among the twelve settlements surveyed by the WCTU in 1895, Launceston possessed fifty-two of the 182 public houses in the state. See respectively: *People's Friend*, 1 September 1890; AOT: NS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/4, Minutes of the Annual Convention, p. 21 & AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NSS337/1/5, Minutes of the Annual Convention, p. 24, as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', pp. 13-6.

⁴³ Wendy Rimmon, 'Temperance', p. 361.

⁴⁴ Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 41.

⁴⁵ AOT: NSS337 Records of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania, NS337/1/75, Launceston Branch Minute Book, entry for 22 October 1907 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', p. 18. A local option Act was passed in 1908 but it was 'watered down' to the extent that it could only allow a few undesirable public houses to be closed. A last attempt to pass such legislation was mounted in 1917. See also: David C. Cooney, 'Local Option in Tasmania', p. 71.

⁴⁶ A. Oldfield, *Woman Suffrage in Australia* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 181 as cited in Renee Jordan, 'White Ribboners', pp. 49-50. Marilyn Lake asserts that despite the traditional belief that there

like all the moral reform movements active in nineteenth century Tasmania, it collectively set precedents for later reform campaigns including those of the Progressives: in terms of its adoption of formal organisational structures, its tendency to appeal to authority to justify its views and its creative methods of lobbying and recruitment.

2.1.4: Civic Pride, Engagement and Altruism in Launceston

A decided sense of civic pride characterised Launceston throughout the larger Progressive period. It was also shared by, but in no way confined to, their own ranks. A high level of civic pride in the city was consistently observable throughout the interwar period. In his speech at the annual conference of the LFTL on 18 May 1939, Premier Ogilvie congratulated the city on its collective levels of civic pride, contrasting it positively with that apparent in Hobart.⁴⁷

In his Valedictory Address of 1919, which followed the very testing circumstances of the influenza pandemic, Mayor Shields noted that aldermen were poorly rewarded for their voluntary service and that without more sympathy and consideration, it would be hard to secure their valuable services into the future.⁴⁸ A tendency towards civic engagement in Launceston among the business and professional classes during the interwar period however, became increasingly evident. Those with appropriate skills, wealth and public standing appear to have almost seen civic engagement as a social obligation - despite often feeling unappreciated or rewarded. While it could be argued that while many were successful businessmen and that their own fates were tied to that of the city, most were clearly motivated into action by a deep sense of civic pride rather than a desire

were only two waves of feminism in Australia, the inter-war period was a golden age for the feminist activism and reform. See: *Getting Equal*, p. 9.

⁴⁷ *Examiner*, 20 May 1939, n. p.

⁴⁸ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1919*, p. 4. George Shields (1854-1933) born in Launceston and became the proprietor of a grain business. He served as an Alderman, Mayor and later a MHA representing Bass as a Nationalist between 1923-25. A moderate conservative he occasionally clashed with Ockerby, and previous to that with more decided conservatives such as David Storrer, over Council policy. He is most remembered for having helped to bring down the Nationalists in 1924 by crossing the floor of Parliament. He lost his seat the following year. See: *Examiner*, 8 May 1933, n. p.

for material gain or celebrity.⁴⁹ The devotion of time was also valued: despite a very demanding schedule of official LCC business, from the outset its aldermen were also active on a wide range of boards and committees reflecting a high degree of civic pride.⁵⁰ In his history of the LMB published in 1998, Sir Raymond Ferrall echoed the sentiments of the era when he mourned the replacement of Directors who gave their services voluntarily with paid bureaucrats chosen by politicians.⁵¹

In his book *With Zealous Efficiency: progressive and Tasmanian state primary education, 1900-1920*, Grant W. Rodwell discusses the role of the philosophy of Social Darwinism in the Progressive movement, specifically in relation to the development of the primary school education system. He notes that Darwin's biological writing has a decided impact on social thinking in the period, as the theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest were applied to the social questions of the age. He argues that there were two basic schools of thought: an authoritarian one and another advocating the ideals of altruism and co-operation. While some saw the competition inherent in the natural world as providing a lesson relating to the benefits of competition and the resultant right of the winners to dominate as an elite, there was an alternate view that the real lesson was that focusing on co-operative efforts led to a higher level of efficiency and success. While individual competitiveness should still ideally be harnessed, the efficiency created by expanding opportunities and encouraging altruism above harsh competitiveness avoided the 'wasteful individual rivalry' evident in the industrial age.⁵² While I would argue that both schools of thought were present in the Progressivism evident in Launceston throughout the period, it is the latter type that was the greatest influence on the Progressives of the city.

⁴⁹ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 38. Petrow notes that many of the aldermen had become wealthy through investing in the mining boom.

⁵⁰ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 28. In the last decade of this period between 1905 and 1914, the average number of both Council and Committee meetings combined was over 200, occupying about 200 hours. The peak appeared to be 254 meetings occupying 202 hours in 1906, QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1906*, p. 4.

⁵¹ R. A. Ferrall, 'History of the River Tamar and the Port of Launceston', *LHSPP*, Vol. 10 (1998), p. 23.

⁵² Grant Rodwell, *With Zealous Efficiency: Progressivism and Tasmanian State Primary Education, 1900-1920* (Darwin, 1992), pp. 7-8.

Progressive concern with the state of the urban environment appears to have been neatly complimented by an emerging ethic of civic altruism in Launceston from approximately 1890. Civic altruism in the city appears to have been a natural extension of a heightened sense of civic pride and the direct expression of the engagement that followed. Public bequests to the city of every nature were consistently applauded by successive Mayors, probably not only to encourage further generosity but also reinforce the validity of such actions. The social, political and economic elite of the community, many of whom shared a natural orientation towards Progressive ideas, were encouraged and applauded for their contributions to the city. These gifts were often utilised then by the LCC in ways in which both the cultural and physical nature of the city could both be improved.⁵³

2.1.5: Municipal Reformers

Anthony Sutcliffe argues in his book *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France, 1780-1914*, that the concept of intervening in municipal arrangements became increasingly common in the nineteenth century as the problems associated with industrialisation became more apparent. Sutcliffe insists that this was true to the degree that ‘rudimentary public intervention in the urban environment generally remained impervious to even the most extreme forms of non-interventionist ideology’. According to Sutcliffe, two main forms of

⁵³ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1899*, p. 2 lists Mr. James Oddie of Ballarat’s donation of an Astronomical telescope to the QVMAG. QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1904*, p. 3 acknowledges the generosity of the donation of several art curiosities from all over the world to the QVMAG from the estate of the late Lady Dry. QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1908*, p. 3 draws attention to the donation of paintings to the same from Mr. E. G. Miller and the Hon. G. T. Collins MLC. UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1914*, p. 2 mentions the donation of a Glover drawing to the museum by an anonymous lady. Mayor Gee remarks: ‘Such gifts as these, exhibiting as they do a true interest in the welfare and progress of the City, are ever welcome and are gratefully acknowledged’. Public acknowledgments of generous donations were to continue for many decades and were often managed in a thoughtful and creative manner reflecting the degree to which they were valued. The John Hart Bequest for instance where the interest on £10,000 was used to redevelop Royal Park and establish a conservatory in City Park: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1927*, p. 5 and LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer and Building Surveyor’s Office, 1937*, p. 43. In LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1932*, p. 6, Mayor Monds described a bequest from the late Elizabeth Hall as the third in the past year which he felt reflected ‘the highest ideals of citizenship’.

intervention developed: direct provision of services or an imposition of obligations on the owners of urban property and those who used it. While the industrial revolution in Britain was to encourage individualism, the extent of social and environmental problems that emerged led to the development of a tendency towards a more ambitious level of public intervention.⁵⁴ From the 1850s, an increased 'civic consciousness' was evident in cities such as Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh. R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger have contended that municipalisation typically proceeded in three phases: increased investment in sanitation, appropriation of basic utilities and urban renewal.⁵⁵

Key British legislative reforms such as the *Municipal Corporation Act* 1835 were to have a strong influence on the evolution of local government in the colonies. While the shift towards local self-government was slow in Tasmania, much of the opposition fuelled by an ideological opposition towards taxation, the passage of the Hobart Municipal Bill in 1846 marked the beginning of local government in the colony.⁵⁶ While Merchant and Philanthropist Henry Reed's suggestion that Launceston come under a similar Bill was repudiated in a public meeting at the time, the 1852 Act of Parliament which created the LCC was met with little criticism (although the issue of plural voting was a sore point). The ensuing elections were met with enthusiasm and excitement. The anti-transportation candidates secured all available seats.⁵⁷ From the outset then, the LCC was overtly reformist in nature.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ The interventionist nature of the more centralised system of government that developed in Germany was to have a direct influence on the more traditionally individualistic system found in Britain during the 1890s. See: Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914*, New York, 1981, pp. 4-5, 49-50, 69. Michael Roe has argued that the 1835 Act 'affirmed a community's right to efficient, honest, and representative administration', adding that the attitude soon affected Australia. See also: Michael Roe, 'The establishment of Local Self-Government in Hobart and Launceston, 1845-1858', *THRAPP*, 14, 2 (January 1967), p. 21.

⁵⁵ R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, 'An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914', in R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, eds, *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* (London, 1993), p. 37. The degree to which any city indulged in these core pursuits were determined by geographical, social and political factors. Daniel Rodgers argues that while zoning became a keystone of reform in the USA, municipal utility ownership was poor in comparison to Britain and Germany with only nine US cities owning their own water works by the mid 1920s. See also: *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), pp. 152 & 184.

⁵⁶ Michael Roe, 'The establishment of Local Self-Government in Hobart and Launceston', *THRAPP*, 14, 2 (January 1967), pp. 22-4.

⁵⁷ Michael Roe, 'The establishment of Local Self-Government in Hobart and Launceston', p. 24 & Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', pp. 52-3.

Daniel T. Rodgers in *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* uses Birmingham as an example of an original hot-bed of municipal reform.⁵⁹ Despite having the highest death rate of any city in Britain in 1873, under the leadership of Mayor Joseph Chamberlain and through its local council, it was able to by-pass all the entrenched interests and use the profits from the municipalisation of gas supply to improve the condition of the waterworks and invest in sewerage and sanitary improvements. The Birmingham local authority had also utilised an Act to condemn unsanitary dwellings and forty three acres of cheap housing was subsequently torn down and redeveloped. By 1890 the city had been transformed into a modern city with a multitude of amenities.⁶⁰ Stefan Petrow has argued that the LCC was influenced by Chamberlain, quoting Mayor J. W. Pepper in 1904 when he described it as a 'large commercial concern', wherein the aldermen were 'the directors' and the ratepayers were 'shareholders'. The aim of municipal business was to provide services at the cheapest rate possible, the equivalent of paying a dividend to the 'shareholders'.⁶¹ 'Municipal socialism' involved the assumption of control of essential services such as gas and water, as well as establishment of those considered non-essential such as electricity supply and trams. The most important element was the use of profits from those enterprises to subsidise those services.⁶²

⁵⁸ *Examiner*, 1 Jan 1923, p. 6: This intimate account of the founding and subsequent history of the Council on the occasion of its 70th anniversary and it recounts that in relation to abolition of the transportation system, after the first election 'every councillor elected had voiced his opposition to its continuance'.

⁵⁹ Although F. M. L. Thompson has more recently argued that Chamberlain's apparent 'invention' of Municipal Socialism was actually preceded by similar reforms in Manchester, Glasgow and Leeds. See: F. M. L. Thompson, 'Introduction', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, p. 3. Thompson notes that the key elements of this trend of municipalisation were the provision of services related to gas, water and electricity supplies, as well as transport services.

⁶⁰ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp. 120-1.

⁶¹ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 29.

⁶² Stefan Petrow, 'Municipal Heaven: Launceston 1853-1914', *LHSP*, 15 (2003), p. 21. Petrow explores the differences between the three distinct systems of municipalism: *municipal enterprise* referred to the provision of services deemed essential by local authorities; *municipal trading* involved the provision of services not deemed essential. While the focus of the first types was to lower annual rates with profits, the aim of *municipal socialism* was to use the profits from services not to lower rates but to subsidise services to make them as cheap as possible for all residents. See also: 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 49-51.

Launceston began its shift towards municipalisation with the completion of the St. Patrick's River Water Supply Scheme in 1857. Likewise, the Scottish city of Glasgow solved its water supply problems with the new Loch Katrine water scheme in 1860. Both municipal authorities in Launceston and Glasgow appear to have been encouraged by their respective projects and further motivated by the 'sheer size of the social problems' they shared. By 1889, the LCC had established an adequate sewer system, provided gas lighting and constructed the Cataract Bridge. The LCC also eagerly accepted the opportunity to operate its own municipal fire and police services. The LCC had also helped to facilitate the establishment of the Launceston and Western Railway in 1871.⁶³ Although its achievements were not on the scale of some of its international counterparts such as Glasgow, by 1900, Launceston presented an undeniable case for consideration as a 'progressive city'.⁶⁴ It provided a stark contrast to the level of municipal intervention evident in the capital of Tasmania, Hobart.⁶⁵

2.1.6: The Emergence of an Alternative Social Economy

Daniel T. Rodgers has argued that municipalisation was the first 'Atlantic-wide progressive project'. But to Daniel T. Rodgers, it was the 'alternative social economy' it helped to create which made some cities more than just the sites of solely commercial ventures. The desire to be modern, advanced, cutting-edge, might have made a city a progressive one, but was not in itself a hall-mark of Progressivism. A Progressive city was more than just an exercise in pride; it was an

⁶³ Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', pp. 52-6. Gas lighting began in 1860. The Cataract Bridge was the first to be built in the Southern Hemisphere. The fire service was inaugurated in 1857. The railway route to Deloraine was taken back over by the Tasmanian State Government in 1873. Koshin lists the assumption of control of the local police force by the Launceston Council as having taken place in October 1865, but it is clear that it officially occurred 1 January 1858. See: *Examiner*, 15 December 1858, n. p., as cited in Stefan Petrow, 'Tolerant Town, Model Force: The Launceston Municipal Police, 1858-1898', *University of Tasmania Law Review*, 16, 2 (1997), p. 241.

⁶⁴ Glasgow followed a very similar municipalisation process to Launceston, but on a larger scale. By 1900, improved sanitation, slum demolition, housing provision and the acquisition of municipal services (including gasworks, laundries and trams) had all been established. See: Hamish Fraser, 'Municipal Socialism and Social Policy', in R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger, eds, *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* (London, 1993), pp. 260-2.

⁶⁵ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 26.

attempt to service the full spectrum of the needs of its residents. In *Atlantic Crossings*, Daniel T. Rodgers draws a picture of:

The self-conscious city, owning its essential services, steering the play of forces in the urban land market, its eye on the shelter needs of its inhabitants, its pride vested in its civic buildings and public spaces...⁶⁶

The combination of the cultural ethics of self-reliance and civic altruism, along with a successful program of municipalisation in Launceston, arguably laid the seeds necessary for the emergence of an 'alternative social economy' in the city.

In his history of Launceston, John Reynolds remarked on the sustained dichotomy of wealth and poverty in Launceston: 'This was a local revelation of that well-known anomaly of the industrial revolution which gave wealth to a few, relative prosperity to some, but practically nothing to groups in weaker bargaining positions'. While the economic boom of the 1870s made the city wealthy, poverty had always been evident but largely ignored. Some philanthropy was always evident but the problem was largely ignored by all levels of government. Relief was left to the churches which explained it as being a result of a high level of indolence amongst the lower orders. They provided minimal relief while attempting to instil an improved work ethic and sense of discipline among their flocks.⁶⁷ However the level of poverty among the lower orders was made even greater by the onset of economic depression in the early 1890s.⁶⁸ Lloyd Robson reports in his *Short History of Tasmania* that the local Benevolent Society was overwhelmed during 1894 with 2000 casual cases alone. The distress reached a peak in Launceston between 1893 and 1894, when the depression had even begun to affect the

⁶⁶ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp. 159, 164-5.

⁶⁷ John Reynolds, *Launceston*, pp. 136-8. Henry Reed (1806-1880), the noted local philanthropist whose charitable work was broad, was even influenced in approach by General William Booth of the Salvation Army.

⁶⁸ The evidence of William Whitaker (a lay preacher in the Wesleyan Church and appointed Town Missionary in 1854) in 1871 to a Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions (after an absence of ten years) revealed that he found the distress and poverty just as it had been during his first tenure. He described a city where the poor were 'lost in filth and wretchedness', few children were being educated and the sick neglected. He claimed the major cause of the suffering to be 'improvidence'. Barbara Valentine, 'Launceston City Mission', *LHSPP*, 14 (2002), pp. 29-30. Testimony drawn from 'Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions: Report of the Commissioners', in *UTAS Ltn Serial, Journals and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania*, Legislative Council Paper No. 47, (Hobart, 1871) pp. 45-99.

respectable classes. In some ways their suffering appears to have been made worse due to the social stigma associated with accepting relief. Many families, unfamiliar with the general degradations of poverty, had to be sought out by various church charities as they felt too ashamed to ask for aid.⁶⁹ The increase in the perceived level radicalism resulting from the indignities of economic depression, were a matter of intense concern for the middle classes.⁷⁰

The depression of the 1890s drew attention to the distress and disadvantage evident among the lower orders in Launceston. To the emerging Progressives in the city, the problem was not moral in nature but instead related to the poor urban environment. The solution was intervention informed by science.⁷¹ As exhibited across the globe during the classic Progressive era, there was increasing evidence of a dependence on expertise, encouraged by international developments primarily in the medical and social sciences and organisational theory. The adoption of a scientific approach to the general administration of society at all levels was the road to stability and progress. The core ethic was efficiency and this also had an immediate impact on the operation of the workplace.⁷² Grant W. Rodwell observed that there was a wide consensus of opinion amongst Progressives of a need for the professionalisation of public administration. Science, co-ordination and discipline were the organisational trilogy expounded by the Progressives. Rodwell explained that the change permeated all levels of government: 'Henceforth, government would be of the people, for the people, but by professional administrators or

⁶⁹ Lloyd Robson & Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, 2nd ed. (Hobart, 2005), p. 54.

⁷⁰ The publication of the socialist paper the *Tasmanian Democrat* between 1891 and 1897, as well as the catholic *Monitor* became useful vehicles for 'mild left-wing opinions'. They both supported the efforts of the union movement to win political representation and drew attention to the success of socialist policies in New Zealand. See: R. P. Davis, 'Tasmania', in D. J. Murphy, ed., *Labor in Politics, the State Labor Parties in Australia 1880-1920* (St. Lucia, 1980), p. 395.

⁷¹ The value of 'social exploration' had been well established by mid-century through the published moral indignation of observers such as Charles Booth and Jack London. The main problem identified was 'mid-Victorian paternalism' and the solution was scientific enquiry and intervention. See: Peter Kennedy, 'Introduction', in Peter Kennedy, ed., *Into the Unknown 1866-1913: Selections from the Social Explorers* (Manchester, 1976), p. 29.

⁷² Kevin Blackburn, 'The Quest for Efficiency and the Rise of Industrial Psychology in Australia, 1916-1919', *Labour History*, 74 (May 1998), p. 122-3. An article in the *Mercury*, 8 Oct 1910, p. 3, entitled 'Science and Labor, How to Lay Bricks' is a prime example of the local profile and widespread acceptance of the central ideas of scientific management. The article was based on a speech given by F. W. Taylor himself, past President of the American Society of Engineers. He states in one section: 'The increase in the output of working men was to be attained through deliberate scientific study of the motions of men'.

technocrats'.⁷³ The medical profession were one of the strongest exponents of core Progressive ideas: both the need for intervention and the need to rely on expertise. The formation of the Launceston District Nursing Association in 1893, funded not by government but by public subscription, was motivated by the recognition of the need to intervene as nursing care to be available to the poor in their own homes. An indication of the increasing role of experts in the process of providing services, the committee included two local surgeons. A qualified nurse was provided to supply proper medical care to those who would otherwise be denied it.⁷⁴

A local culture that valued self-reliance and at the same time encouraged civic altruism then, helped to encourage the rapid municipalisation of Launceston. That process in turn encouraged the development of an 'alternative social economy' within the city. The depression of the 1890s resulted amongst the middle classes in an increased focus on many of the social ills that had previously remained hidden. During this period, the LCC delivered some highly innovative infrastructure schemes. The evidence of successful infrastructure development in the city encouraged the local Progressives to become more ambitious in their calls for reform. What reformist goals which may have once seemed impossible were now achievable. Many Progressives were urban professionals and they were also informed by the literature and activities of various international movements. However the new social agenda of these emerging Progressive collations in the city were to not always correlate with those of the local aldermen.⁷⁵

2.1.7: The Role of the Examiner as a Catalyst for Progressivism

The role of the local paper, the *Examiner*, in promoting Progressivism, within the confines of the city of Launceston, cannot be underestimated. The open enthusiasm for Progressive ideas expressed by its editors during the period, and its subsequent

⁷³ G. W. Rodwell, *With Zealous Efficiency*, p. 10.

⁷⁴ John Reynolds, *Launceston*, pp. 136-7.

⁷⁵ David W. Gutzke has echoed Rodger's argument in characterising the Progressives' social agenda in the following manner: 'Progressive represented a response to the ills of urban industrial society in which reformers from the 1870s sought to humanise the city and ameliorate widespread social problems.' See: David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, p. 24.

influence as a catalyst for experiment and change requires that its role be independently analysed. There was also a remarkable continuity in the editorial tone of the paper across the wider Progressive era between 1890 and 1940. Two men largely held the position of senior editor of the *Examiner* during that time: F. J. Prichard and Stanley Dryden.⁷⁶ While Prichard was arguably a more sophisticated writer, Dryden continued Prichard's Progressive crusade from 1920 to 1938.⁷⁷ For both men, there could be no worse criticism applied to any local political figure than to brand him a member of the 'do nothing brigade'.⁷⁸

The *Examiner's* main competitor, the *Daily Telegraph*, operated until 28 March 1928.⁷⁹ In an editorial sense, like the *Examiner*, it exhibited a conservative political voice, minus the overt interventionist slant.⁸⁰ In an editorial sense, the paper could

⁷⁶ F. J. Prichard (1851-1920), Senior Editor of the *Examiner* for twenty seven years between 1893 and 1920. He was born Whitchurch, Hereford, England of Welsh extraction. Prichard came out with his parents and eleven siblings to Australia during the period of the gold rush. He then came to Tasmania in 1884. During his career as Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, the paper was obviously influenced by his Progressive stance on several issues. He died during a holiday in Sydney. See: *Examiner*, 21 May 1920, p. 4. Stanley Dryden (1869-1954), born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northumberland, England, he immigrated with his family to Tasmania in 1887. He spent three years on the land at Scottsdale and then became Assistant Reader for the *Examiner* in 1891. He was Chief of Staff for the majority of F. J. Prichard's twenty seven year tenure as Senior Editor. He became Senior Editor following Prichard's death in 1920. He was to remain in the position for more than 17 years, afterwards being retained as a Consultative Editor. He continued and expanded the Progressive slant of the main local paper as it had developed during Prichard's tenure. At the time of his death it was noted that he was often in the confidence of those in both government and civic office and that he had played a large role in the overall progress of Launceston. In relation to his journalistic style, at the time of his death it was noted that: 'His writing was forceful and yet characterised by simplicity of style that never left the reader in doubt as to what was meant'. In terms of wider associations, he was a Fellow of the Journalists of Great Britain and a leading figure in the local 'Masonic craft'. See: *Examiner*, 21 May 1920, p. 4; 11 March 1922, p. 26; 23 July 1938, n. p.; *Mercury*, 23 August 1954, n. p.

⁷⁷ *Examiner*, 21 May 1920, p. 4; 11 March 1922, p. 26 and 23 July 1938, n. p. Between them, both Prichard who was Editor of the paper for 27 years, and Dryden who was to hold the position for 18 years, provided a consistent and comprehensive catalogue of editorials discussing Progressive reform across the entire Progressive era. It is arguable that Prichard was and remained the superior writer, but their Progressive bias was almost identical. Like Prichard too, Dryden could be occasionally snide but he was very consistent in his support of Progressive notions. Having personally reviewed all editorials of the era, I argue that although unattributed, it is also very obvious when Dryden was absent (presumably on holiday or leave) as the various associate editors that took the editorial reigns, including R. J. Williams his eventual successor, did not write with the same air of emphasis or authority on Progressive issues.

⁷⁸ *Examiner*, 12 October 1920, p. 5

⁷⁹ The *Daily Telegraph* began as a bi-weekly publication in 1881. It served the Launceston community faithfully for forty seven years and its closure in 1928 resulted in putting seventy locals out of work. This was brought on by declining sales and it was in 1928 the fifth daily newspaper in Tasmanian to cease publication within 10-12 years. The closure resulted in the formation of the Telegraph Co-operative Printery. See: *Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1928, p. 4.

⁸⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 December 1919, p. 12. The Editor calls on the public to vote conservative (for the local Nationalist Party candidates) in the upcoming state elections. This is very similar to

be described as having less of a romantic faith in the validity of Progressive ideas.⁸¹ It also certainly gave less attention to Progressive endeavours such as the city manager experiment. On the whole, in relation to Progressive ideas it demonstrated a more critical analysis. While the *Daily Telegraph* exhibited a higher standard of journalism during the period of concurrent publication, its consistently objective editorial approach ironically makes it less significant to this study.⁸²

consistent political position of the *Examiner*, as demonstrated in an editorial published on 30 May 1919, p. 4: 'Stick to the Nationalist candidates. Vote for each and every one in order of preference. That is the only way the election is to be won'. The *Examiner*, 31 May 1919, p. 7 provides a list of all candidates in the election and the Nationalists names were capitalised! An anti-Labor bias is already very evident and provoked a rebuke from local candidate James MacDonald. He claimed that it was impossible to get press coverage in Northern Tasmania. The complaint was publicly rebuked by F. J. Prichard who claimed that coverage was a favour and not a right! This makes a nonsense of Sir Raymond Ferrall's dismissal of what he termed as 'the oft repeated rantings of the far left on the prejudice or otherwise of the media'. See: R. A. Ferrall, *Notable Tasmanians* (Launceston, 1980), p. 114.

⁸¹ It did support many Progressive reforms over nearly five decades of operation: it was pro-reform in Primary education; supportive of the local hydro-electric and tramway schemes; pro-board of health reform. See: *Daily Telegraph*, 28 March 1928, p. 4.

⁸² The *Daily Telegraph* advised its voters to vote 'No' in the failed local referendum on the issue of appointing a Business Manager, on 30 July 1920, p. 4. The Editor had previously expressed doubt on 15 July 1920, p. 4, that he was not convinced that diminishing the number of aldermen would help to improve the performance of the Council. Editor John Gunning argued that more time was needed to provide more details on how the system was to operate.

2.2: Case Study: The Four Themes of Progressivism in Launceston

2.2.1: The Focus on Infrastructure and Services

The infrastructure achievements of the municipalisation phase of the city of Launceston, served to encourage Progressives to become more ambitious in their calls for intervention. Motivated initially by general moral indignation over the horrors of the depression of the 1890s, the heightened sense of social politics that characterised the emerging Progressives and their determination to reform the urban environment appeared to complement the interest of the LCC in establishing a municipal haven. However their mutual agendas emerged as being quite independent.

2.2.1.1: Funding the Municipalisation of Launceston

From its very inception, the LCC had adopted a policy of responsible borrowing and management of debt in order to realise many of the services and amenities which came to symbolise Launceston's modernity. This borrowing took place through the London Money Market and Parliament normally approved this approach.⁸³ The passage of the *Launceston Water Act* in 1856 allowed it to raise £40,000 for the construction of the St. Patrick's Water Supply Scheme. Through the establishment of Reserve and Sinking funds, it was to ably manage debt that although gradually increased, was off-set by an increasing array of assets of particular value (including the Town Hall begun in 1864 and eventually costing £6000) and some with major revenue raising power (particularly the Hydro-electric

⁸³ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', p. 61.

scheme at Duck Reach completed in 1895).⁸⁴ In 1875, LCC debt had been £51,796, growing to £283,936 in 1901 and £453,758 in 1914.⁸⁵

2.2.1.2: The Influence of the 1890s Depression

Following the fall of the Van Diemen's Land Bank in 1891, the subsequent depression created challenges for some ambitious aldermen who were keen on extending the scope of municipalisation. In *A Short History of Tasmania*, Lloyd Robson noted the severe psychological effect of the crash in 1891 on Tasmanians in general remarking: 'Such was the impact of the crash that for many years afterwards Tasmanians dated events from the year the VDL Bank went broke'.⁸⁶ The depression did adversely affect the stability of the LCC's finances. In the financial year 1893-1894, the government stopped grants for streets. In order to save money, some positions were also amalgamated.⁸⁷

2.2.1.3: Expansion of Infrastructure and Services During the Municipalisation Phase

Still, the depression did not prevent the LCC from expanding several aspects of its municipal infrastructure and services. Despite some concerns that it would become a 'white elephant', the Launceston Albert Hall was built initially for the International Exhibition (which ran from 25 November 1891 to 22 March 1892) and also to provide a valuable ongoing civic facility. Mayor Sutton laid the foundation stone of the Albert Hall on 2 April 1890.⁸⁸ When completed and opened

⁸⁴ Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', p. 53. For the exact location of Town Hall please refer to Appendix A: 'An Interwar Map of Launceston, 1938', point of interest 1. The Duck Reach Power Station is situated beyond the boundaries of the map, within the Second Basin but there is an indication of it in the bottom right hand corner along the South Esk River.

⁸⁵ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 38.

⁸⁶ Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, 2nd ed. (Hobart, 2005), p. 53.

⁸⁷ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 58-60.

⁸⁸ Samuel John Sutton (1832-1906) was a Launceston businessman, Alderman and later Mayor. Born in Hobart but educated in Launceston, he became a baker by trade and a member of the local congregational community. Personifying the link between the moral reformer and the impersonal Progressive, he was also leader of the LTS and subsequently ran his hotel, the 'Metropole', on a

on 10 March 1891, it was the 11th largest such Hall in the world. The profits made just from its first engagement went towards the work being conducted on the Cataract Cliff Grounds by the Launceston City and Suburbs Improvement Association.⁸⁹

The city of Launceston experienced the second phase of municipalisation, as determined by Morris and Rodger, from 1889 to 1918.⁹⁰ The appropriation and development of basic utilities and services was modest but evident. The two most common municipal enterprises on the international stage were electrical power plants and tramways. German cities purchased power plants in unprecedented amounts during the 1890s. In many cases the two initiatives complemented each other. One of the most progressive cities in Germany, Frankfurt, established a power plant in order to power its new street-car system. Factors such as geography and political culture influenced the success of this phase, but its characteristics were consistent. For example, municipal electrical schemes were less common in the United States, but nine such plants were operating across the nation by the mid-1920s. Similarly, only four cities (Detroit, San Francisco, Seattle and New York) owned and operated their own tram systems by 1925.⁹¹

Certainly the most ambitious progressive infrastructure project of the 1890s was the construction of the Duck Reach power station. The *Launceston Lighting Act* was passed in December 1887 and granted the LCC rights over the water in the South Esk River for the purposes of producing electricity. Alderman and former Mayor Samuel Sutton was again at the forefront of this project and led the lobbying which

temperance basis. He served two terms as Mayor, in 1890-1891 and 1898. He was also the primary leader of the campaign for the local hydro-electric development scheme and several other infrastructure developments throughout that period. In addition to local politics he had two terms as a MHA from 1891-1897 and 1901-1903. He retired as an Alderman in 1905. During his life he was strongly engaged in many aspects of civic life including the Chamber of Commerce, the Launceston Benevolent Society and the Prisoner's Aid and Rescue Society. Historian, John Reynolds, described him in the following manner: 'A hearty, jovial man, Sam Sutton enjoyed both popularity and experienced periods of chilliness, the fate of all progressive spirits in public life'. He was married three times and had seven children by his third wife. He was buried in the first Launceston Public Cemetery in Charles Street. His headstone was transferred to the Monumental Cemetery at Carr Villa Cemetery in 1923. See: John Reynolds, *Launceston*, pp. 126-9, 191; *Examiner*, 8 September 1906, n. p.

⁸⁹ Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', p. 56.

⁹⁰ R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, 'An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914', p. 37.

⁹¹ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp. 122-3 & 252.

resulted in a public plebiscite wherein the majority vote of yes (2, 173) literally drowned the no vote (690). The LCC engaged the services of Professor Kernot of Melbourne University to act as advisor on the project. When the project was officially opened by Mayor Ferrall in December 1895, Launceston became the first city in the Southern Hemisphere to be lit by hydroelectric power.⁹² The city was to enjoy a reliable electricity supply from that point on. The system was also fastidiously maintained in order to ensure its continued profitability. Three-Phase power (more reliable than the original two-phase system) was adopted in 1903, demanding a massive overhaul of the system. The resultant financial loss was accepted as being an acceptable price for improving the overall grid.⁹³ In relation to lighting, the LCC strove to provide the most efficient lamps available. The transition was made from old carbon filaments to metal ones in 1909.⁹⁴ Despite its rejection at a plebiscite in 1910, a steam plant was added to the system in 1911 in order to prevent a shut-down, the LCC having considered the additional drain of the impending tram service and the ‘capricious flow’ of the South Esk River.⁹⁵ While its popularity helped to secure the new asset, public opinion had to be ignored as the LCC began to increasingly rely on it for its revenue and convenience in attracting business.

On an international scale, the establishment of tramways had a twofold effect on the development of modern cities. Tramways facilitated improved urban planning. Secondly, they allowed for controlled demographic expansion. In Britain, municipal bodies in Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh all made large investments in tramway systems.⁹⁶ The Canadian cities of Toronto and Hamilton also made the transition from ‘walking cities’ to ‘commuter cities’. Improved transportation networks allowed for the expansion of the metropolitan area to between ten to fifteen miles from the city centre. In these cities, before the establishment of tramways, the commercial, industrial and residential areas were

⁹² Jillian Koshin, ‘Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston’, pp. 56-7.

⁹³ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1903*, p. 1.

⁹⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1909*, p. 2.

⁹⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1911*, p. 2.

⁹⁶ R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, ‘An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914’, p. 37.

often intermixed.⁹⁷ A modern transport system allowed from increased segregation, thereby encouraging the shift towards the third phase of municipalisation which involved demolitions of slums, improved zoning and construction of state of the art working class housing.⁹⁸

The delayed but successfully instituted Launceston tram scheme constituted the first clear indication that the initial drive of enthusiasm for municipalisation among the aldermen was waning. In 1902 City Engineer Charles St. John David prepared a report on the 'advisability or otherwise of the construction of the tramways'. David was very sceptical as to the benefits of such a scheme noting that Launceston was not as favourably suited to it as Hobart was, although he agreed that the addition of a tram-service to the city was a 'very desirable adjunct'. His major objections appeared to be economic, stating that he was dubious as to whether residents would be prepared to pay three or four pence for the first few years of operation in order to help cover the costs.⁹⁹ As well as being a brilliant engineer and therefore a genuine asset to the LCC, David was as ever blunt and honest when asked to advise the aldermen of its options. David's own Progressive impulses were tempered by a cool, methodical intellect and pragmatic character.¹⁰⁰ This quality appears to have been

⁹⁷ David Cannadine, 'Victorian Cities: how different?', in R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger, eds, *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* (London, 1993), pp. 116 & 141.

⁹⁸ R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, 'An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914', p. 37.

⁹⁹ As quoted in a notice included in QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Address and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1902*.

¹⁰⁰ This is probably best exemplified by his 'dispute' with the State Hydraulic Engineer over the options available to the Council to ensure a steady supply of water and therefore hydroelectricity from the Duck Reach Power Scheme. Supported by the Chief Electrical Engineer at the time R. J. Strike, they continuously reiterated their opposition to his proposal to install sluices at Wood's Lake and add an additional pipe at the tunnel outlet of the scheme. The objections were based on hard practical facts related in part to an intimate knowledge of the topography of the area. See: QVM LCC8, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Power for Electricity, Report of the City Engineers on Mr. Reid Bell's Report, 27 August 1910. A brilliant example of David's methodical approach is his recommendations of four separate alternative schemes for improving the water supply of the City in July 1914 within which he not only investigates the possibility of increasing water distribution but also improving water quality and providing another power generation scheme. In Progressive fashion he quotes an independent expert Dr. J. C. Thresh, Medical Officer of Health to the Essex County Council on the benefit of using large reservoirs. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of City Engineer on Improvement in Water Supply, 3 July 1914*. Charles St. John David (1855-1924) had been appointed as City Engineer and Surveyor in March 1892 and served in that capacity for thirty two years. He was reportedly born in Chepstow, Monmouthshire, Wales but little is known for sure about his early life, including his family or his education and career. His will prepared in 1909 appears to suggest that he may have been born Richard Thomas Sargent and have first worked as a builder, joiner, undertaker and general contractor. He arrived in Queensland in 1870. He worked for several years in Brisbane as a consulting Engineer. He was appointed City Surveyor in Launceston during March 1892. His professional achievements were multiple, including the

valued by the more fiscally conservative aldermen and succeeded in tempering the ambitions of the Sutton-led faction.¹⁰¹

The matter was put before the people (i. e. the ratepayers) in a democratic fashion in 1906. The majority of those enfranchised voted in favour of the tram-scheme being established and run by a private company, the LCC retaining the right to purchase it after twenty one years of operation.¹⁰² However the capital could not be raised for it to be established as a private enterprise, and so the LCC eventually went to the polls again in 1909. Again the public voted in favour, this time for a plan to establish a municipal run scheme.¹⁰³ Stefan Petrow argues that it may have been the fiscal success of the Electric Light Department by this time that convinced the ratepayers that it was a solid gamble. Still it was noted at the outset in the Mayor's Address in 1909 that a 'slight wave of depression is passing over the city, and indeed over the whole state owing to varying causes, principally through the aggregation of adverse circumstances in mining and in the produce markets'. He reminded the general public that while the long-term outlook was good, that 'the revenue of the Council suffers when dullness of times prevails, and becomes more buoyant when prosperity is apparent'. Despite the decline in the local economy, the scheme was both popular and promised to be reproductive and those two factors helped to ensure that it was realised.¹⁰⁴

installation of the first hydro scheme at Duck Reach, the city swimming baths, the suspension bridge at the First Basin, designing the grounds of the public cemetery at Car Villa, redeveloping the sewerage system for the greater Launceston area, the design and construction of the tramway system and the design and remodelling of several important civic buildings. He deserves then to be remembered as being one of the principal architects for the realisation of a Progressive vision of the city of Launceston, a vision he did not always share but he supported with a rare talent and energy. Although David died in Sydney on leave, his body was returned to Launceston and given a civic funeral. See: Marion Sargent, 'The Enigma of Charles St. John David', *Tasmanian Ancestry*, 23, 3 (December 2002), pp. 147-51; *Examiner*, 18 July 1924, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ The opposing fiscal responsibility faction was in ascendancy after 1905 following Sutton's retirement and fully established by 1920. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1901, p. 5. For details on the post-1919 aldermanic culture of the city, please also refer to section 3.1.1.

¹⁰² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1902*, p. 5; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1906*, p. 1.

¹⁰³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1911*, p. 4. The first dedicated summary headed 'Tramways' includes a brief summary of the struggle to have the service realised over the previous five years.

¹⁰⁴ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 53-64. In that section Petrow notes that in 1909 the electric department provided a six per cent return on the total capital investment and therefore provides a solid argument for heightened confidence being a key factor in the institution of a municipal run tram-scheme. QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and

Both David and Strike faithfully submitted a report in July of 1909, proposing four schemes wherein practicality was measured against the percentage of the population served in each case, which included a detailed map of each potential scheme.¹⁰⁵ The Mayor reassured the public in his Address of 1910 that tramway undertakings were ‘remunerative elsewhere’. A large loan had to be secured in order to realise the scheme. This brought the number of major LCC loans to nine (the largest of which at the time was for the construction of the power scheme for which total expenditure was £167,709). The revenue at the time from the Electric Light Department was sufficient to be retiring some debt, but much of the profits were soon being used to subsidise other LCC departments.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, while the path to the establishment of the service was uneven, the scheme was only realised because it was a potential economic asset. This did not prevent the aldermen from portraying the project publicly as a purely progressive achievement. In 1911, the Mayor declared that the LCC had ‘installed a system relatively equal to any in

Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1909*, p. 1. In the Financial summary, the Mayor notes that the ‘principal business of providing the electric lighting has been yielding a fair amount for the reserve fund’.

¹⁰⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report on Electric Tramways to His Worship the Mayor and Aldermen, 1909*, pp. 1-6. R. J. Strike AMIEE, MIE (AUST) AMAIEE (1873-1941) was educated in Sydney and first worked as an Electrical Engineer at Broken Hill and later New Zealand. He first came to be in the employ of the LCC as ‘Mains Engineer’ in 1899 soon after the Duck Reach Hydro-Electric scheme was put into operation. He was given an executive job at Town Hall until the retirement of Consulting Engineer W. Corin in 1907 when he was appointed City Electrical Engineer. In 1909 he and City Engineer Charles St. John David produced a four scheme report for the Council on the proposed tramway scheme. He was also given the position of Superintendent of Tramways from 1911 which he held until his death in 1941. He went on a tour of the cities of Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong in 1923 with Mayor Shields and Alderman Monds with the object being to ‘study Municipal methods and acquire information which might be serviceable to the Council’. Strike had to be hospitalised for several months in 1927 due to ill health. At the time of his death in November 1941, Mayor Boatwright noted that the Electric Department had only grown in size and prestige under his management. He had few outside interests other than his family. His wife predeceased him by 15 years, the couple having had 3 daughters. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1905*, p. i; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1907*, pp. i-1; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report on Electric Tramways to his Worship the Mayor and Aldermen, Launceston, 2 July 1909*, pp. 1-6; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1921*, p. i; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1923*, p. 4; UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1922*, p. 4; LLS – Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1941*, p. 9; *Examiner*, 3 November 1941, p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1910*, p. 1. For instance the Water account for that year had increased its debt to £2,539 but the finance committee decided to transfer money from the electric lighting account into it so that the debt was reduced to £920/02/06.

Australasia and of which, I am further proud to remark, that the citizens and visitors have shown a full appreciation'.¹⁰⁷

2.2.1.4: The Onset of Fiscal Conservatism

In addition to the economic pressures of the depression of the 1890s, there was a political dimension to the reduction of expenditure on infrastructure by the LCC. The controversy over the original bill for the electric light scheme drafted to incorporate a levy of two shillings in the pound, reminded the aldermen of the sensitivity of ratepayers to the issue of maintaining low rates. This was exacerbated by the fact that the favourable poll conducted in June 1892 was based on an estimation of a small levy of six pence in the pound. A petition to abolish the original bill exposed the aldermen to close scrutiny. The eventual rate levied was four pence in the pound. Arguably in response to public pressure, overall rates levied in the pound were kept low over the following decade and they actually fell from three shillings and five pence to two shillings and six pence between 1893 and 1895, at the peak of the depression. They began to rise again as the recovery took place to three shillings and three pence in 1897-98, before reaching stability again at three shillings by 1900. This was in part aided by the removal of the police rate following centralisation in 1899. Therefore the rates levied in the period overall had dropped from three shillings and four pence in 1885 to just three shillings in 1905.¹⁰⁸ The emphasis on low annual rates appears to have been a political tactic amongst the aldermen to ensure re-election. However it prevented appropriate maintenance and the expansion of infrastructure.

The new century brought about overall, official shift in fiscal policy for the city. In 1901, Mayor Boland lamented the recent lack of fiscal stringency:

From almost the establishment of the Corporation the policy of the Council was to keep up the assessment and the rates, especially the water, and provide good reserve funds for emergencies, and to

¹⁰⁷ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1911, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 58-60.

execute such public works as were very necessary. Within the last seven or eight years this has been changed to the policy of freely carrying out public works, using the reserve funds, lowering the assets, and reducing the rates, with the result that Parliamentary sanction has had to be obtained to enable the Council to wipe off its debit balances and start with a fresh sheet.

In short, Mayor Boland, was recommending a return to the ‘old-fashioned policy’ of spending with restraint.¹⁰⁹ This is quite at odds with the loans expended in the pursuit of ‘reproductive advantages’ argument, which had been championed for several years by Alderman Sutton and his support base.¹¹⁰

The mostly favourable economic circumstances of the first decade of the new century meant that rates were only minimally raised. The overall rateable value of the city increased and that combined with the revenue raised from both the electric power and tramway enterprises meant that the LCC could afford to pass those benefits on to the residents. However with the exception of the tram-scheme, works were limited to only those that were deemed necessary. This policy was criticised by City Engineer David who continually reminded LCC of the need to properly maintain infrastructure.¹¹¹ As early as 1898, the City Surveyor had remarked that: ‘At the risk of repeating what has been stated in former reports, I am bound to again refer to the inadequacy of the amount voted for street construction and repairs’. He went on to explain that while he estimated that £6000 per annum was required, the amount voted for in 1898 was only just over £4236.¹¹²

Certainly urban expansion was creating a practical problem for the LCC in the first decade and a half of the new century: it was becoming increasingly difficult to both maintain basic services such as water supply and drainage as well as meet the demand from them in the new suburbs. In 1915, the Gunn estate was sub-divided in to fifty four allotments, and those combined with the rest of the available land when cut presented the LCC with the proposition of providing services for no less than 320 additional dwellings. City Engineer David estimated the cost of laying the

¹⁰⁹ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1901, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Stefan Petrow, ‘The Best Governed City in Australia’, p. 61.

¹¹¹ Stefan Petrow, ‘The Best Governed City in Australia’, p. 60.

¹¹² QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Surveyor*, 1898, p. 1.

twelve and fifteen inch pipes necessary to provide drainage to the new area at £476 (neglecting those technically outside the city boundary and allowing for roof water and sewage only and not surface water).¹¹³

2.2.1.5: The Launceston Marine Board and the Hunter Scheme

W. Henry Hunter had been originally engaged by A. E. Evershed, the Master Warden of the LMB.¹¹⁴ He arrived in Launceston on April 2 and departed May 7. Hunter later recounted that his trip was a positive one:

During my stay in Tasmania I made Launceston my headquarters, and had ample opportunity of making myself acquainted with the existing conditions of trade and commerce in the district of which Launceston is the centre and the Tamar is the natural line of transport, as well as with the prospects of development of the trade and of increase in the commerce in question.

He also claimed to have enjoyed the full co-operation of the LMB in regards to the provision of all the data and samples he required. Hunter divided his recommendations between works for the overseas trade and the Launceston trade. The first set of works he costed at £85, 000 and were to include: the removals of Bombay, Garrow and Porpoise Rocks, the dredging of point of Anchorage Shoal, the construction of first section of wharf in Long Reach, near Sawyer's Point, 700 feet in length, as well as roads, sheds, railways and equipment for the wharf. The second set of works were estimated to cost £326, 000 and were to include removal of Whirlpool Rock (to depth of thirty feet below Low Water Spring Tide, the improvement of Whirlpool Reach, the formation of new channel between

¹¹³ QVM LCC2: Sewerage East Launceston and St. Leonards' Council, Memo from City Engineer to Works Committee, 24 April 1915.

¹¹⁴ The Marine Board Port Offices during the interwar period were situated on the Esplanade along the North Esk River. Please refer to Appendix A: 'An Interwar Map of Launceston, 1938', point of interest 25. William Henry Hunter (1849-1917) an Engineer first employed as the resident engineer on the Hylton and Mouth Wearmouth railway, Durham in 1872. He was later employed on pioneer and parliamentary work for the Manchester Ship Canal between 1882 and 1887. He then became chief assistant engineer on the design and construction of the ship canal, becoming chief engineer in 1895. He was then elected as a member of the Board of Consulting Engineers of the Panama Canal in 1905. At the time of his engagement by the LMB he was in private practice. See: R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston* (Launceston, 1983), p. 38 and *Mercury*, 5 March 1917, p. 3.

Rosevears and Town Point, including formation of new harbour and of a turning basin and the construction of a first section of new wharf near Town Point 1000 feet in length, as well as roads, sheds, railways and equipment for wharf. His estimate did not include the cost of the proposed dry dock for the city. In defending the ambitious nature of the plan, Hunter resorted to the use of a famous maxim: 'facilities beget trade'.¹¹⁵ Sir Raymond Ferrall later claimed that the consequences would have been dire if the LMB had not taken on such an ambitious agenda: 'It is quite certain that Launceston would have stagnated and the Tamar become a backwater of small account'.¹¹⁶

Hunter's vision was very progressive in nature, in that it was epic in scope and a reflection of the sort of elaborate intervention typical of the municipalisation of the age. It did draw a degree of criticism, particularly from fiscal conservatives concerned that it was not justified by the relatively small population of the north. However, such criticisms were dismissed as it was largely agreed that the aim was population and economic growth, which could not occur without the proper facilities. The key to the plan's success was the vision of a deep water port situated at Bell Bay connected to a railway system, linked directly to Launceston. In endorsing the scheme, the LMB were accepting the notion that an increased level of taxation was acceptable if it was to encourage the economic development of the region. The scheme - although modified over time - was to dominate the long-term policies of the LMB for the next half-century.¹¹⁷

2.2.1.6: The Failure of the LCC to Adopt the New Social Agenda

The opening of a new public cemetery, Carr Villa, on 1 August 1905, represented an emerging pattern of intervention by the LCC. As municipal socialism increasingly fell in to disfavour with the serving aldermen, the LCC engaged in

¹¹⁵ *Examiner*, 3 August 1912, pp. 8-9.

¹¹⁶ R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston*, pp. 40-3.

¹¹⁷ The public debate mainly concerning the potential benefits versus the cost of the scheme was epitomized by the series of letters to the editor published in the *Examiner*, 8 & 9 August 1912, n. p. For instance Arthur T. Symonds comments published on the 8 August remark: 'It will be an advantage to have a good port at the north of Tasmania'. That same day, J. W. Cheer's comments were published: 'The question we must ask is, will the districts served by Launceston furnish a sufficient volume of traffic to pay £400 per week extra wharfage?'

Progressive intervention only in response to pressure from state governments or at least to their policies that had an indirect impact at the local level.¹¹⁸ The passage of the *Cemeteries Amendment Act*, 1902, for practical health reasons closed all burial grounds within the limits of the city on 31 December 1905.¹¹⁹ Following the approval of a government loan of £3000, work had begun in 1902. Carr Villa House was demolished, an initial five acres cleared, the ground ploughed and levelled, a sexton's house and mortuary chapel built and initially one thousand trees and shrubs and an additional thousand hedge plants were planted. The changes in the early operation of the cemetery reflect increasing secularisation in society. At the outset, graves faced East-West but this was soon changed to the familiar North-South pattern – which was quite revolutionary at the time.¹²⁰ The LCC often implemented highly efficient and innovative schemes but its motivation was often debatable. This factor is demonstrated by its sustained neglect on other infrastructure reform issues as defined by the emerging Progressive social agenda.

By the turn of the last century, the LCC clearly needed to begin to again address the issue of sanitation. Specifically there were increasing calls for improving the quality of the water supply and to implement a coherent drainage and sewerage program. The City Medical Officer (CMO), L. Grey Thompson in 1907 began agitating for improvements in the water supply reporting in one case that: 'It is evident to the most casual observer that as settlement progresses it will be necessary to pipe the water from St. Patrick's River to the city'.¹²¹ The population along the likely spots

¹¹⁸ On the surface alone, this achievement has been interpreted as evidence of the Progressive direction of the LCC during the period. See: Stefan Petrow, 'Municipal Heaven', p. 23.

¹¹⁹ This Act amended the Cemeteries Act, 1865 and provided for relatives of those interred or those with a previously established right of burial to be buried in any of the urban burial places up to 31 December 1925. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, 'A Bill to further amend The Cemeteries Act, 1865', Bill No. 13, *Journals and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania 1902*, Vol. XLVI (Hobart, 1903). The Bill was latterly referred to as Act 2 Edward VII, No. 9.

¹²⁰ This background information is derived from M. Roberts, *The History of Carr Villa as a Cemetery from 1901 to 1963 Based on details in Launceston City Corporation Annual Reports*, January 1988, held in the General Cemeteries File at the Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania.

¹²¹ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply, 1907-1908*, Letter from Medical Officer to Town Clerk, 19 April 1907. Lavington Grey Thompson (1855-1923), the son of a merchant, born Launceston and educated at Launceston Grammar School and later Edinburgh University. He first worked as a surgeon at a Brisbane hospital before succeeding Dr. Murphy as Surgeon-Superintendent of the Launceston General Hospital (LGH) until 1889 and was himself succeeded by Dr. James M. Pardey. Then entered private practice. He replaced J. T. Wilson as CMO in 1903 and remained in the post until his death. He was to prove a driving Progressive force for the city. He never married but was heavily involved in many Professional and civic associations including serving on the

of pollution at the intake at St. Patrick's River (about eight miles square), at the time had a population density of about 400 persons or forty four families.¹²² While noting in his annual report in the same year that no 'sensible' pollution had been detected, he recommended the installation of a larger storage reservoir than Distillery Creek which at the time held 800,000 gallons, as he argued that it would diminish the amount of microbes.¹²³ Thompson was clearly aware of the dire contemporary situation in the more densely populated regions of England and the United States as he noted that the water consumed in some areas was practically 'dilute sewage'. In an attempt to avoid a similar scenario developing locally, he therefore pushed for treatment either through filter beds or chemical methods.¹²⁴ Another persistent complaint by Thompson was the amount of land-slips along the course of the river which delivered earth into the water.¹²⁵ City Engineer David was in full agreement, endorsing all that he had to say in 1907 and remarking that 'stringent measures will have to be adopted if we are to keep our supply free from contamination'. He recommended the cleaning of Distillery Creek from the dam to St. Patrick's River and half a chain on each side and more importantly that it should be 'kept clean'. Furthermore, it was his opinion that either the head works needed to be totally reconstructed (as he claims he suggested half a decade before) or that the water be piped to the city for the entire distance (admitting that that would mean a large amount of expenditure).¹²⁶

executive committee for the Mechanics Institute, becoming the Executive Officer of the British Medical Association, the Treasurer of the BHA from its inception, Chieftain of the Caledonian Society and Treasurer of the Tasmanian Turf Club. At the time of his death, Mayor Shields noted that within a week of his demise, he was still attending his duties. The Mayor summarised his character in the following way: 'His distinguished medical career, his active interest in many public institutions, and above all his sympathy and generosity towards the poor and afflicted, will keep his memory green in the hearts of the citizens'. He was succeeded by the equally Progressive Dr. Pardey. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1923*, p. 3; *Examiner*, 24 October 1923, p. 5.

¹²² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1909*, p. 1.

¹²³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1907*, p. 2.

¹²⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1908*, pp. 1-2.

¹²⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1909*, p. 2.

¹²⁶ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply, 1907-1908*, Letter from City Engineer to Water Works Committee, 20 May 1907.

Surface drainage in Inveresk was a particular problem, and the area had a reputation as a breeding ground for disease. Stefan Petrow explained that as a suburb, Inveresk was popular with the poor as it was positioned in close proximity to the main city and land was cheap.¹²⁷ Although some blame for the persistence of certain diseases in Launceston, particularly diphtheria, was the ignorance or carelessness of the common man, it was becoming increasingly clear that the physical environment was a crucial factor. Typhoid fever broke out in 1900, there being thirty cases and two deaths.¹²⁸ The Mayor's Address in 1901 noted in relation to the health of the city, that while general health had been good, drainage work continued.¹²⁹ No doubt further instances of a bubonic plague outbreak on the mainland created a heightened state of awareness of the importance of hygiene.¹³⁰ In his first report as CMO for the Launceston district, L. Grey Thompson particularly noted that: 'The contemplated extension of deep drainage in various suburban portions of Launceston will materially add to the comfort of all citizens'.¹³¹ From 1905, Thompson provided a break down of cases of infectious disease relative to their locality of origin. Almost without exception it was the area of North Launceston that exhibited the highest number of cases and within that area was situated the densely populated area of Inveresk.¹³² In his annual address in 1899, Mayor Panton noted that the underground sewerage infrastructure had been constructed with borrowed capital which was almost exhausted and that 'the question of providing funds for future works will need the serious attention of the LCC'.¹³³ The time had come for the attention of the city to return to the much more traditional problems of water supply, drainage and sewerage, but it was to only partly meet the challenge.

¹²⁷ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 39.

¹²⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health and Inspector of Stock, 1900*, p. 8.

¹²⁹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1899*, p. 4.

¹³⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health and Inspector of Stock, 1901*, p. 13.

¹³¹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1905*, p. 4.

¹³² Between 1906-1910, North Launceston consistently had the highest number of notified cases of infectious disease in the Launceston district, closely followed, as was the norm, by Central Launceston. QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1906 – 1910*.

¹³³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1899*, p. 1.

In relation to the quality of the water supply, in 1904 the Distillery Creek dam was emptied and cleaned, although at this early stage of reform nothing was mentioned about the possibility of installing a filtration plant or other means of purification.¹³⁴ In his Address of 1905, Mayor Pepper could report that the race had been concreted the whole distance from the tunnel to the dam, although the intake was yet to be done.¹³⁵ Following L. Grey Thompson's condemnation of the water supply in 1907, the Water Works Committee investigated the situation along the River and ordered several works be done including the construction of head works, screens and gates at the intake and fencing the race either side all the way along Adams flat. Most importantly testing was to be done of the water quality and the construction of a filter system was to be considered by the LCC.¹³⁶ The consequent analysis of the water quality which took place in the laboratories of successive state governments revealed moderately reassuring results: discounting animal matter and pollution, a puzzling increase in chlorine was detected between the eight mile mark and the dam. Thompson argued that this might have been due to natural springs. In explaining the fact that solids increased in the dam area, Thompson revealed that they were natural constituents that occur in tributaries. The State Government laboratories themselves concluded that though there was evidence of ammonia in the river, it was of a vegetable origin. Comparing the 1907 samples with those taken last in 1901, laboratory staff concluded that the time of the year may have been a factor as they explained that rains can wash vegetable matter into the river.¹³⁷

The 'passable' results of the water sampling resulted in the LCC receiving an official rebuke from the Chief Health Officer (CHO), J. S. C. Elkington in 1908.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1904*, p. 2.

¹³⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1905*, pp. 1-2.

¹³⁶ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply 1907-1908*, Report of the Water Works Committee, 1 October 1907.

¹³⁷ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply 1907-1908*, Letter from the Medical Officer to the Town Clerk, 18 December 1907.

¹³⁸ John Simeon Colebrook Elkington (1871-1955), born Castlemaine, Victoria. His father became an Inspector of Schools. 'Jack' studied medicine but failed his finals in 1890 and afterwards graduated from the University of Melbourne with a degree in arts and law. He became a lecturer there in 1877 and in 1879 became Professor of History and Political Economy. His focus was on health policy and he was an active member of the Melbourne Hospital Committee. He was invited to Tasmania during the small pox outbreak of 1900 and thereafter became the state CHO. During his tenure he greatly reformed and improved the health system. In 1910 he took up the position of Commissioner of Health for Queensland. Elkington became Federal Quarantine Officer for the state in mid-1913. He helped to expand the quarantine service into a Federal Department of Health.

Elkington commented: 'It is further necessary to warn the local authority that isolated... analyses of a few gallons of water taken once or twice a year, are not of the least use in enabling an idea to be formed concerning the general safety of any water supply so far as the spread of water-borne disease is concerned'. While insisting on stringent testing, Elkington went on to warn of the dangers of relying on testing alone, dismissing Thompson's acceptance of a passable rating and berating him for the existence of privy pits, earth closets and surface drains close to the collection area. While admitting it was impossible for the local authority to prevent all contamination, Elkington warned that it would only take half a pint of typhoid laden urine or a single typhoid infected stool in several million gallons of water to cause an incident which 'would of necessity have a most disastrous effect upon the welfare and progress of your city'. He finished with a steadfast recommendation for the LCC to provide means of filtering or purifying the water supply.¹³⁹ Although the Water Works Committee had by this time reached the same conclusion, and Elkington's response would have added authority to arguments for an adequate filtration system, a mechanical filtration plant for the scheme was still on the design board in 1924.¹⁴⁰

The failure of the LCC to end the reliance on tidal disposal of raw sewage relates directly to its increasing culture of fiscal conservatism after 1905. The first formal plan to rectify the problem had actually been proposed by City Surveyor Mault in 1886. His successor Charles St. John David remained faithful to the basic premise of the Mault plan which involved constructing an intercepting sewer which bisected the main streets of the city, averting the discharge of the sewerage into the river and collecting it at the base of the Tamar Street Bridge. Using ejectors, the material was to then be transferred under the structure to the other side allowing for treatment or discharge on flood tides. Despite the fact that several municipalities adjoining the

He pursued an interest in tropical method primarily as a method of facilitating Anglo-Saxon expansion into the equatorial zone. He resigned in 1928. Michael Roe claims that his career 'zenith' was passed by 1914, although he continued to contribute strongly to the field of health through his publications to the end of his public career. Elkington led a highly active life and married twice. See: Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960* (St. Lucia, Queensland, 1984), pp. 89-117.

¹³⁹ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply 1907-1908*, Letter from Secretary of the Department of Health to Officer of Health, 8 January 1908.

¹⁴⁰ QVM LCC2: *Water Supply – General Reports, Memos etc.*, Memo from City Engineer to Mayor, 18 January 1924.

city had not yet amalgamated, David was steadfast in his belief that this system needed to be based on a plan which integrated infrastructure between Invermay, Inveresk and the remainder of the city.¹⁴¹ There had been little action taken on the issue by 1903 (perhaps deterred directly by the recent plague scare in 1900 and small pox epidemic earlier that year?). David was subsequently asked by the aldermen to report again on the issue. He estimated the proposed scheme would cost £26,000 (exclusive of the Invermay drainage project which was also crucial to the overall plan). Ever prudent, David already appeared dubious about the treatment option noting that large tanks and much space would be required. In the event that the LCC decided to adopt the plan, in full he was in favour of the bacterial purification of effluent rather than chemical treatment, which he regarded as ‘thing of the past’ as the alternative offered better results at a lower cost.¹⁴² David’s scheme was considered by the Sewerage Committee and rejected on the basis of cost. Instead it recommended a plan for minor works prepared previously in 1901, involving improvements to the outlets on George and Tamar Streets at an estimated cost of just £200.¹⁴³

The practice of tidal disposal of sewerage represented a shared challenge between the LCC and the LMB. The LMB had the responsibility of dredging the rivers in question, particularly the upper reaches of the Tamar. In 1903 the LMB sought legal advice on the issue and it was informed that while the LCC was known to be committing offences against the *Rivers Pollution Act*, it was utilising the best practicable and available means for disposal, making prosecution unlikely. Also any injunction would not only require great expense and the testimony of a range of experts, but might not be successful. The fact that the LMB had remained passive on the issue for so long would not have improved the likelihood of a decision in its favour.¹⁴⁴

Hunter’s subsequent report delivered in 1912 was to dominate the policy agenda of the LMB for more than the next half century. Its recommendations were varied. The

¹⁴¹ QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Letter from City Surveyor to Mayor, 12 September 1894.

¹⁴² QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Letter from City Surveyor to Mayor, 5 September 1903.

¹⁴³ QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Report of the Sewerage Committee (as a sub-committee to the Whole Council Committee), 2 November 1903.

¹⁴⁴ QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Legal Opinion on the Sewage Problem, Discharge into the Harbour, provided by Messrs. Alfred Green and Co. for the Launceston Marine Board.

two most contentious areas of the report were its recommendations for sewage discharge into the North Esk to cease and for an alternative method of sewage treatment to be implemented. Hunter considered it necessary to limit raw discharge to North of Home Reach only during tide ebbs. While he noted that the wardens were concerned about the costs, they eventually implemented eighty per cent of his recommendations. Sir Raymond Ferrall was to wryly note in 1983 that although Mayor Sadler had assured the LMB that the LCC would deal with the problem in 1921, it actually took another sixty years for the dumping of crude sewage into the River to end.¹⁴⁵

To the credit of the LCC, it availed itself of the services of an expert in sanitary matters in 1904. Doctor Theodore Kendall-Mailler was engaged to produce a report on the issue of sewage disposal in Launceston and make recommendations.¹⁴⁶ He seemed to sense the brakes which had been applied to the advancement of the city, noting that: 'I was greatly surprised that the city of Launceston, which is so much up to date in many directions of municipal administration, should be so backward in reference to the maintenance of the purity of its water supply, and should altogether back any system of sewage disposal'. Kendall-Mailler was a critic of disposing of sewage in rivers explaining that: 'the current of a river can be strong but does not always maintain itself in the centre of a river and therefore it is possible for matter

¹⁴⁵ R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston*, pp. 40-3. In addition to the proposal to end raw sewage discharge into the North Esk, Hunter recommended that: the development of an overseas trade area with a deep water port at Long Reach or Bell Bay connected to Launceston by rail; the construction of new wharves at Home Reach to better provide for interstate trade, the removal of rocky obstacles in the river and the dredging of Anchorage Shoal; the excavation of a canal; at Haystack point extending to Ti-Tree Bend; the construction of a dry dock; the purchase of specialist equipment including a bucket dredge; the acquisition of as much foreshore as possible.

¹⁴⁶ The use of a consultant had actually been one of City Engineer David's recommendations in his report on the issue in 1903. See: QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Report of the Sewerage Committee (as a sub-committee to the Whole Council Committee), 2 November 1903. Theodore Kendall-Mailler (1857-1930), a Sydney born surgeon who became an expert and consultant on sanitary issues. He first took a BA in Sydney and later a medical qualification at the University of Edinburgh. Returning to Sydney, he worked as an Assistant Surgeon at St. Vincent's Hospital. He subsequently became a medical advisor to the Sydney Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage between 1892 and 1904. During that time he produced a work entitled *The Australian Sanitary Inspectors Handbook* (Sydney, 1901) with John L. Bruce. He moved to Launceston to practice that year and produced reports on sanitation reform for several local municipal authorities, including the HCC. In 1910 he relocated to England. He practiced medicine there until the outbreak of the Second World War when he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps, allocated the rank of major. He spent the war in charge of the hospital ship, the St. Andrew which carried wounded soldiers across the channel from France to England. After the war he was appointed local health officer of the Isle of Wight until his retirement in 1927. See: (Adelaide) *Advertiser*, 24 September 1904, p. 5; *Mercury*, 12 October 1904, p. 3; *Argus*, 22 November, 1904, p. 6; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 1930, p. 15.

to be deposited on adjacent shores... acted on by the sun and atmosphere creating greater nuisance'. He recommended that the city's sewage be treated in the area between Margaret and Charles Street or in Inveresk. He noted - like City Engineer David had - that any plan relating to Inveresk had to incorporate the township of Invermay, as Inveresk received all the drainage from that adjacent municipality. In terms of treatment Kendall-Mailler recommended a plan in which the solid contents of the sewage were reduced to a state of liquefaction by means of three changes which occurred in a covered septic tank (based on the process of oxidation, forty per cent of the organic matter is transformed into gas and much of it is then consumed by microbes), then the further breaking up of organic matter by their passage through filters which were subject to constant aeration. The final product then would be 'clear, colourless, odourless and tasteless' and therefore safe to discharge into the river. Kendall-Mailler estimated the cost to be between £9-10,000, which at five per cent interest would have translated into an LCC expense of about £500 annually.

The LCC failed to respond positively to the Kendall-Mailler report. This was partly due to the fact that both the aldermen and City Engineer David repudiated the link suggested in the report between the policy of tidal disposal and increasing incidence of typhoid fever.¹⁴⁷ The major objection however was economic in nature. In 1905 David tabled another report on 'sewage matters' to the aldermen. It was already his fourth report on the issue and he was still advising caution. Although this was before the official amalgamation between the Launceston and the Inveresk/Invermay municipal authorities, it was accepted that any effective scheme needed to take the suburb into consideration. This increased the estimated cost. David noted that the cost of installing a complete system of sewers for Invermay and incorporate purification works, would amount to an additional cost of well in excess of five thousand pounds. Consequently David commented in this report that

¹⁴⁷ David (perhaps because he was in the direct firing line of responsibility as the relevant departmental head) particularly objected to Kendall-Mailler's implication that the thirty six cases and five deaths related to typhoid over the previous year could be attributed to the method of sewage disposal, noting that it gave a false impression of a crisis. He noted that of the cases, eight originated from outside the city boundary and eight from Victoria. Of the five deaths, three were amongst those originating from outside the city and one was actually due to diabetes, resulting in a total of only one death. See: QVM LCC2: Sewerage – Disposal of, Memo from City Engineer to Sewerage Committee, 1904.

‘undoubtedly this district should contribute towards the cost of the Inveresk scheme, the exact amount can be hereafter determined’.¹⁴⁸

Two other practical reasons delayed the implementation of a comprehensive sewage and drainage scheme. The reclaimed land in Invermay, leading up to Tea-Tree Bend (at the time known as Dargan’s Flats), was consistently in a liquid mud state. A core aspect of the plan was to carry the necessary tank sewers but the condition of the area made it unsuitable. Furthermore, the technology associated with the treatment of sewage was advancing rapidly. This meant that any system invested in would be a risk and also that it could soon be made redundant. These practical concerns though still translated into higher costs. The reclaimed area of Invermay would have had to have been fully drained before pipes could be laid with confidence.¹⁴⁹ Even by 1914, improved sanitation technology had increased the estimated cost of outfitting Launceston with a state of the art sewage system was estimated at around eighteen thousand pounds.¹⁵⁰

CMO L. Grey Thompson’s indifference towards the proposed sewage treatment scheme also impeded progress. He argued that, although it was undeniably offensive to the senses, the potential harm crude sewage discharge could cause was debatable. He referred to an experiment with Thames water as an indication that typhoid bacilli perished with great rapidity. In 1914, Thompson estimated that a septic tank system for the city would need to cover three acres and realistically cost upwards of £30,000. In comparison with other cities, Thompson stated:

While some cities are treating their sewage on a scientific plan, it is noteworthy that Hobart has abandoned the septic tank system and is delivering the raw sewage into the sterile sea, which is always able to purify itself quickly. In the United States 75% of the 28,000,000 people living in cities discharge their sewage into inland waters, 23%

¹⁴⁸ QVM LCC2: Sewerage – Disposal of, Report from City Engineer to Sewerage Committee entitled ‘Sewage Matters’, 7 July 1905.

¹⁴⁹ In fact the system being considered at the time, known as the activated sludge system, had by 1921 been replaced by the septic tank method of purification (which involved blowing air through the sewage) as it was faster and more cost effective. See: QVM LCC2: *Sewerage – Disposal of*, Unidentified newspaper report entitled ‘Sewerage of the City, Marine and City Board Engineers in Conference, Bridge and Wharf Approach’, 1921.

¹⁵⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April 1914, n. p.

into the sea or tidal waters, and only 4% maintain sewage purification plants.

He also reiterated Hunter's observation that tons of earthly matter was constantly being washed into the river through storm water, and that dredging was always going to be necessary regardless of the sewage contribution.¹⁵¹ This effectively absolved aldermen of any requirement to intervene in the short-term.

The LCC's main sanitation reform during this period, proved to be the completion of the Invermay deep drainage scheme in 1909.¹⁵² This was implemented at the relatively moderate cost of £5000. Parliamentary power was secured in 1905 to allow the LCC to borrow £25,000 in total to fully extend its deep drainage system.¹⁵³ In 1909, 101 infant deaths were attributed to infectious diseases. However, this was the first of three unusually hot summers which may have also contributed to this statistic.¹⁵⁴ Regardless, the aldermen again were keen to play up the health benefits of their Progressive approach to the issue of sanitation. The following year in his annual address, Mayor Oldham took solace in the fact that 'recently at least the health of the residents has improved and hopefully they will reap the benefit of the more sanitary conditions provided.'¹⁵⁵

2.2.1.7: The Town Planning Movement in Launceston

The garden city movement reflected the Progressive 'belief in the physical environment's capacity to mold individual character'. This offshoot of the Progressive movement emphasised 'unpolluted air, spaciousness, and gardens.' The garden city concept was a synthesis of both German and British ideas. The Garden City Association was formed in London in 1901. Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, the chief architects of its first privately funded project, the

¹⁵¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April 1914, n. p.

¹⁵² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health*, 1909, p. 1.

¹⁵³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1905, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵⁴ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health*, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1910, p. 4.

Letchworth Garden City, had both been influenced by aspects of the planning of small German towns and employed several elements into his design for the Hampstead Garden Suburb.¹⁵⁶ There walls and space were used to segregate various parts of the city into separate communities for both aesthetic and health reasons.¹⁵⁷ The movement spread widely across Western Europe. This was reflected in the translation of Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* into German, French and Russian by 1912.¹⁵⁸ The Liberal Party ensured that town planning became a central issue of the national election in January 1906.¹⁵⁹

There were three Commonwealth government 'fact-finding missions' to investigate merits of the garden city concept, 1913-15. Through the mediums of lectures, articles and interviews, Charles Reade and others, 'effectively disseminated' the central principles of town planning on a national basis.¹⁶⁰ Reade delivered a lecture in April 1915, which subsequently led to the formation of the Launceston Town Planning Association.¹⁶¹ This tour also appears to have inspired the formation of the Southern Tasmanian Town Planning Association (STTPA) based in Hobart.¹⁶² The formation of both planning associations in the state directly following Reade's lecture tour reflects the international nature and potency of the cross-fertilisation of Progressive ideas in this period.

¹⁵⁶ David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, pp. 33-4.

¹⁵⁷ Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914* (New York, 1981), pp. 66, 180-1.

¹⁵⁸ David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', p. 35.

¹⁵⁹ Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City*, pp. 66, 180-1.

¹⁶⁰ David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', pp. 37-8. Charles Compton Reade (1880-1933), native of East Invercargill, New Zealand, the son of a lawyer, who became a journalist and town planner. While working in London, Reade developed an interest in town planning and wrote several articles on the topic, some published in Australia and New Zealand. He became Secretary of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association of Great Britain and editor of its periodical. Following several tours of Australasia, he was offered the position of South Australian Town Planner in 1918. He later became both the first Government Town Planner of the Federated Malay States (1921-20) and later the Director of Town Planning and Development for the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia (1930-33). Sadly it appears he committed suicide as a result of professional frustration and disease. See: John M. Tregenza, 'Reade, Charles Compton (1880-1933)', in Geoffrey Searle, ed., *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 11, 1891-1939* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. 340-2. According to Gutzke, 'Reade replicated what Thomas Adams had accomplished in Canada'.

¹⁶¹ *Examiner*, 20 April 1915, n. p.

¹⁶² *Mercury*, 27 February 1915, p.7.

The northern version was nowhere near as active as its southern counterpart, as the two organisations appear to have acted entirely independent of each other.¹⁶³ Despite the lack of success of the organisation, the formation of the LTPA marks the beginning of a professionally informed manifestation of the larger Progressive town planning movement in the city. To a degree, even the infamous slum clearances instituted by CMO L. Grey Thompson were in part a reflection of the more traditional middle-class anxieties associated with ‘urban and moral decay’.¹⁶⁴ The First World War subsequently eroded any urgency among the small group of urban professionals who formed the LTPA.¹⁶⁵

Like the STTPA, the cause of town planning in Launceston was obstructed by the reluctance of both state and local governments to challenge the traditional rights of property owners. Stefan Petrow has argued that due to the problem of a lack of ‘public control over land’ on the part of local authorities, their focus often fell on beautification rather than clearance. The former option had the benefit of being a cheaper option and helped to generate tourism income.¹⁶⁶

2.2.1.8: Recreation, Education and Entertainment in Launceston

The prioritisation of services relating to education, recreation and entertainment reveals more about the true motivation behind improvements to the city infrastructure by local governments during this period. By 1919, the department of

¹⁶³ Stefan Petrow, ‘Regenerating the people: town planning activities in Hobart 1916-39’, in Robert Freestone, ed., *Cities, Citizens and Environmental Reform: Histories of Australian Town Planning Associations* (Sydney, 2009), p. 149. While the STTPA failed during the interwar period to secure comprehensive planning legislation for the state, it did achieve some minor advances including the allotment of more space around dwellings under the Hobart Building Act 1923 and the beautification/redevelopment of several areas in Hobart, including some disused burial places. In contrast with the LTPA before 1933, it appears hyperactive.

¹⁶⁴ Andrew May & Susan Reidy, ‘Town Planning Crusaders: urban reform in Melbourne during the progressive era’, in Robert Freestone, ed., *Cities, Citizens and Environmental Reform: Histories of Australian Town Planning Associations* (Sydney, 2009), p. 94. May and Reidy argue that a ‘rational argument’ aimed at dealing with urban expansion on an international level informed the town planning movement in Australia during the first two decades of the century. At the same time this is not portrayed as a one-way process but rather the result of a long term international exchange of ideas on the issue. Please refer to section 2.2.2.3 for details on the Thompson slum clearances in Launceston.

¹⁶⁵ *Mercury*, 1 August 1933, p. 5.

¹⁶⁶ Stefan Petrow, ‘Regenerating the people: town planning activities in Hobart 1916-39’, p. 149-50.

Parks and Reserves under the control of Superintendent William McGowan Senior had come to be highly regraded for its contribution to the city development.¹⁶⁷ The Cliff Grounds at the Cataract Gorge were vested into the hands of the LCC by the Launceston City and Suburbs Improvement Society in 1898. An impressive array of further improvements lavished on the civic asset by that department, were funded by a small penny entrance fee.¹⁶⁸ The LCC was to benefit from the charitable spirit of the residents of the city on a regular basis: the sixty acre Punchbowl Reserve was virtually donated to the city when it was purchased from the estate of the late Mr. Lawrence Green by the LCC in 1904 for seven pounds an acre.¹⁶⁹ By 1913, the Department of Parks and Reserves was responsible for 300 acres, a consistent drain on treasury but one deemed to be of value and benefit to the community by the LCC.¹⁷⁰

Environmentalism was viewed by Progressives as an antidote for many social problems. David Gutzke insists that the view that environmental changes

¹⁶⁷ William McGowan, Snr. (1860-1939) was in the employ of the Launceston City Council for fifty seven years, fifty five of them spent as the Superintendent of Reserves. He retired in August 1937 but was maintained in a consultative capacity until his death in June 1939. He was succeeded in the position by his son, William McGowan, Jnr. Like several other capable Department Heads, he was not a concerted Progressive himself, but certainly a diligent servant of the LCC. He personally left a tangible legacy as many of the reserves and gardens of the city were originally laid out under his direction. On reflecting on McGowan's life-time contribution to the city, Mayor Ockerby remarked: 'A monument of his foresight and ability may be seen throughout the City in the number of beautiful Reserves and Rockeries established under his supervision'. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1937*, p. 2; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1939*, p. 7; *Mercury*, 26 June 1939, p. 3.

¹⁶⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1898-1911*; UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1912 & 1914*; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1913*. The sections on the Parks and Reserves rarely mention cost, implying strongly that they have a value above the purely monetary. For the exact situation of the Cataract Gorge and Cliff Grounds please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938', point of interest 52.

¹⁶⁹ QVM LCC2: *Punch Bowl Reserve – Acquisition of 1904-1907*, Letter from Richard Green to the Mayor, 26 October 1904. Lawrence Green's Trustees requesting in return that they not be required to do any fencing. The establishment of a path to the power station from the Cliff Grounds in 1905 was first proposed by Mr. R. Gee with a £20 gift, increased by £150 by Mr. McGowan the Superintendent of Reserves and then matched by the Council: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1905*, p. 3. Mayor Russen subsequently reported in his address of 1906 that the path had proved so popular that now they had to formulate a way to stop visitors from picking the native shrubs and flowers from along the route! See QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1906*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Stefan Petrow, 'Municipal Heaven', p. 19.

encouraged moral uplift pervaded Progressive thought.¹⁷¹ Bernard Aspinwall has argued that provision of public parks and recreation grounds were part of a wider effort to reform the environment and so, during this period ‘public spaces were slowly being recaptured for virtue.’ Aspinwall insists that projects such as Queen’s Park, Glasgow as designed by Joseph Paxton, reflected attempts to reunite man, nature and God in the context of the city.¹⁷² R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger noted that to Progressives these facilities served a double purpose: they increased opportunities for the lower orders to enjoy healthy pursuits and at the same time provided an avenue to exercise middle class hegemony. Recreational facilities provided another means to attempt to control and change working class behaviour.¹⁷³ Typically, the program of actively expanding the recreational area available in Launceston received strong editorial support from the *Examiner*.¹⁷⁴

Also by 1919, the QVM provided excellent educational opportunities for the residents. Despite good attendances, the museum after it was vested in the LCC in 1895 was never a profitable venture, but that was accepted as it was seen to be central to the intellectual and cultural life of the city. Small extensions to the QVM were carried out in 1908-1909, which allowed for an expansion of exhibits. The improvements in the quality of exhibits (particularly those of a mineral orientation) and an expanding art collection were continual matters of pride for successive mayors. Lectures were offered during the winter months and they were invariably well attended. The summaries on that department in the annual reports often included praise for the generosity of locals for their donations of items, reflecting a conscious determination on the part of the LCC to provide a facility that would encourage a deeper interest in learning among the residents.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ David W. Gutzke, ‘Progressivism in Britain and Abroad’, in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, pp. 32-3.

¹⁷² Aspinall notes that Paxton ‘added a further lung to the city.’ See: ‘The Civic Ideal: Glasgow and the United States, 1880-1920’, in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), p. 72.

¹⁷³ Aside from the physical benefits to be derived from physical pursuits, such facilities provided a positive avenue for the younger members of the working class to direct their energies, away from negative preoccupations such as drinking and violence. See: R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, ‘An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914’, pp. 34-5. Please refer to section 5.1.2 for more information on the importance of environmentalism.

¹⁷⁴ See editorial ‘Our Open Spaces’ celebrating the decision to preserve York Park and expand recreation areas in the city: *Examiner*, 12 August 1920, p. 4.

¹⁷⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1898-1911*; UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s*

General entertainment facilities were provided by the LCC but, unlike the educational or aesthetic projects, they were run on a business model. Following the end of the Great Exhibition in 1892, Albert Hall was deemed an asset as it had proved to be self-supporting.¹⁷⁶ The Victoria Baths were another facility provided for the public in 1897. A ladies bath was added in 1906, but the public response to that addition was unenthusiastic and further extension of services did not occur.¹⁷⁷ The LCC made a distinction between the value of educational/recreational and basic entertainment facilities. The first reinforced the basic Progressive preoccupation with improving minds and physical health of the race. The second category appears to have been considered optional and any services provided needed to be reproductive in nature.

2.2.2: The Efficiency Movement

Reformist notions of the importance of applying scientific methodology in order to improve the overall efficiency of society were to penetrate national boundaries during the wider Progressive era. Progressives looked to the creation of a society which enjoyed improvements both in regards to its ability to be efficiently administered, as well as its ability to respond to the social ills that had become transparent during the recent depression. This was largely achieved by virtue of the

Valedictory Address, 1912 & 1914; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1913*. The section on the 'Victoria Museum and Art Gallery' in the 1906 report notes the contrast between the amount of available space between 1891 and that year! Also see Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', p. 57. For exact situation of the QVM, please refer to Appendix A: 'An Interwar Map of Launceston, 1938', point of interest 27.

¹⁷⁶ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1906*, p. 3. Mayor Russen smugly commented in his report for that year, that the Albert Hall had 'quite outlived the name of 'the White Elephant'.

¹⁷⁷ Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 years of local government in Launceston', p. 57. Mayor Russen in his Address for 1906 comments that the construction of a ladies swimming bath 'it is expected will do much to popularise this very necessary establishment amongst the fair sex'. See QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1906*, p. 2. In 1910 though the Baths were less popular and they made a loss of £117 for the year. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1910*, p. 1. Mayor Gee admits in his address of 1914 that although they were satisfactorily managed, the ladies baths had not received the patronage expected. See UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Address and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1914*, p. 1. For the precise location of the baths, please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938', point of interest 29.

interactions of those belonging to the professional-class. This trend was to first manifest itself in Launceston between the years 1889 to 1918 and specifically in relation to the pursuit of health reform. There was considerable focus on improving health outcomes for women and children. The application of these ideas often reflected a ‘top-down’ paternalistic approach, motivated by a shared moral indignation. The implementation of these ideas was also often conducted in a detached, impersonal manner which often ultimately proved to be counter-productive.

2.2.2.1: Applying Scientific Methodology to the Issue of Health Reform

Frederick Winslow Taylor’s scientific management theory was to have a strong influence on the approach of health professionals on a global scale. In the industrial work place, Taylor’s system had simply been a means for management to gain control of the ‘mode of performance’ over every activity in the work-place; the ultimate aim was to increase productivity. While this approach to reforming industry was very popular amongst capitalists and managers, it also strongly influenced other professions. In regards to health professionals, its central effect was in regards to ‘a separation of hand and brain’. Just as respect or regard for the traditional knowledge or methods of skilled workers had been superseded by a system of factory work wherein ‘conception and execution became separate’, health became a field polarised between infallible, expert professionals and properly, passive clients. The Progressive approach was often top-down. Furthermore, problems were often seen as the result of apathy and ignorance of the lower orders, rarely the science of the method set by the experts.¹⁷⁸

During his tenure as CMO, L. Grey Thompson stressed the importance of health education amongst the lower classes. He was a member of an educated middle-class which had grown increasingly concerned about the plight of the poor in the city and was in a position to act. He made the health of women and children a top priority as

¹⁷⁸ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1974), pp. 91-2, 109 & 126.

they represented the health and future of the race.¹⁷⁹ In his annual report for 1907, Thompson spoke in depth about the persistence of high infant mortality across the world. He argued that, unlike the overall death rate, it was just as high as it was fifty years before, and in fact had increased by one per cent in London since 1888. Thompson, following international examples, recommended four basic solutions: (i) a nurse inspector to both demonstrate and distribute literature; (ii) the local authority supply of guaranteed milk; (iii) a bounty system; (iv) a foundling system. Like most Progressives, he attributed most of the blame for the suffering that occurred amongst the lower orders, entirely to poverty and ignorance.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Nowhere was this Progressive focus on the role of women as fertile nurturers and the importance of healthy children to the nation and the wider Anglo-Saxon race better illustrated than in the *Secret Drugs, Cures, and Foods – Report of the Royal Commission On, Volume I*, a self-funded investigation conducted by Irish born, Sydney Piano manufacturer, Octavious Charles Beale (1850-1930). In a work that was characterised by an overtly moralistic tone and a reliance on opinion rather than statistical data, Beale had clearly been motivated by fears of what American President Theodore Roosevelt had considered to be 'race suicide'. He had previously acted as a Commissioner in producing the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate and on the Mortality of Infants in New South Wales*, headed by Charles Mackellar and published in 1904. Beale claimed that the 1907 Royal Commission was the first to investigate the problem from an international perspective, drawing on accounts and some data from the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, the United States as well as Australia. Clearly the focus of the report was not simply on the detrimental effects of an unregulated drug market on the national birth rate. The underlying theme of the Royal Commission was an expression of concern over the lack of national attention given to ensuring that the population were both willing and capable of sustaining the Anglo-Saxon race - of which a reliance on dubious drugs and quackery to facilitate widespread contraception across all classes was merely a symptom. Beale observed in his introduction: 'The frequency with which mothers refuse to, or are unable to nurse their babies, is much lamented'. With typical pragmatic zeal, Beale importantly noted: 'But sobs do not save'. See: *Secret Drugs, Cures, and Foods – Report of the Royal Commission On, Volume I* (Sydney, 1907), pp. 1-3, 26. For a summary of Beale's life and career please refer to: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 December 1930, p. 13.

¹⁸⁰ QVM LCC2: Health Department – July to December 1907, *Report of the Officer of Health for the half-year*, 23 July 1907. In this report he made mention of a committee of ladies who were quietly lobbying for direct legislative action due to concerns over the plight of mothers. The concept of maternal bounty systems is detailed below in section 2.2.2.2, Guaranteed or 'pure' milk is defined in section 4.1.4. A foundling system referred to a formal system for the provision of care for abandoned, neglected or severely disadvantaged children. Successive state legislation relating to child welfare planned from around 1908 was implemented after the war, culminating in the passage of the *Adoption of Children Act* of 1920. This made the idea of establishing a local system redundant. The state was then able to effectively deal with the issue through measures ranging from short to long-term placements. See: Naomi Parry, 'Such a Longing: Black and White Children in New South Wales and Tasmania, 1880-1940', unpublished PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 2007, p. 185. Parry argues after the 'progressive' legislative reforms that 'adoption waxed and apprenticeship waned.'

2.2.2.2: The Professional Dynamic and Progressive Health Reform

Progressive ideas were consistently transmitted through the professions. L. Grey Thompson was influenced by a scheme designed by the Anderston and District Health Association of Glasgow to reduce infant mortality rate (IMR). The scheme rewarded mothers with a gift of £1 if they nursed their babies through their first year. Part of the project was to provide a dispensary to which mothers could go for advice and assistance at any time of the day.¹⁸¹ By 1907, Thompson clearly began to lobby the LCC to introduce a similar scheme. This was another demonstration of the level of cross-fertilisation of ideas across national boundaries becoming evident in the city. In correspondence with the Secretary of the Association, F. J. Ferguson, the Launceston Town Clerk, C. W. Rocher noted: 'Our medical Officer of Health considers that the Huddersfield and Glasgow Bounty schemes are best practical methods of dealing with the Infantile Mortality drift.' The Glasgow effort had been a Progressive response to an alarming death rate in a very densely populated city.¹⁸² The approach was certainly paternalistic and also a typically pragmatic method for addressing what was a core health concern for most Progressives.

While the LCC never employed such an incentive based scheme, it did engage a local health nurse to provide both education and care to mothers and babies. There is some doubt though that the education program instituted in the city was sufficient intervention alone to account for all improvements in the local IMR. On the surface at least, this Progressive initiative does appear to have had a short-term impact on the city IMR: the ratio of infant deaths per 1000 births fell from seventy eight to fifty six between 1910 and 1914. The local IMR though spiked during the hot summers of 1910 and 1911, mirroring the fatalities of the summer of 1909 which

¹⁸¹ QVM LCC2: Health Department – July to December 1907, Secretary of the Anderston and District Health Association to Town Clerk, 12 September 1907.

¹⁸² QVM LCC2: Health Department – July to December 1907, Town Clerk to Secretary of the Anderston and District Health Association, 28 October 1907. Bernard Aspinwall details a thorough portrait of the city's Progressive credentials in essay format. He notes that Glasgow was a modern, efficient city and lists its main municipal achievements in detail. See: 'The Civic Ideal: Glasgow and the United States, 1880-1920', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), pp. 71-2. It is similar to Launceston in terms of its timeline of Progressive reforms: municipalisation of water 1855, gas supply 1864, electricity supply 1891 and plentiful recreational space. It was arguably superior in relation to its slum clearances after 1880 and public housing scheme which saw the construction of 2000 dwellings by 1909. It also instituted a city manager scheme almost before it had been developed in the United States.

had preceded the introduction of the program. The interrelationship between climate and infant mortality makes it plausible then, that a lowering of the local IMR between 1912 and 1914 may have been in part, the result of a more moderate climate. The statistical improvement however, was officially represented as a victory in the Progressive war on perceived working-class ignorance and neglect.¹⁸³

2.2.2.3: Imposing Stricter Housing Standards and Unintended Consequences

Local city medical officers were preoccupied with the increased regulation of housing standards in the city. This agenda was pursued, despite the fact that it exacerbated the levels of homelessness among the poor. In 1902, the previous CMO, John T. Wilson, had made the link between dilapidated housing and the proliferation of rats, and therefore disease.¹⁸⁴ His successor, L. Grey Thompson, became notorious for enforcing conformity with regulations in relation to both residential buildings and hotels. One of his main missions was to ensure the general provision of adequate ventilation. In relation to hotels he was concerned more about overcrowding and favoured the introduction of a law utilised in California to prevent it.¹⁸⁵

The initiative did not result in an eradication of slums within the city boundaries, despite the determination of the CMO and the LCC. The absorption of Invermay and Trevallyn, exposing their squalor suddenly highly evident in those suburbs, strengthened the determination of local authorities to prosecute infringements in the slums.¹⁸⁶ A notice in the *Examiner* in September 1909 attested to Thompson's determination: over forty dwellings were listed and threatened with demolition

¹⁸³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1914*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health and Inspector of Stock, 1902*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1905*, p. 2.

¹⁸⁶ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1907*, p. 1.

unless improved.¹⁸⁷ However, the influenza pandemic a decade later was to draw attention to the continuing social and health problems associated with sub-standard rental housing.¹⁸⁸ The typical response of both the aldermen and the local media was to tactfully place the blame for the squalor on the practices of the lower orders rather than the neglect of the landlords. Owners avoided the Thompson initiative, simply complying with the specified minimum standard.¹⁸⁹ Many wealthy landlords had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.¹⁹⁰

The push to improve housing standards in the city unintentionally increased homelessness. The problem had not even begun to abate by 1918, as Thompson noted in his annual departmental report:

Instances of overcrowding exist and the difficulty of procuring houses of any kind is becoming more and more manifest. Numbers of squalid houses are ripe for demolition, fifty (50) of which as a first instalment should be condemned. The erection of one hundred (100) municipal-owned dwellings is respectfully submitted for approval.¹⁹¹

In this instance, Thompson demonstrated one of the central failings of the Progressives: he launched into a determined campaign without fully considering the full consequences of his actions on the most vulnerable section of society. For both practical and ideological reasons, the LCC refused responsibility for the provision of housing.¹⁹² In contrast, the London City Council had instituted its own slum clearance program from 1900, but balanced this before the outbreak of the First

¹⁸⁷ *Examiner*, 18 September 1909, n. p.

¹⁸⁸ Baby Health Clinic Nurse Myrtle Searle gave an account of the squalor she encountered across the city as a result of her temporary involvement in the fight against influenza as a general health nurse in September 1919. See: *Examiner*, 19 September 1919, n. p.

¹⁸⁹ For an example see: *Examiner*, 22 September 1919, n. p.

¹⁹⁰ This was also discovered to have occurred in Hobart after the influenza pandemic of 1919 inadvertently brought slums to public attention. Beresford describes a conspiracy of silence between politicians, property-owners and the media coming to an abrupt end and resulting in the first coherent campaign by the state Labor Party to lobby the ruling Nationalist Party for legislative reform on the issue. See: Quentin Beresford, 'That Dreaded Plague: Tasmania and the 1919 Influenza Epidemic', *THRAPP*, 29, 3 (September 1982), p. 114-5.

¹⁹¹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health*, 1918, p. 1.

¹⁹² Please see the discussion below in section 2.2.4.3.

World War, with the construction of five housing estates on the outskirts of the city providing accommodation for 42,000 people.¹⁹³

2.2.3: Progressive Coalitions

The dynamics of professional associations, both social and formal, became the driving force in the formation of Progressive coalitions in the city. These early coalitions between 1889 and 1918 reflected the coherence of the emerging 'alternative social economy'. Such Progressive coalitions were universally committed to causes devoted to reforming the urban environment and working towards raising the living standards and general well-being of the lower classes.

2.2.3.1: A Classic Progressive Cause

Dr. Edward Crowther, son of a founding member of the Royal Society and a long-serving medical officer at the Hobart Hospital, succeeded in having the Cremation Bill passed through Parliament through his capacity as a Member of the House of Assembly (MHA). Many Progressives supported this practice as it was recognised as a more economic and hygienic alternative to earth burial. Under the *Cremation Act* of 1905, a body had to be identified before cremation occurred and only in an area approved by the CHO. Without sufficient capital to fund a local crematorium, the Act served no other purpose than to help regulate the open-air cremations sporadically organised by enthusiasts.¹⁹⁴

2.2.3.2: The Professional Dynamic in Launceston

The Progressive struggle to make the practice of cremation legal in Tasmania resulted in the formation of arguably the first truly Progressive coalition in the city.

¹⁹³ David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, p. 41.

¹⁹⁴ Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question: A Centenary History of Cremation in Australia*, (Clearview, 2003), p. 164.

Robert H. Wiebe specifically divided middle-class Progressives in the United States into two categories: professionals and businessmen.¹⁹⁵ In one sense the original Tasmania Cremation Society was the first example of both sections of the middle-class forming a coalition to pursue a Progressive agenda. There appears to have been a strong occupational dynamic inherent to the early development and transmission of Progressive ideas within the city.

Martin J. Schiesl attributes the idea of the ‘internal dynamics’ of certain occupations playing a role in fostering Progressivism to Robert H. Wiebe.¹⁹⁶ Wiebe explained the process in *The Search for Order*:

The shared mysteries of a speciality allowed intimate communion even at long range, as letters among the scattered champions of public health demonstrated. Finally, the ability to see how their talents meshed with others in a national scheme encouraged them to look outward confidently instead of furtively. As much as any other trait, an earnest desire to remake the world upon their private models testified to the deep satisfaction accompanying this revolution in identity.¹⁹⁷

Subsequently In 1912, the Cremation Society of Tasmania was formed in Launceston, with the aim of making cremation available to the public in the interests of public health. The strongest support for the practice came from the medical profession and among the founding members were local Doctors Gustave Hogg and James Pardey.¹⁹⁸ Both were prominent local medical professionals and

¹⁹⁵ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), p. 112. He argued as a definition: ‘One included those with strong professional aspirations in such fields as medicine, law, economics, administration, social work, and architecture. The second comprised specialists in business, in labour, and in agriculture awakening both to their distinctiveness and to their ties with similar people in the same occupation’.

¹⁹⁶ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency Municipal Administration and Reform in America 1900-1920* (London, 1977), p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 113.

¹⁹⁸ Gustave Heuze Hogg (1869-1950), born Tasmania and studied at the Launceston Grammar School. He won a scholarship at the age of eighteen and travelled to England to study. He obtained a classic degree at London University and later studied medicine at Edinburgh, Dublin, Paris and Vienna. On his return to Launceston he worked as a local surgeon, helping to found the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital. He became active in many professional and community organisations. His professional associations included: president of the local branch of the British Medical Association, fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, founding fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons. His community associations included: president of the Mechanics Institute Library, member and chairman of the Launceston Grammar School Board, member of the Council of the University of Tasmania. He was married with children and his wife joined him in his

Progressives, involved in multiple reform movements. The Society also included a number of the 'intellectual and business elite' of Launceston.¹⁹⁹

2.2.3.3: A Significant Failure?

In 1912, the original and Launceston based TCS then set about raising money and collecting signatures for a pro-cremation petition. Chairman, Dr. Hogg led a delegation to the Mayor, Alderman George Paton on 24 July 1912 in order to first state the case for cremation in preference to burial as a means of disposing of human remains and also requested that the LCC assist them in erecting a crematorium. While Paton was diplomatic, he was aware that the local aldermen would never approve expenditure of £1,400 so soon after establishing the Carr Villa Cemetery. In a compromise he agreed to approach the aldermen with the proposition to set aside a parcel of land at the new cemetery for the purpose of being used as a crematorium site by private interests. In October 1912, the LCC passed the motion to grant half-an-acre of land for that purpose provided that the crematorium be constructed within two years from the 1 January 1913. The Society failed to raise the necessary funds, but the one positive result of the initial campaign was the designation of a potential site for a crematorium. Soon the Society quietly

support of the BHA and its agenda. He died in retirement at his Launceston home. A member of the original Tasmanian Cremation Society, he was cremated. See: *Mercury*, 8 May 1950, p. 6.

James McImery Pardey (1862-1944), born Geelong, Victoria, the son of a Chemist, he attended Melbourne University. His first job was in his father's Pharmacy. After qualifying as a Doctor, he became House Surgeon at Melbourne Hospital. He then came to Launceston in 1886 to take the position of House Surgeon at the LGH under the supervision of L. Grey Thompson. He then returned to Melbourne to take a higher degree. On his return to Launceston in 1889, he succeeded Thompson as Surgeon Superintendent at the LGH. In 1891 he went into private practice. During the 1903 Small Pox epidemic he was in charge of the isolation hospital at Mowbray. He married Miss Florence Marrow of Inglewood Victoria and they had a son and a daughter, celebrating a Golden Wedding in 1942. Pardey was appointed CMO in October 1923 following the death of Thompson. He was confirmed in the position in June 1924. He served the longest term in the position. At the time of his death in 1944, R. J. Williams, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, recollected the following: 'Dr. Pardey took a deep interest in the history and progress of Launceston and in the health and development of children'. Like Thompson he was heavily involved in public activities, including the Northern Tasmanian Football Association and the East Launceston Bowling Club. Also a founding member of the TCS, he was cremated. See: *Examiner*, 2 August 1944, p. 4.

¹⁹⁹ Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question*, pp. 164, 166-8. In terms of referencing the legislation, Nicol cites: (UTAS Ltn Serial) *Journals and Printed Papers of the Tasmanian Parliament*, 1905, pp. 282-90; Tasmanian Acts of Parliament, *Act No. 27, 1905* and *Mercury*, 2 November 1905, n. p. In relation to the formation of the Tasmanian Cremation Society, Nicol cites: (*Launceston*) *Daily Telegraph*, 13 January 1912, n. p.

disbanded, indicating a lack of widespread public support for such a key Progressive reform. Denied a crematorium was established in Hobart until 1936, Tasmanians wanting cremation had to ship the corpse to Melbourne.²⁰⁰

The first truly Progressive coalition in the city then failed to achieve its objective. However, the fact that the first incarnation of the TCS was native to Launceston reinforced two separate arguments: that Launceston showed promising signs of developing as a hot-bed of Progressivism; and that this movement emerged from the urban, middle and professional and business classes.

2.2.3.4: The Importance of Educating the Masses

The standard of access to higher education was another prime Progressive concern. In her book *The New Social Order*, published in 1918, Meredith Atkinson noted that, while elementary education was of a sufficient standard in Australia, secondary education was deficient. She voiced the general concerns about how this problem had the potential to have long-term consequences for the future of the Anglo-Saxon race.²⁰¹ Adult education was increasingly seen as an acceptable method to achieve self-improvement with consequent benefits to the wider society. The Mechanics Institute and the QVM were early examples of conspicuous attempts to open educational opportunities to the lower orders of the city.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question*, pp. 168-9, 268-9, 276. As a reference for the petition and fund-raising initiative of the Tasmanian Cremation, Nicol cites: *Examiner*, 11 July 1912, p. 4; 20 July 1912, p. 6. In referencing negotiations with Paton and the deliberations of the Council, Nicol cites: *Examiner*, 20 July 1912, p. 6; 23 July 1912, p. 4; 25 July 1912 & 29 October 1912, p. 7.

²⁰¹ Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order: A Study of Post-War Reconstruction* (New Town, 1919), pp. 156-7. These concerns mirror those expressed by L. Grey Thompson. Please refer back to section 2. 2. 2. 1.

²⁰² Stefan Petrow, *Going to the Mechanics: A History of the Launceston Mechanics Institute 1842-1914* (Launceston, 1998), p. 1. Petrow questions the assumption that the establishment of such an institution was one devoted to liberating the lower orders, postulating that it could have as easily be interpreted as a method of 'influencing what mechanics read and where they met', allowing the elite to develop a means of 'channelling their behaviour in socially and politically desirable ways'. See: Stefan Petrow, *Going to the Mechanics*, p. 4. The scientific lectures held at the QVM even in the depths of winter, illuminated by electric lamp, were very popular amongst the 'aspirational' classes of the city. See: QVM: Newspaper Cuttings 6 Jan 1896 – 3 Jun 1909, *Examiner*, 29 November 1897, n. p. However it is open to debate as to whether such efforts overall were aimed at empowerment or employing a means of social control.

The Worker's Educational Association of Great Britain established a branch in Launceston in 1914. WEA courses were based around separate academic subjects and offered to weekly classes of approximately thirty two people. The classes were taken by a tutor and an equal amount of time was devoted to teaching and group discussions. Local academics were encouraged to participate.²⁰³ Forming coalitions that provided educational opportunities served to benefit both the individual and society as a whole: the poor could gain skills enabling them to improve their own condition, and society benefited on social and economic levels from enjoying a more informed and productive working population. Such organisations helped to reinforce social barriers as such courses did not contribute to formal academic qualifications, and served more to emphasise the enormous academic gulf between the middle-class professional elite and the majority of the working population. This initiative was not socialist in nature but rather reflected the Progressive desire to address social ills while at the same time reinforcing the fundamental hegemony of the capitalist system.

2.2.4: Social Justice Not Equality

The Progressive movement was characterised by a preference for a reliance on established charity networks to disseminate necessary welfare. It saw that there was a role for local government particularly, in subsidising those charity networks to achieve a heightened level of social justice.²⁰⁴ Their aims were pragmatic and devoted to improving social outcomes that would help both maintain stability and improve the health and well-being of the lower orders. Encouraged by the successes of municipalisation, local Progressives in Launceston began to lobby the LCC to directly subsidise select welfare initiatives increasingly after 1899.

²⁰³ *Examiner*, 17 March 1920, n. p.

²⁰⁴ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 28.

2.2.4.1: Subsidised Services in Preference to Overt Welfare Initiatives

By 1911 the LCC had widened the scope of its municipal enterprises beyond those that could be deemed essential. Both the electric power and tram schemes had become operational by this time. Meanwhile, Progressives were beginning to lobby the LCC to engage enterprises more solidly aimed at improving the living conditions of the lower classes, such as cheap public housing. Instead, the LCC appeared to be devoted to a system of municipal ownership and trading which inherently promoted self-sufficiency in relation to essential services and also effectively subsidised their cost for the benefit of the whole community.²⁰⁵ In England, municipal trading had become commonplace and had involved the assumption of municipal control of tramways, hospitals, laundry services and public baths. Even London, which had restricted itself to control over water, gas, electricity and trams, had fully embraced municipal trading by 1900.²⁰⁶ Launceston's development through the phases of municipal enterprise, trading and socialism more closely parallels that of the pioneer city of Glasgow, Scotland from 1860. Glasgow began a retreat from municipal socialism after 1908 when profits from its extensive enterprises were increasingly used to lower rates rather than subsidise services.²⁰⁷

Specifically in relation to the Electric Light Department, Mayor Boland remarked that his calculations suggested that if revenue increased at the same rate as the street lighting had, the reserve fund would have held the total of £25,000 instead of £8234. As the service was not run as a private enterprise but instead as a service by the LCC, the cost to the city had actually been £2000 instead of £5000. Therefore, he

²⁰⁵ As Stefan Petrow implies, the term *municipal socialism* applies in a more limited sense to Launceston. Certainly *municipal enterprise* had expanded to *municipal trading* as the services offered exceeded what could be deemed essential. In keeping with the proper definition of *municipal socialism*, profits from the enterprises were not used to lower rates but rather rate-payers were effectively subsidising the establishment of services that benefited all residents. However more socially orientated schemes such as public housing were rejected. See: Stefan Petrow, 'Municipal Heaven', p. 21 & 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 49-51.

²⁰⁶ David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', pp. 40-1.

²⁰⁷ Again, Glasgow developed a more diverse range of enterprises. See: Hamish Fraser, 'Municipal Socialism and Social Policy', pp. 260-3 & 272. Launceston began a gradual retreat from municipal socialism during the interwar period. Refer specifically to 3.1.2 for an analysis of this transition.

noted, the department made the citizens a gift of £3000 a year, equal to a 5d rate. In summary, he declared that:

It will thus be seen that the department, while paying its way, does not make any call upon the citizens – in fact, it has not cost them one penny, as the lighting rate insufficient to pay for the street lighting. The object is not to make handsome profits in the manner of that of a company, but to supply current at a fair and reasonable price.

In illustrating his argument, he also cited the disparity in fares between the privately run trams-scheme in Melbourne which cost fifty per cent or more than those in Sydney. The central tenet of the aldermanic ideology in this period though, was that this must all be achieved while keeping the overall rates at a reasonable level.²⁰⁸ In contemplating a necessary rate rise in 1905, Mayor Pepper reflected confidently that rates were light, considering the range of benefits received by the citizens. In fact, he contended that it was actually one of the lightest taxed cities in the Commonwealth.²⁰⁹

2.2.4.2: Local Council Responses to Distress Caused by the 1890s Depression

The response of the local administration to the plight of the victims of the 1890s depression in Launceston was peculiarly unsympathetic. Stefan Petrow argued that this depression even had an effect on the operation of the LCC, as some jobs had to be amalgamated and grants had to be sought to help maintain the streets.²¹⁰ The economic crisis effected residents of many classes, placing a heavy demand on the local Benevolent Society, reaching a peak in 1893 and 1894. In 1894, 2000 casual cases were relived by the Society, while at the end of the year there were fifty six men, 116 women and 179 children on the Society's permanent roll. Many of the casual cases had been members of the 'respectable classes' which needed to be

²⁰⁸ QVM: LCC8 Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1908, pp. 2-3.

²⁰⁹ QVM: LCC8 Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1905, p. 1.

²¹⁰ QVM: LCC8 Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1905, p. 34.

sought out by the Secretary because they were so ashamed of their situation. Mixed with these efforts though were elements of the theory of the deserving and undeserving poor, as many were told not to give the starving and homeless money but refer them to the Society (as it was feared they would just drink it away).²¹¹ The restrained official response had contributed to a growing sense of moral indignation which motivated Progressives to begin to organise and support selected reform initiatives, such as improved and more accessible housing. After some years of lobbying from the Benevolent Society, the local churches organisations and other interested parties, Mayor McCracken formed the Citizen's Relief Committee to assist the poor, sick and destitute in 1896.²¹²

2.2.4.3: The Prospect of a Council Funded Public Housing Scheme

Provision of housing for the poor was one particular form of municipal infrastructure intervention that never eventuated in Launceston. In March 1906, when celebrating the array of services provided by the LCC, the *Examiner* posed the following question: 'What next? What in the direction of municipal socialism will follow... possibly housing for the poor?'²¹³ Mayor David Storrer in an interview in April 1903 in the *Daily Telegraph* noted that he was in favour of the principle, but felt that the LCC acting as a landlord would not 'meet with universal favour'.²¹⁴ While some schemes were proposed, none found mainstream approval. Stefan Petrow has in fact argued that if 'the Launceston Corporation had embarked on a scheme of municipal housing it would have been the high-water mark of municipal intervention'.²¹⁵

By the turn of the century there were many international precedents for the successful establishment of a municipal housing scheme in Launceston. During the 1890s, France and Belgium established state banks to extend cheap loans to non-commercial builders of working class housing. In Germany, the first cooperative

²¹¹ Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, p. 54.

²¹² Jillian Koshin, 'Chronology of 150 year of local government in Launceston', p. 57.

²¹³ *Examiner*, 21 March 1906, n. p., as cited in Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 29.

²¹⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 2 April 1903, n. p., as cited in Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', p. 66.

²¹⁵ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 99.

building societies were established. Dusseldorf first experimented with direct municipal construction and ownership of housing. Meanwhile, Ulm and Frankfurt engaged in land purchases to encourage private investment in low cost housing.²¹⁶ These experiments influenced public housing provision trends in Britain. The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, enabled Glasgow to clear unhealthy areas and directly provide housing for the dispossessed constructed.²¹⁷

The reasons for the LCC rejection of the municipal housing concept were varied and debatable. The official rationale for not undertaking such intervention was in fact that the installation of a tramway system in the city would help to open up more distanced but cheaper land for development.²¹⁸ This was a proposed bridge between Morris and Rodger's designated second and third phases of municipalisation: the increased appropriation of utilities (for example improved transportation systems) and the systematic replacement of slums with model housing on the peripheries.²¹⁹ However without municipal intervention through such initiatives as the purchase of cheap land, combined with tolerance of landlords who maintained their properties to a minimum standard, there was little motivation for private investment in affordable housing.²²⁰ While a municipal housing scheme failed to eventuate in Launceston, the shortage in low income accommodation in the city was eventually resolved by a scheme instituted by successive state governments. Once the state began to assume responsibility for housing, there was little real chance that any municipal authority would have considered undertaking such a complex and economically contentious venture.²²¹

2.2.4.4: The Reliance on the Private Model of Charity

While there was a sustained reliance on voluntary charity organisations providing welfare relief, there was little or no assistance from local government. Entrenched and hidden poverty had been a perennial problem in Launceston. Distress during

²¹⁶ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp. 190-1.

²¹⁷ Hamish Fraser, 'Municipal Socialism and Social Policy', p. 273.

²¹⁸ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', p. 67.

²¹⁹ R. J. Morris & Richard Rodger, 'An introduction to British urban history, 1820-1914', p. 37.

²²⁰ Please refer back to section 2.2.2.3.

²²¹ For more details and analysis please refer to sections 3.1.5.1 & 6.1.5.

the 1890s depression in Launceston peaked in 1893-94.²²² The conference (or local branch) of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul came into existence in Launceston in July 1899, the first of its kind in Tasmania. J. V. Sullivan acted as its President from its inception until his death in 1937. The fundamental principle that the Society was based on was that Vincentians were to engage the poor wherever they resided. Normal procedure was for two officers to visit the home of any individual or family suspected of suffering poverty. Funds were normally raised by a variety of methods, through concerts, sporting events etc.²²³

This kind of relief was a legacy of the traditional parish administered poor relief model of charity evident in England and Wales from around the seventeenth century.²²⁴ One example of a community based scheme that began to break the established model was the Mole Creek wood cutting day. From the winter of 1910, residents at Mole Creek banded together for a day's worth of wood-cutting to help supply the poor of Launceston. The program was still supported by the local City Mission, which helped distribute the wood on the basis of perceived need.²²⁵

²²² Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania*, p. 54.

²²³ Pat O'Halloran, 'Some Facets of the History of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Launceston during the Presidency of J. V. Sullivan, 1899-1937', *LHSPP*, 14 (2002), pp. 42-7.

²²⁴ The system was largely administered by local Parishes until the passage of the Poor Relief Act of 1834 and involved the determining of eligibility for assistance on the basis of their claim as a member of the community and then classification into a specific category (impotent, able-bodied or vagrant). See: M. J. Daunton, *Progress and Poverty, An Economic and Social History of Britain 1700 – 1850*, (Melbourne, 1995), pp. 447-53.

²²⁵ *Examiner*, 13 May 1936, p. 8. One bullock by 1936 had participated in every effort over an eighteen year span. The program was still operating in 1937. See also: *Examiner* 5 May 1937, n. p.

2.3. Conclusions

Early moral reformers in the colony from the middle of the nineteenth century, notably in the temperance and anti-transportation movements, influenced the development of later reform movements. Their preference for formal organisational structures, their tendency to appeal to authority and/or science to justify their views, as well as their creative methods of lobbying and recruitment, all provided a distinct template for later moral reform organisations, such as the WCTU. Like later Progressives, early reformers in general were largely led by middle-class, educated men and women who felt it was their moral duty to re-shape society in their own image. Progressivism in Launceston, as on the international scale, was to have a decidedly lower ‘moral charge’ than those early reform campaigns. Moral reformers demonstrated a tendency to blame social problems on individual weakness, rather than on the wider environment.²²⁶ However, like later Progressive reformers, they were characterised by a general emphasis on the importance of maintaining and improving the health of women and children.

Isolation and administrative neglect during the colonial period helped to imbue Launceston with a strong, self-reliant culture. The enthusiasm for municipalisation was probably an extension of this resolve. By the outbreak of the First World War then, Launceston from a comfortable, middle-class perspective at least, might have been considered to have been a ‘Municipal Heaven’.²²⁷ This was a direct result of the LCC’s resolve over several decades to embrace municipal socialism.²²⁸ While this was indeed a reflection of a high level of civic pride and engagement, in truth the local alderman shared little of the Progressive impulses in favour of improving the urban environment for the benefit of the lower orders. Municipalisation though,

²²⁶ David C. Cooney, ‘Local Option in Tasmania’, p. 18. Cooney explained the moral reformers typically nineteenth century explanation for alcoholism: “By succumbing to the temptation of the demon drink, a person’s life would be thrown into confusion and in all events his family would be ruined, his health broken and he would end up in a pauper.”

²²⁷ Stefan Petrow, ‘Municipal Heaven’, pp. 16-25.

²²⁸ This more accurately reflected a desire of the aldermen to provide cost effective infrastructure and services to residents. It did not in anyway reflect an ideological aversion to public monopolies or any sympathy with the objectives of ‘fabian socialism’. See: Stefan Petrow, ‘The Best Governed City in Australia’, p. 49.

inadvertently provided a trigger for the development of a number of local Progressive coalitions which reached a peak between 1889 and 1918.

The local Progressive coalitions that began to emerge in Launceston before 1918 were driven by both an emerging ethic of civic altruism and the encouraging example of municipalisation. Distribution of wealth in Launceston was traditionally highly polarised and poverty was deeply entrenched. The material benefits of the mining boom in the latter part of the century failed to filter down to the lower orders. Ongoing municipalisation of the city, combined with the revelations associated with the horrors of the 1890s depression, helped to draw middle-class attention to the sustained plight of the lower orders. Increasingly a sizeable section of the middle and professional classes of Launceston came to share the belief that if society was to be improved, active intervention was necessary. The LCC's municipal socialism also demonstrated what could be achieved by the mechanism of local government, and helped to raise Progressive ambitions. They were also to effectively echo the values and concerns of the wider international movements. The LTPA was an unsuccessful but accurate reflection of the typical Progressive coalition that began to form in the city in the first two decades of the century. Also the significance of the role of the local daily, the *Examiner*, as a catalyst for Progressivism cannot be underestimated. Through its favourable coverage of Progressive views and debate, as well as its complimentary editorials, it became an active participant in the wider movement rather than merely an objective contemporary observer.

While there were many LCC infrastructure achievements in this stated period, as a municipal authority it was often prompted by more practical factors: a peculiar drive to modernise combined with increasing pressure on it from successive state governments to act on specific problems. The Albert Hall, the Duck Reach Power Station and the Launceston Permanent Tramway were all civic assets that provided invaluable services to the residents at a minimum cost. Infrastructure schemes pursued by the LCC tended to be both popular and potentially reproductive. Schemes were rarely considered simply as a response to Progressive concerns over such issues as health or education. This did not prevent the aldermen though, from

portraying their infrastructure achievements as being a sign of their Progressive nature.

When the aldermen actually resolved to act on an issue, the results were often innovative and effective. For instance, the new public cemetery proved to be of a very high standard, continuing to service the city to the present day. However the main motivation for that scheme was the closure of intra-mural burial places by State Parliament. It is unlikely that such a scheme would have been attempted until the traditional intra-mural facilities were completely full. In contrast, mainstream Progressive concerns over the lack of sanitation reform in the city were largely ignored before 1919.

The search for more efficient strategies to deal with the challenges facing modern society was central to the Progressive agenda. Increasing emphasis on relying on scientific methodology in meeting the new health challenges of the industrial age was very evident in Launceston during this period. The CMO, L. Grey Thompson was in truth a moderate Progressive, who sometimes clashed with the CHO over Progressive issues and even dismissed some of the claims and recommendations of the Kendall-Mailler report on sanitation. Nevertheless, Thompson was crucial to the process of making the new Progressive approaches mainstream. His methods in attempting to lower the IMR (public education, a pure milk supply, as well as suggestions for the implementation of bounty and foundling systems) were all directly influenced by international schemes. His paternalism towards the working-class, blaming their ignorance and apathy, also inadvertently revealed a darker aspect of Progressivism. At the same time it reinforced his sense of class superiority.

Thompson found begrudging support within the LCC for his enforcement of housing regulations, but his lobbying for the institution of an accompanying municipal housing scheme was ignored. Despite his moderate Progressivism, a level of frustration would result from the difference in agenda between the incumbent CMO and the LCC. While his methodical war on sub-standard housing was undeniably a boon to the health of the poor, the level of homelessness among the poorest sections of the community also demonstrates the often inadvertent negative consequences of Progressive initiatives. It also suggests that the aldermen

did not cooperate with the initiative out of any concern over improving the urban environment for the benefit of the lower orders, but rather in order to improve the general aesthetics of the city.

Launceston became fertile ground for the formation of Progressive coalitions. The first, the TCS, was formed typically from among a group of Progressive urban professionals. Although unsuccessful, it laid the foundations for the successful establishment of a local crematorium two decades later. The success of WEA attested both to the existence of a middle-class eager to teach and a substantial segment of the working-class population eager to learn in order to improve themselves.

Such movements also demonstrate other emerging aspects of Progressivism in Launceston. The formation of the TCS reflected the importance of the 'internal dynamics' of certain professional occupations as effective transmitters of Progressive ideas. The success of the WEA in Launceston revealed a prime motivation behind Progressive coalitions. Progressives commonly demonstrated the dual desire to encourage the lower orders towards self-improvement, while at the same time consolidating their own cultural hegemony. By reinforcing middle-class social values, they were in effect helping to protect society from any potential radicalism that might threaten the status quo.

Progressives were not concerned with pursuing equality; they overwhelmingly supported raising levels of social justice. They believed that welfare should be distributed through the traditional charity networks of society and they also recognised that local government needed an expanded role in subsidising services for the benefit of the lower orders. The municipal socialism of the LCC remained the only evidence of any official redistribution of resources and its schemes were designed to benefit all residents, not just the disadvantaged. Its response to the suffering caused by the depression of the 1890s was restrained. The care of the poor was overwhelmingly left to the established charities (almost universally operated by the various churches of the city). These local charities then distributed aid in a manner both minimalist and judgemental which was reminiscent of the traditional parish poor relief model.

Progressives in the city strongly championed the concept of a municipal housing scheme. However the city was to never fully engage with Morris and Rodgers's third phase of municipalisation. This would have provided the LCC with both a reproductive opportunity and a method of improving the urban environment. It may have also created an ongoing method of regulating housing standards among the poorest sections of the community. From the perspective of Progressives, it must have been considered a missed opportunity. Despite the emergence of Progressivism in the period between 1889 and 1918, levels of social justice in the city did not improve to any measurable extent. Similarly, there was to be little progress evident during the interwar period.

Chapter 3: Building and Maintaining a Progressive City, 1919-1939

3.1: Introduction to the First Thematic Analysis

Theme 1: The sustained attempt by the local administration to achieve a general improvement of the urban environment, despite wider economic concerns.

It may not be a work as highly admired to plant avenues of shady trees in the roads, or make fine parks, or convenient, happy playgrounds, or good drains and clean, convenient streets as it is to pass laws... But it probably affects the ordinary daily life and happiness and health of all our people a good deal more.

- C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands, Australians*.¹

By 1919, Launceston had experienced an intense phase of municipalisation making it uniquely modern for a regional city. This process had occurred concurrently with many other ambitious cities across the western world such as Glasgow, Birmingham or Dayton. While many of the triumphs of municipalisation in Launceston had certainly made the city a more pleasant place to live, those infrastructure projects had not been specifically designed to reform the environment for the benefit of the lower classes. At the outset of the interwar period Municipal socialism had effectively provided all residents of the city with cheap public services, principally in relation to water, gas, electricity supply and transport.

However by November 1919, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, F. J. Prichard, noted that despite the end of the war, the city's situation looked grim. He made a list of what he considered to be the most prominent problems besetting the city: a lack of playgrounds, no boys' home, a lack of industries, and the delays in implementing

¹ C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands Australians* (Melbourne, 1918), p. 26.

the Hunter Scheme.² The LCC had found itself in a difficult position in relation to continuing to provide a high standard of municipal services for its residents; at the same time the local economy had stalled, the population had continued to increase. In 1919, the population of Launceston officially reached 22, 017 (with an additional 1, 225 located in the suburbs of Sandhill, Mowbray and Newstead).³ Despite these developments, the LCC had not moved to ensure that taxation was raised to meet the increasing costs of providing services. Subsequently rising wages and costs for basic materials, particularly those relating to construction exacerbated the gap between revenue and expenditure.⁴ While LCC annual revenue had jumped from £36,500 (1900) to £92,267 (1914-15), the pace of increase slowed considerably during the war: it increased from only £98, 040 (1916-17) to £99, 361 (1917-18). The amount of revenue gathered remained static at around £117, 500 for four years (1918-20). Revenue then began to again increase as the economy began to recover from the effects of the war.⁵

From 1919, mainstream opinion was divided over both the benefits of a Progressive agenda and proposed approach to improving the city. From 1919 there were increasing calls from within the community for the LCC to invest in major projects aimed at improving the urban environment. This was a Progressive agenda specifically designed to benefit the living conditions of the lower classes. The *Examiner* became an important catalyst for Progressive reform in the city, particularly in regards to infrastructure improvement. Unlike its competitors, it assumed the role of an active participant in the wider movement within the city. Successive senior editors fully supported the Progressive coalitions largely led by the professional and business classes of the city against two major obstructive factors: a tendency on the part of the local government to favour economy over intervention, and sustained adverse economic circumstances.

² *Examiner*, 28 November 1919, p. 4.

³ LLS Stack Serials, Office of the Government Statistician, *Statistics of Tasmania, 1919-1920*, (Hobart, 1920), pp. 96-7.

⁴ QVM: LCC8 Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1920*, p. 3. The Mayor sadly reported the need to raise the annual rate by -/1s/1d in the £ due to the decisions of several 'wages boards'.

⁵ *Examiner*, 1 January 1923, n. p.

This emerging vision of Launceston as a Progressive city was to be frustrated to a large extent by a reluctant, fiscally conservative local government, especially in regards to expenditure on infrastructure. In the years immediately following the First World War, the LCC delayed action on several key Progressive infrastructure reforms: the need to reform the sewage disposal and treatment system, the provision of a water filtration system; the construction of a scientifically designed city abattoir; and the establishment of a local crematorium. From a Progressive perspective, inaction on such projects arguably endangered the health of the whole population of the settlement, particularly those identified as the most vulnerable. Many local Progressives became frustrated due to a deep, underlying concern over the sustained collective health of the Anglo-Saxon race.⁶

3.1.1: The Role of the Examiner in Promoting the Cause of Urban Improvement

The *Town Planning Act*, passed by British parliament in 1909, had set a bench mark for legislation designed to facilitate urban planning and inspired Progressives across the globe to lobby for local powers to pursue similar reform.⁷ Town planning expert, Charles Reade, helped to draft a town planning and housing bill for South Australia based on the British Act. Reflecting diverse global influences, the bill incorporated the idea of utilising an American style three-man commission of three experts to co-

⁶ Michael Roe explains that a common quality amongst many Progressives was a tendency towards 'Social Engineering', which at times strongly approximated ideas associated with eugenics. In order to achieve and maintain the state of 'Anglo-Saxon perfection', it was deemed necessary to place vast amounts of attention on the welfare of mothers and their children. See: *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960* (St. Lucia, 1984), p. 5. The Eugenics Education Society was founded in Britain in 1907. It was believed that improvements in diet, hygiene and education could help reverse a perceived deterioration in national physical standards there. Those ideas were also prominent in the United States where forced sterilisation of the 'unfit' was legally achieved. See: David W. Gutzke, 'Progressivism in Britain and Abroad', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism*, pp. 30-1. Meredith Atkinson's concept of the pursuit of a classless 'super-race' is one contemporary example of this preoccupation. See: *The New Social Order. A Study of Post-War Reconstruction* (New Town, 1919), p. 89. Octavius Beale's emphasis on the issue of racial health is another outstanding example. See: *Secret Drugs, Cures, and Foods – Report of the Royal Commission On, Volume I* (Sydney, 1907), pp. 1-3.

⁷ This act allowed urban authorities to 'lay down the patterns of main streets, to designate industrial and residential areas, to set aside land for open space and public buildings and fix densities and house types in residential districts.' Consistent with the national culture of individualism, the Act was designed to facilitate and not impose mandatory regulation on urbanisation. See: Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914* (New York, 1981), p. 82.

ordinate planning. While it passed swiftly through the House of Assembly but was defeated in the Legislative Council.⁸

The *Examiner* reflected the decidedly urban focus of Progressivism in its editorial discussions between 1919 and 1939. However, this tended to manifest itself in calls for municipal amalgamation rather than overt town planning.⁹ The *Examiner* did publicise the limited debate that occurred over the best use of space within the city. With typical Progressive optimism, Dryden adopted the position that Launceston was a city with a big future: Inveresk was to become a major industrial centre and the population of the city was expected to triple or more over the coming century. There was recognition of the tension between preserving the recreational space in the city for the reasons of health and facilitating development.¹⁰

At the end of the First World War, Prichard echoed the Progressive fear on the condition of the Anglo-Saxon race. This concern was reflected in his calls for improved recreational facilities for children. The ultimate goal was to combat the perceived, physical decline of the British Empire.¹¹ The call for greater town planning was a fundamental component of the Progressive agenda.¹² One of Dryden's earliest editorials reveals a conceptual link between expressions of concern in regards to the health of the wider Anglo-Saxon race and calls for the greater regulation of urban expansion. He argued that all municipal authorities should have a facilitating town planning act to allow them to prevent over-crowding.

⁸ John M. Tregenza, 'Reade, Charles Compton (1880-1933)', in Geoffrey Searle, ed., *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 11, 1891-1939* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. 340-2. For more on Reade, refer back to section 2.2.1.7.

⁹ Again, it was very critical of the lack of activity of the LTPA. See: *Examiner*, 15 August 1919, p. 4.

¹⁰ See again the Editorial 'Our Open Spaces', in *Examiner*, 12 August 1920, p. 4.

¹¹ Prichard noted in an editorial: 'The War has found out many defects, and none more so than the deterioration in physique of our men, and especially those who occupations are in factories'. See: *Examiner*, 20 August 1919, p. 4. He adhered to the popular argument that the malaise that was stifling the Anglo-Saxon race was a by-product of the compassion of modern civilisation: 'Civilisation is to some extent responsible for the mating of the unfit, and for bringing into the world children who have little potential of growing to healthy men and women'. See: Editorial entitled 'Child Welfare', *Examiner*, 8 December 1919, p. 4.

¹² One of Prichard's last editorials lamented the effect of the war on the health of the race and stressed the need for a greater emphasis on the urban environment to counteract any negative results: 'The late war killed off or maimed a million or so the prime of British manhood, and the weakly elements are in greater proportion. They will carry on the race and beget progeny, and it becomes of greater importance than ever that their housing and living conditions should be improved, so as to give their children a chance of developing healthy bodies'. See: *Examiner*, 17 May 1920, p. 4.

In true Progressive style, Dryden quoted an expert, Mr F. Stapley of the Victorian Institute of Architects who had recently delivered a lecture in Melbourne on the importance of appropriate zoning in order to improve public health outcomes. Dryden agreed that the establishment of dense population centres across the world had been a mistake, echoing the established Progressive position on the subject.¹³

3.1.2: The Increasing Fiscal Conservatism of the LCC

Increasingly throughout the interwar period, profits from the more successful municipal enterprises were used to subsidise shortfalls in other departments.¹⁴ The focus of the local aldermen was to minimise annual rate levels. This situation was more typical of municipal trading rather than municipal socialism.¹⁵ This was another indication of the creeping economic orthodoxy that had begun to dictate the policy direction of the LCC from 1900.¹⁶ The aldermen attributed this trend to wider economic disruption. In regard to the general financial situation of the city, Mayor Shields in 1920, stated:

I sincerely trust that the day is not that far distant when the unsettled conditions now prevailing in regard to wages and the cost of materials will become normal, so that the Council will be enabled to adopt estimates and strike its rates with some degree of equanimity, feeling that there is little probability of unexpected

¹³ *Examiner*, 17 May 1920, p. 4. For another example of this sentiment see also: C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands, Australians*, p. 62. Urban planning was a hot international issue in this period. Germany had a reputation as a world leader in the field. This had resulted from strong legislation necessitated by accelerated population growth after 1870. There was also strong interaction between Germany and Britain, the former strongly influenced by British advancements in the design of water supply and sewerage systems. See: Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City*, pp. 9-12 & 20. Please refer back to Section 2.2.1.7.

¹⁴ Consistently is was the enterprises such as the Electricity Department and the Council Quarry which increasingly subsidised less reproductive concerns such as the Permanent Tramway and Carr Villa Cemetery. Following the compulsory purchase of the Duck Reach Power station in 1943, Mayor Clark noted: 'The compulsory acquisition of the Electricity Undertaking is a serious blow to the Council as in the past it has made full use of the profits in keeping rates of the City at a reasonable figure. The immediate effect has been an increase in the rating for the current year.' See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1943-44, p. 8.

¹⁵ Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia: Launceston 1885-1914', *Launceston Historical Society: Occasional Papers*, 2 (1995), pp. 49-51.

¹⁶ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1901, p. 5.

large expenditure occurring during the year, which so seriously affects the financial position.¹⁷

This position was used to justify the rejection of calls from both the City Engineer and the CMO for important infrastructure upgrades, particularly in relation to sewage disposal. Progressives also favoured an efficient use of resources in the quest to achieve an improved urban environment. Launceston CMO, L. Grey Thompson, also stressed caution when recommending infrastructure reforms to deal with sanitation issues, mostly on the grounds of estimated expenditure.¹⁸ Embracing the alternate social economy did not mean a total rejection of fiscal discipline but rather informed the priority process when determining policy. However, there is little evidence that anything other than fiscal conservatism informed the LCC policy agenda in relation to infrastructure after 1919.

Regardless of the economic downturn following the war, the demands for infrastructure and services by residents of the city had continued to increase.¹⁹ This situation presented the LCC with a dilemma: how was it to maintain, improve and expand available services when revenue was in contraction? Frederick M. Nicholl, the City Manager for barely a year in 1921-22, was to argue that the main problem for the lack of available revenue was that the LCC had gradually built up an overdraft over the decades instead of setting a rate that was adequate to cover expenditure.²⁰ For the LCC, its overall policy direction by 1919 had shifted fully from an engagement in municipal socialism to a complete devotion to economic rationalism. This was at the expense of any future improvement and even the maintenance of past achievements.

¹⁷ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1920, p. 3.

¹⁸ See *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April 1914, n. p. There is definite sense of fiscal realism about Thompson's attitude to resolving the problem of reliance on the tidal discharge method.

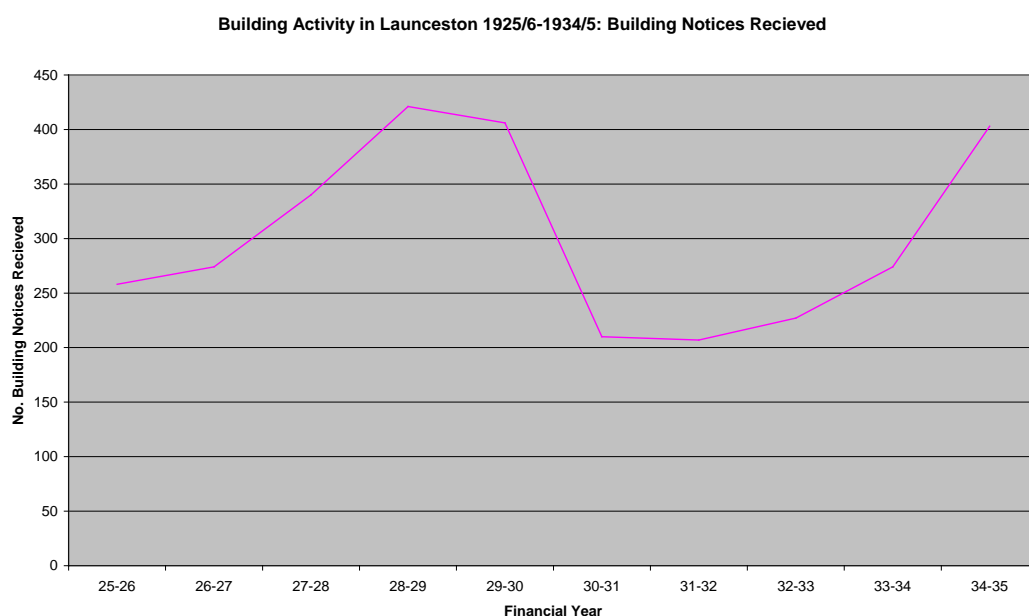
¹⁹ One measure of increasing service demands was water consumption: Following the subsequent installation of the Water filtration plant, it was possible for the first time, for the Council to monitor the water consumption levels of the city. In 1928, the city collectively consumed 764 million gallons, representing an average of seventy one gallons per head, per day. This had increased to 893 million gallons, equalling an average consumption of 81.5 gallons per head, per day. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 3 and LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1929, p. 3.

²⁰ R. J. K. Chapman, 'An Experiment in Australian Local Government: The City Manager in Launceston, 1921', *Public Administration: The Journal of the Australian Regional Groups of the Royal Institute of Public Administration*, 27, 2 (September, 1968), p. 391.

3.1.3: The Failure to Capitalize on the Brief Boom

The good economic times were all too brief for Launceston in the 1920s and the later part of the decade was to be characterised by a distinct slowing of the local economy. In 1925, Launceston experienced a sudden rise in the level of unemployment in the city and there was a noticeable slowing in building activity in comparison with recent years.²¹ This is demonstrated in the table below.

Table 1: Building Activity in Launceston 1925/6 to 1934/5 - Building Notices Received



(Source: *Reports of the LCC City Building Surveyor's Department*)

Despite that fact, building activity continued to grow steadily in the city until the financial year of 1929-30, when the global economy stalled. The effect of the global crash on the local economy was both sudden and devastating: between 1929-30 and 1930-31, building notices received by the LCC fell from 406 to 210 and the amount spent on building fell sharply from £167, 577 to £59, 256.²²

²¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1925, pp. 1, 5.

²² See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Building Surveyor*, 1926; UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports,

3.1.4: The London Loans

The decision to once more borrow from the London money market in the late 1920s was to have a negative impact on the city finances for decades. After 1916, during which a £150,000 loan matured which had been floated in London thirty years before, the aldermen ended the practice of borrowing in England as it had proved an expensive way of raising money. The LCC then decided to obtain money locally.²³ However, there was a return to the old policy during 1926. This decision was attributable to general dissatisfaction amongst the aldermen with the high level of interest paid for the local loans arranged by F. W. Nicholl, the City Manager, in 1921. The LCC then discovered that it did not have the legislative powers it needed and therefore while it waited for Parliament to pass a facilitating act, it was assisted by its bankers by virtue of an overdraft to cover any moneys required by it in the short-term. On 31 December 1926 loans totalling £208,759 matured (of which £154,905 was bearing interest at seven per cent). The LCC then decided to obtain a replacement loan in London at a similar rate.²⁴ The new London Loans were raised under the powers of invested in the LCC by *The Launceston Corporation Act, 1925* (16 George V, No. 16). This act required that the State Government guarantee the payment of interest on the loan for it to be approved. In 1927 the London money market was therefore approached again and a £100,000 loan was secured for a term of twenty five years at a rate of £05/10/07 per cent. To the aldermen of the LCC in 1927, the London loans represented a way to keep both interest repayments and the local annual rate low.²⁵

Report of the City Building Surveyor, 1927; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Reports of the City Building Surveyor, 1928-1934*.

²³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1916, p. 1.

²⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1926*, p. 1.

²⁵ Another issue of contention between City Manager F. M. Nicholl and the aldermen - the issue of raising the annual rate to a level that accounted safely for all necessary expenditure and future investment - is discussed in Chapter Four. Please refer to section 4.2.4.. Following his termination, this was one of the first policy decisions to be reversed by the aldermen who were conscious of the electoral importance of keeping rates at a low level. For a more detailed analysis of Nicholl's loan and its reception please refer to section 4.2.4. In his Valedictory Address for 1924-25, Mayor Ockerby crows that in four successive years rates had been reduced by a total of 1s 6d in the Pound. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1926*, p. 1.

The fact that this approval was given by the Lyons State Government suggests that the failure to recognise the economic danger signs of potential depression was widespread.²⁶ The obvious warnings signs began as the global economy began to sour at the same time as a number of smaller loans began to mature: investors had to be enticed to renew their investments through the rising of interest rates.²⁷ Most damaging to the finances of the LCC were the subsequent increases in the rates for remitting funds to the London Market. The figures in the table below illustrate the astounding rise as a result of the stock market crash.

Table 2: Rates for Remitting Funds to the London Market, August 1928 & December 1929

Remitting Charge	August 1928	December 1929
Telegraphic Transfer	20/--%	42/06%
On Demand	12/06%	33/09%
30 Days Sight	05/--%	25/--%
60 Days Sight	02/06%	16/03%

(Source: *LCC2 Correspondence Files*²⁸)

Mayor Osborne remarked in regards to the London loans in his report for 1930: ‘A very disappointing feature of the present day is the very high rate of exchange on London. At the rates now prevailing, it will cost the LCC £787/10/00 to send the interest to London, which is due at the end of the year’. The first loan of £150, 000 was due in 1946, and the other two loans amounting to £100,000 were due in 1952 and 1953.²⁹ While they were all made at five per cent, the exchange rate meant that in 1934, the actual rate paid on them was closer to six and a quarter per cent.³⁰

²⁶ QVM LCC2: 1928 100,000 Loan 17/ 6.15, Letter from the Premier to the Town Clerk, 2 December 1927.

²⁷ QVM LCC2: 1928 100,000 Loan 17/ 6.15, Letter from the Town Clerk & Treasurer to the Manager of the Local Branch of the Commonwealth Bank, 17 October 1929. There was in fact £84,000 due in December, £17,000 in 31 March 1930 and £30,000 on 30 June 1930. See also: Memo from Town Clerk and Treasurer to the Finance Committee, 29 October 1929.

²⁸ QVM LCC2: 1928 100,000 Loan 17/ 6.15, Letter from the Manager, Commonwealth Bank, Launceston to the Town Clerk, 16 August 1928 & Letter from the Manager of the Commonwealth Bank to the Town Clerk, 18 December 1929.

²⁹ QVM LCC2: 1928 100,000 Loan 17/ 6.15, Letter from Manager of the Launceston Branch of the Commonwealth Bank to the Town Clerk, 26 June 1929. Robert Osborne (18??-1931), Alderman and Mayor of the City, was born in the West of England, spent sometime in the United

The London loans were to remain a burden on the finances of the LCC for the remainder of the interwar period and beyond. In 1940 as the 1946 maturation date approached, an increasingly concerned LCC realised that the exchange rate to settle the loan through the sinking fund would cost an additional £37, 500 according to the rates of exchange that year. It was therefore decided to open an account and set aside a sum annually in order to cover the cost. By 1940 a total of twenty per cent of the city's total income was devoted to covering the cost of providing for the Interest and Sinking Funds on account of loans, totalling £64, 046. This burden directly limited the ability of the LCC to even entertain the idea of Progressive infrastructure projects.³¹

3.1.5: The Increasing Emphasis on Reproductive Projects

During the interwar period, the LCC maintained its commitment to core education and recreational projects. Of all the ventures operated by the LCC in the period, the QVM was its flagship initiative. It did not seem to have to be economically viable to be justified. Many of the comments about it by successive Mayors during the period on the surface suggest that they consistently shared the Progressive view that as an institution it represented an asset that was not easily quantifiable. It was valued above all as an educational resource and the intellectual face of the city to

States in his youth and then moved to South Australia in 1884. He started the first of three newspapers on a goldfield there. He became a Justice of the Peace. He retired in 1911 and then travelled extensively with his family. He considered settling again in England, but then partly on medical advice he chose Trevallyn, Launceston in 1913. He returned to his homeland one last time in 1926. He was elected to the local council in 1922, serving two terms as Mayor in 1929 and 1930. His wife passed away in April 1928. He was very Progressive in his approach to politics, running on a pro-business manager ticket and becoming the first President of the second incarnation of the Tasmania Cremation Society in 1929. He died in surgery in Sydney in 1931. See: *Examiner*, 19 September 1921, n. p.; QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1926, p. 4; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 7; Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question: A Centenary History of Cremation in Australia* (Adelaide, 2003), p. 169; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1931, p. 5.

³⁰ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1934, p. 3.

³¹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1940, p. 1.

the world.³² The QVM was very much the exception to the general rule. In contrast, the LCC strongly resisted taking over the local library, although it was a similar public asset.³³ The aldermen over a long period of time cultivated a Progressive image and enjoyed the subsequent adulation from the middle classes. However, this assessment breaks down under any close examination of their policies towards municipal infrastructure and services during the interwar period.

The aldermen's commitment to the expansion of the number and size of recreational areas remained a constant throughout the interwar period, despite the lack of profitability. Between 1934 and 1937, the LCC officially spent £11, 750 on reserves, which was a larger investment when it is considered that maintenance were understood to be an ongoing cost. Proudly proclaiming that recreational areas now constituted twenty per cent of the total area of the city following the acquirement of Coronation Park off Mulgrave Street, Mayor von Bibra defended the investment: 'I do not believe we have spent a pound too much, and I believe that Launceston is very well provided with lungs for the people... There are approximately 20 public areas in the city, with a total of about 820 acres, approximately one-twentieth of the whole of the city. This is not too much.' A motion was passed in May 1937 to approve a special additional 3d. in the pound rate to cover the cost of maintaining the expanded reserves. It was further recognised that suburbs such as Newstead with rapidly expanding populations, would soon require more recreational space.³⁴ The plentiful provision of parks and reserves by the LCC appears to have been an effective method of improving the general aesthetic quality and recreational opportunities of the city for a modest cost. These new assets were also presumably a way in which the serving aldermen could

³² The QVM was certainly in a category of its own in qualifying for sustained support from the LCC, attendances were monitored but were never representative of a 'bottom line'. In 1930 Mayor Boatwright noted that while attendances had been good, it was equally important that it had maintained good relationships with 'kindred museums of the world'. This suggested it was not seen as a business venture but rather an institution that represented the intellectual face of the city to the outside world. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1930, p. 5. It was often considered to be an appropriate choice for civic minded citizens to patronise with bequests. Two important contributions from private citizens were received in a single year in 1932. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1932, p. 5 & *Report of the Curator of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery*, 1932, p. 59.

³³ *Examiner*, 9 November 1938, n. p.

³⁴ Throughout the interwar period, the LCC continued to strive to meet the increasing demands for recreational space. See: 'New Reserve for City, Area Purchased in Mulgrave Street', in *Examiner*, 18 May 1937, n. p.

simultaneously serve the interests and court the gratitude of the working classes, as well as the votes and respect of the middle-class professional with Progressive sympathies.³⁵

However, while the LCC maintained the QVM and even expanded its reserves for reasons of aesthetics, health and recreation, it failed to expand the amount and diversity of services it provided regardless of the pressure from the Progressive section of the community. There were increasing calls for the LCC to subsidise the local public library. While the library was struggling financially by 1939, the LCC resisted calls from some of its most prominent Progressive citizens to help subsidise what it saw as a vital educational resource. The aldermen grew to fear it as a potential long term burden.³⁶

Increasingly there was an emphasis on the part of the LCC for any new recreational facilities to be reproductive or at least self-sustaining. When drawing up the plans for the laying out of York Park in 1920, the issue of maintenance was at the forefront of consideration. The timing of the project appears to have been an odd choice when it is considered that some more essential projects, such as a water filtration plant and a new city abattoir, were being delayed. However, costs were modest compared to those other proposals amounting to £2, 190 in total.³⁷ Central to the decision to go ahead was the fact that the level of general interest in the facility suggested that it might sustain itself in relation to maintenance costs. Through the Town Clerk, the LCC sought advice from other municipal authorities concerning unfamiliar financial arrangements, in this case the scale of hiring charges for the use of the grounds.³⁸

³⁵ The Editorial entitled 'Our Open Spaces' conveys the middle class gratitude towards the LCC for preserving and expanding recreational space in the city. See: *Examiner*, 12 August 1920, p. 4

³⁶ Dr. Gustave Hogg, an active Progressive in the city, was President of the Local Library Board and announced that the library in 1938 required £3000 in income to be debt free, while annual subscriptions were only attracting £2000. See: *Examiner*, 9 November 1938, n. p. For an exact indication of the location of the original public library, please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938', point of interest 5.

³⁷ QVM LCC2: *York Park Sports Ground 1919-1920/1*, Memo from City Engineer to City Manager, 20/10/1921. For an exact indication of location and generosity of size, please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938', point of interest 59.

³⁸ QVM LCC2: *York Park Sports Ground 1919-1920/1*, Letters from the Acting Town Clerk to Town Clerks of Bendigo and Fremantle Councils, 30/10/1920. Both Councils obliged.

3.1.6: Failed Progressive Infrastructure Initiatives

While a water filtration plant, an updated city abattoir and a crematorium were eventually realised, several other Progressive initiatives failed. The proposed municipal housing, sewage treatment and flood protection schemes were also a part of the new Progressive vision of the city, a product itself of the emerging ‘alternative social economy’. In all three cases it appears to have been different combinations of their specific complexity, adverse economic and political conditions and perhaps even their respective lack of reproductive value which saw two of them thoroughly investigated but all unrealised by 1940.

3.1.6.1: A Municipal Housing Scheme

The LCC in conjunction with successive city medical officers embraced the role as municipal guardian, defining and enforcing building standards with considerable zest.³⁹ This had the inadvertent consequence of continuing to increase homelessness among the poor. From 1919, the LCC had rejected persistent calls to establish a municipal housing scheme for low income residents. During his tenure as CMO, L. G. Thompson consistently lobbied for a municipal funded solution to the low income housing shortage problem in Launceston. He had declared in his annual report for 1919 that ‘Overcrowding is manifest and the erection of buildings is a pressing need’.⁴⁰ In fact soon after in 1923, he suggested that the local authority should build pise houses as these offered health and economic benefits to tenants.⁴¹

³⁹ As noted previously, CMO L. G. Thompson was much in favour of an extension of Council powers to make repairs to neglected housing on their behalf and bill them. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1920*, p. 2. His successor James M. Pardey proved to be as equally officious.

⁴⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1920*, p. 2.

⁴¹ QVM LCC8: Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address, 1923*, p. 3. Essentially rammed earth constructions, Pise buildings were well insulated, remaining warm in winter and cool in summer and therefore beneficial to both the health and the economies of individual households.

Several underlying reasons explained the LCC's policy position. The total cost of a scheme would have been considerable but not prohibitive.⁴² The LCC had the power to obtain land at cheap rates.⁴³ Implementing a pise house scheme as suggested by the CMO in 1923, may have helped to lower construction costs.⁴⁴ Stefan Petrow has argued that in the event of the LCC entering into their own housing scheme, both the building industry and other vested local interests would have objected. A municipal housing scheme would have been expected to lower the demand for investment in private rental buildings. In reality, there was little regular investment in low cost housing in Launceston until after the Second World War.⁴⁵

It is more likely that the reason for the reluctance on the part of the aldermen was ideologically based. Firstly, the aldermen ensured that creating the correct market conditions would create an adequate amount of housing for both the private and rental markets. By providing easily accessible, subsidised public transport, the establishment of the permanent tramway had in part been a way of making investment in outlying suburbs practical.⁴⁶ Secondly, the LCC version of 'municipal socialism' was the provision of subsidised services (such as electricity and water supply, transport etc.) which collectively benefited the community, not just the specific welfare of individuals. Its brand of 'gas and water socialism' allowed for a very measured redistribution of resources for the benefit of all, not specifically the underprivileged.⁴⁷ This was generally consistent though with the

⁴² Costs were the standard reason given by both the LCC and HCC for refusing to engage in municipal housing schemes. When confronted with the example of the housing scheme of the Glasgow Corporation, Scotland, in 1908, Mayor Freeman of the HCC noted that the LCC did not own as much land and did not enjoy the same revenue base. See: Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?: Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914* (Hobart, 1995), pp. 98-9, 190.

⁴³ *Daily Telegraph*, 8 August 1911, n. p. as cited in Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 99.

⁴⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 99. Petrow argues that vested interests in the status quo such as the building trade and property owners would not have tolerated such a scheme. Owners appear to have maintained properties to minimum standards and profited from a demand that outstripped supply. Please refer again to section 2.2.2.3. The homelessness problem was eventually mostly resolved by intervention from successive state governments. For details and analysis, please refer to the section 6.1.5.

⁴⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 2 April 1903, n. p., as cited in Stefan Petrow, 'The Best Governed City in Australia', pp. 66-7. See also: Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South?*, p. 99.

⁴⁷ 'Gas and Water Socialism' is a term used by George E. Mowry to describe the typical Progressive trend during the period towards limited public ownership of essential utilities. While highly interventionist in nature, it is measured, practical trend which in the case of the United States between 1896 and 1915, 'persuaded many nonsocialistic Americans to accept the principle

tendency of Progressives to oppose the alteration of the economic structure from which they benefited.

3.1.6.2: A Sewage Treatment Scheme

The LCC had great difficulty extending the sewer system to incorporate the expanding city, let alone introduce a comprehensive sewage treatment scheme. In 1924, the sewage mains did not even extend through all of Trevallyn and about 280 premises were served in total within the city by the refuse carters through the pan system.⁴⁸ James M. Pardey, CMO, mentioned in his departmental report for that year that: 'It will be a great benefit to those householders concerned when an underground sewerage scheme is installed in this portion of the city'.⁴⁹ To the credit of the LCC, as the 'Mault-David' scheme was finally instituted, provisions were made for some future form of treatment before disposal. The LCC provided two pumping stations enabling the dry weather flow from the Margaret and lower George Streets outfalls to be transferred temporarily to the Forster Street outfall, pending the construction of treatment works. The nature of the treatment that was to be utilised had not been fully decided on.⁵⁰ Only eighty five premises within the city-proper were still using the pan system by 1928 and in addition, all of Trevallyn had been sewered with exception of only two houses.⁵¹

In 1924, the Director of Sanitary Engineering for the Commonwealth Department of Public Health, visited the city and discussed the problem of tidal disposal of raw

of limited public ownership'. See: George E. Mowry, 'The Urban Reform Tradition', in Lyle W. Dorset, ed., *The Challenge of the City 1860-1910*, (Lexington, 1968), p. 99. The program of reform instituted by Birmingham's Mayor Joseph Chamberlin from 1878, had totally transformed the city by 1890. This represented a major international example of the benefits of municipalisation. See: Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), pp. 120-1.

⁴⁸ This involved the physical removal of waste from premises by LCC employees to a selected location. A cart and horse were utilised. There were still two horse and cart teams in service in the early 1920s. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921.

⁴⁹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1924*, p. 3.

⁵⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1926*, p. 2.

⁵¹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1928*, p. 6.

sewage into the Tamar. The LCC subsequently approved the long considered 'Mault/David' plan of intercepting the raw sewage pipes leading to the Tamar, collecting the material and then using an ejector system to transport them to the other side of the North Esk for treatment. The incorporation of sludge drying beds was to be the first form of proper sewage treatment in the city.⁵² This represented the first partial commitment to a scheme which would facilitate the initial breaking down of raw sewage before discharge into the Tamar.

While chemical or bacterial treatment of sewage was still decades away, the newly incorporated suburbs of Trevallyn and Mowbray were the first to enjoy a limited form of sewage treatment. In 1925, the Mayor was able to report: 'A large amount of investigation work on the disposal and treatment of the city sewage has been carried out, and matters are well in hand for the early prosecution of the scheme'.⁵³ The City Engineer's report incorporated an explanation of how the sewage system would work in the difficult topography of the Trevallyn area: although the majority of the sewage would be gravitated to the works, two ejector stations installed along West Tamar Road would be used to transport the remainder, the sewage then was to be treated by sedimentation only, the resultant effluent was to then be discharged directly into the Tamar without further treatment at all stages of tide. The sludge would be at least be digested in tanks and dried on beds.⁵⁴

The considerable cost of the scheme continued to be the primary concern of the LCC. In his published examination of the treatment proposal in 1914, City Engineer Charles St. John David noted that it would necessitate a rise in the setting of the annual rate.⁵⁵ Despite the reservations of several aldermen in regards to the

⁵² UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 1.

⁵³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1925, p. 1.

⁵⁴ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer*, 1925, p. 1.

⁵⁵ Again see *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April 1914, n. p. Still, at the same time as the sewage disposal network was commencing, the long planned water filtration plant was also being constructed. In his Valedictory address for 1925, Mayor Ockerby proudly declared that a further rate decrease was on the agenda. This probably attests both to the fact that there had been some temporary economic improvement in the economy of the city by the middle of the decade and also that he wanted to put to rest any public concerns that the Council might have been over extending itself. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1925, p. 1.

expenditure on the Trevallyn scheme, it was completed by the end of 1927.⁵⁶ By 1928, focus had returned again to normal extensions and maintenance.⁵⁷ However, although there was now partial treatment of sewage, tidal discharge remained the official LCC policy for the rest of Launceston for several decades.⁵⁸

3.1.6.3: A Flood Protection Scheme

The importance and value of town planning were central to the Progressive approach to reforming the city. One of the key challenges for the local government of Launceston after April 1929 was how to protect the city from the worst effects of the next flood. Although there had been intermittent floods across the North of the state since the beginning of settlement, the events of that year emphasised the full implications of the danger inherent to establishing a major settlement on an ancient flood plain. The fertility of the land and its ideal situation for industrial development overrode any concerns over the problems with its topographical situation as the nexus of three rivers.⁵⁹ It was universally recognised after 1929 that, given the right climatic circumstances, the flood waters could at any time inflict property damage and cost lives.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1927, p. 1.

⁵⁷ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 3.

⁵⁸ R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston* (Launceston, 1983), p. 40-3.

⁵⁹ C. G. Burrows, 'Protection from Floods', (Paper read at a General Meeting of the Northern Branch of the Royal Society of Tasmania, Friday 7 August 1981), *Royal Society Bulletin* 33 (1981), p. 3. Burrows noted that the worst floods in the Tamar catchments were a result of any combination of sub-tropical rains falling in the East and South East. A flood of equal intensity (at least 250,000 cusecs over a twenty four hour period) had occurred in the Launceston catchment area in July/August 1852. There were also several other floods of varying magnitudes which affected the city over its history leading up to the 1929 flood: exceptional flows also occurred in 1828 (September 200,000 cusecs); 1863 (December, 150,000 cusecs); 1893 (July, 150,000 cusecs). Also flows of lesser magnitude were recorded in 1889 (June and November, 120,000 cusecs each), 1911 (March, 85,000 cusecs), 1923 (May 80,000 cusecs), 1926 (October, 120,000 cusecs) and 1931 (June, 115,000 cusecs). The last surge might have served as a reminder of how little had been done since the 1929 disaster. See: QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, *City Engineer's Report to the Works Committee on Flood Prevention*, 6 October 1931.

⁶⁰ While no deaths were directly attributed to the flood, there are indications that the hardship involved may have contributed to the deaths of a number of elderly people. See: Jill Cassidy & Elspeth Wishart, eds, *Launceston Talks: Oral Histories of the Launceston Community* (Launceston, 1990), p. 99. In the book Thelma Brookes, a survivor of the flood, recounted how she believed the incident indirectly led to the death of her grandmother.

Meeting the challenge of providing Launceston with comprehensive flood protection was to prove to be an extremely protracted process. Following the efficient clean-up operation considerable public agitation insisted on some kind of levy system being instituted.⁶¹ While it was recognised that any program would be best designed and implemented by local government, the cost of a comprehensive system would be crippling for a municipal authority already under great financial pressure. In December 1930, on the campaign trail, Mayor Hollingsworth apologised for the two-year delay which mainly attributed to the effects of the depression. He revealed publicly that the first report on the issue had just been received placing the estimated cost at around £600,000, with an annual maintenance bill of £60,000. From the outset, the LCC were determined that any ultimate scheme would be the joint responsibility of the LCC and the incumbent State Government.⁶²

The combination of the London loans and the depression therefore had financially crippled the LCC making an effective response to the threat difficult. Depression struck the city very hard, resulting in the closure of the Rapson Tyre Factory and increasing widespread general unemployment. The repairs to the infrastructure of the city inflicted by the flood had been expensive. Furthermore, expenditure in the financial year 1929-1930 had increased by £12,722. But the population appeared pleased with the way in which the administration had handled the crisis, returning Mayor Hollingsworth and Aldermen Boatwright and Barber to Town Hall in the elections held that year.⁶³ However, not all were pleased with progress in regards to the formulation of an official and integrated flood protection scheme.

In the years immediately after the flood, the issue of future flood protection was a high profile political issue, muted only perhaps by the ensuring economic disruption of the depression. Initially the pressure for the LCC to act was locally based. The Invermay and Inveresk Progress Association (IIPA) late in 1930, called a meeting between themselves, a representative of the State Government and the

⁶¹ The Council were even able to boast that all industries affected by the flood were reconnected by the first week of May. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1930, pp. 3-5.

⁶² *Examiner*, 4 December 1930, p. 3.

⁶³ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1930, p. 5.

LCC to discuss the issue of a flood protection scheme. Their suggestion was that the embankment be raised by three feet. Hollingsworth agreed that this would give the lower-lying areas of the city a reasonable level of protection.⁶⁴ Understandably, of all local progress associations the IIPA represented the most people threatened by the spectre of flooding and were also the most eager for official action.

To the credit of the LCC, a concerted effort followed to investigate developing an integrated plan to deal with the threat of the next great flood. A joint State Government and LCC report was produced on the issue by Director of Public Works, Mr. G. D. Balsille (a former City Engineer of Launceston), engineering consultant W. B. McCabe (who had previously consulted for the LCC on the state of their water system), and current City Engineer, Mr. W. E. Potts.⁶⁵ The Balsille-McCabe-Potts report of 1930 reflected the LCC's dilemma in attempting to balance the desire for action with the natural restraints of cost:

⁶⁴ *Examiner*, 4 December 1930, p. 3

⁶⁵ See: *Mercury*, 19 March 1931, p. 5. George Davy Balsille (1884-????), was born Dunedin, New Zealand, and trained as an civil engineer. He moved to Victoria, Australia and later enlisted in the 1st AIF (regimental number 22298) in September 1917. He was appointed to the Field Company Engineers. He returned to Australia in August 1919. After the war he was engaged on 'original experimental research work' at London College, under the supervision of Professor Dixon of the Civil Engineering Department. He was then employed as the municipal engineer in Devonport before securing the position of Assistant City Engineer of Launceston in May 1923. On the death of Charles St. John David, he succeeded him as City Engineer in August 1929. During tenure his accomplishments included reforming the water and sewage systems. In February 1929 he was appointed Director of Public Works, his departure much regretted by the local aldermen and staff. After a long distinguished career in that position, Balsille retired in April 1949. He estimated that during his service he had overseen £15,000,000 of expenditure in the state. He was retained for several years on a part time basis as State Co-ordinator of Works. He also served as Chairman of the Water, Sewage and Drainage Board. Furthermore, Balsille was appointed the Tasmanian representative on the planning committee designed to make recommendations to the National Security Council in 1951. See: *Mercury*, 1 May 1923, p. 10; 16 February 1929, p. 8; 17 March 1929, p. 8; 22 January 1949, p. 11; 10 January 1951, p. 9; 8 March 1951, p. 9; 6 February 1952, p. 10 & *The AIF Project*, entry for George Davy Balsille, at <http://www.aif.adfa.edu.au:8080/showPerson?pid=12429>, accessed on 09 December 2010. W. E. Potts (????-????), joined the Federal Capital Commission as an Engineer in July 1925. As Chief Engineer of the Federal Capital Commission he made a significant contribution to the design and construction of Canberra. He then became City Engineer and Building Surveyor of Launceston, appointed in October 1930 and serving in that capacity for 14 years. His greatest contribution to the Progressive development of the city was his role in the establishment of the public crematorium between 1936 and 1939. He took part in an intelligence gathering excursion to inspect several mainland crematoria in late 1937. He was appointed City Engineer of Hobart and was succeeded in March 1944 by L. H. Bird. He later returned to Canberra, securing the position of Director of Works with the Department of Works and Housing in late 1946. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1930, p. 6; QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa 1935-1937*, Memo from City Building Surveyor to the Whole Council Committee, 17 August 1936; UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1945, p. i; *Canberra Times*, 5 July 1930, p. 4; *Mercury*, 1 November 1944, p. 3; *Mercury*, 24 July 1946, pp. 2 & 12.

The data on which any protect can be based has been discussed above, and it now has to be decided on other facts to be presented whether, in view of the risks and cost involved, it is necessary or desirable to go to the expense of giving complete protection against all probable floods, or only to give protection against certain of the more frequent, but alarming, visitation, and whether such protection should be extended to the whole of the areas liable to inundation or only to portions of same. Most people would undoubtedly prefer full protection if the cost is considered within the means of the city and justified by the value of the properly protected and other direct or indirect gains to be had.⁶⁶

While acknowledging that the submission of the IIPA had its good points, Potts noted that it was technically flawed in regards to the design of the embankments and that it underestimated the costs involved. Most importantly, he contradicted Mayor Boatwright in stating that an embankment of only three meters would give residents a false sense of security.⁶⁷ Potts and the aldermen then knew that any scheme undertaken to effectively deal with the more serious flood threats to the lower lying areas of the city would require considerable investment. What is most revealing is the articulation of the very pragmatic concerns over the actual necessity to protect property and, potentially lives.

The Ogilvie State Government was determined that the LCC would not only institute a comprehensive scheme, but also carry most of the economic burden as well. By 1935, the current proposal was estimated to cost £38,000. Attempts by the LCC to indemnify itself against any compensation claims relating to the intention to implement a partial scheme were blocked by the Stage Government. It also denied a request by the LCC to extend its borrowing powers to allow it to instigate that scheme.⁶⁸ The position of the State Government was emphasised in a letter to the

⁶⁶ QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, *City Engineer's Report to the Works Committee on Flood Prevention*, 6 October 1931.

⁶⁷ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1931, p. 6. Potts noted that the proposed embankments would need to have 2 foot slants either side if they were to be 6 feet wide. Also that such a project which aimed for total protection was the most expensive sort. See: QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, *City Engineer's Report to the Works Committee on Flood Prevention*, 6 October 1931.

⁶⁸ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1935, p. 6 & QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee entitled: 'Flood Protection. Replies to Questions raised by Mr. Alderman W. Clark', 19 February 1940.

LCC in October 1938, from Eric Reece, the Minister for Lands and Works: 'It is made clear for the information of your Council that the government does not commit itself to the granting of any financial assistance in implementing your Council's scheme of flood protection'.⁶⁹ Even by 1936, the aldermen appear to have concluded that there was no chance they could implement a partial scheme, and that the project would need to be delayed until a comprehensive scheme could be designed and properly costed.⁷⁰

Despite the public clamour for action, there was widespread disagreement between the various levels of government over what form the flood protection scheme should take. Throughout the 1930s, the proposed flood protection scheme took four basic forms: diverting the North Esk into the Tamar through the Mowbray Swamp; deepening the Tamar River to allow speedier discharge of flood waters; by-passing Stevenson (Stephenson's Bend) with a diversion cut; the diversion of the South Esk into Corminston Creek.⁷¹ Once it was clear that a scheme offering complete protection was required, the energies of the City Engineer and his department were directed at formulating such a scheme. Facing immense pressure to act, the LCC engaged an expert on flood protection, Consultant Engineer H. H. Dare in December 1936, and on 24 April 1937 he advised that the most suitable scheme was one which had been prepared by Potts himself. It was swiftly approved by the aldermen on 17 May 1937, suggesting that if they were going to be pressured into implementing a scheme, they were determined to get value for money.⁷²

The use of the LMB's model of the upper Tamar for simulation testing in late 1940s attested to both the LCC's very Progressive desire to formulate the best plan by utilising the most cutting edge expertise. Consulting Engineer to the LCC, H. H. Dare expressed such a sentiment in his report on the issue submitted in March 1941:

⁶⁹ QVM LCC3: 20/1.10 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Letter from the Minister for Lands and Works to the Town Clerk, 12 October 1938.

⁷⁰ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1936, p. 7.

⁷¹ C. G. Burrows, 'Protection from Floods', p. 4.

⁷² QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, 'Launceston flood protection scheme, Report of consulting engineer re: Progress' prepared by H. H. Dare, 29 September 1942 & Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee entitled: 'Flood Protection. Replies to Questions raised by Mr. Alderman W. Clark', 19 February 1940.

The use of models is coming increasingly into vogue for the investigation of River Improvement Schemes and hydraulic problems, and although the scale of the Marine Board's model necessarily is rather small for our purposes, the tests have enabled some useful information to be obtained, and have yielded confirmatory evidence that the Flood Protection Scheme, as proposed, will be efficient.⁷³

The use of the model allowed the testing of the actual 'hydraulic practicality' of the scheme and resulted in some modifications to the plan including the postponement of the diversion strategy. Potts declared in his departmental report that a specific model of the proposed diversion needed to be constructed and further testing carried out. Still, the use of the LMB's model had confirmed that the premise of the scheme was fundamentally sound: 'Much valuable information, principally of a qualitative character confirmatory of assumptions made and opinions held, was gained by observation and measurement of flood flows and river characteristics on the model'.⁷⁴

During the final stages of the decade, the LCC was involved in the intensely complicated and time consuming process of negotiating with landowners to purchase the necessary property for the scheme.⁷⁵ The confrontation between the LCC and William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd over the use of a plot of land on the corner of Charles Street and the Esplanade reveals many of the difficulties inherent to negotiating sales with reluctant owners.⁷⁶ The State Government also owned

⁷³ QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Report on the 'Flood Protection Scheme Report No. 3' prepared by H. H. Dare, 24 March 1941.

⁷⁴ LLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1940, p. 5.

⁷⁵ For example, the LCC purchased 11 acres within the flood zone from a single owner Mr. E. V. Knight in mid-1938. See: QVM LCC3: 20/1.10 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Letter from the Town Clerk to Mr. E. V. Knight, Local Manager, Wilcoz Mofflin Ltd., St. John Street, Launceston, 7 July 1938.

⁷⁶ In October 1940, Manager Ivan Holyman, refused to put a price on a plot of land his company had recently purchased, informing the Council that 'obviously, we did not buy this land just for the pleasure of owning it'. He explained that it would be difficult to purchase a similar block that would as effectively service their needs. Although the Town Clerk informed Holyman that the Council was 'averse to taking steps to acquire the land for this public purpose by arbitration', simply mentioning the possibility was probably meant to infer that the Council would ultimately have the plot of land if it desired. The implications for the scheme were significant and the City Engineer informed the Whole Council Committee that the costs of by-passing the site were prohibitive and were far more than what would have been involved in acquiring the land by legal means. As Holyman was continuing to prove obstructive, the Whole Council Committee attempted a compromise by resolving to obtain the necessary portion of the land, the value of which was deemed to be £3, 470. However this was refused by Holyman and he flagged his intention to

considerable property along the river front, and proved reluctant to cooperate, despite the fact that it was also pushing for the realisation of the scheme. In a memorandum to the Works Committee in March 1939, the City Engineer complained that, while the proposal was almost complete, it could not be properly finalized unless the State Government either gave or sold sections of embankment land to the LCC.⁷⁷

Technical preparations for the implementation of the scheme were never completed before the Second World War, although great progress had been made. Detailed survey work of the areas to be utilised had been completed, despite the fact that a comprehensive survey of the city remained uncompleted. Numerous bore holes had been sunk along the route of the proposed diversion of the North Esk and along the embankment from the Kelsall and Kemp factory to Charles Street.⁷⁸ By the end of 1939, the LCC had expended a total of £2461 on the preparations for the scheme.⁷⁹ Consulting engineer H. H. Dare appeared to be very confident that the scheme could be realised. While he noted that there were complexities involving raising the railway banks and with constructing the proposed structure at the end of Charles Street, they were not insurmountable challenges. However, a further memorandum from the City Engineer noted that after further discussion with Dare, they had both decided that more consideration of the technical design was needed and that their

charge the Council the extra cost associated with delaying the construction of a building on the site, caused by the stand-off. In fact he threatened legal proceedings if the Council did not proceed with processing their building proposal. The LCC did seek legal advice on the issue however it appears that it was decided by the Whole Council Committee not to proceed with any costly litigation and allowed the building proposal to proceed. Holyman went on to demand damages amounting to £1104 relating to additional costs caused by the delay but the Council refused to pay and the matter was not pursued any further. See: QVM LCC3: 20/1.10 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Letter from Ivan N. Holyman, Manager, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd to the Town Clerk, 23 October 1940; Town Clerk to Ivan N. Holyman, Manager, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd, 31 October 1940; Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 2 December 1940; Report of Whole Council Committee from Meeting, resolution No. 2, 2 December 1940; Letter from Ivan Holyman, Managing Director, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd, to the Town Clerk, 3 February 1941; Letter from the Town Clerk to Ritchie Parker Alfred Green and Co, Solicitors, Launceston, 10 February 1941; Letter from the Town Clerk to the Managing Director, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd, 11 February 1941; Letter from the Manager, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd to the Town Clerk, 28 February 1941; Letter from the Town Clerk to the Manager, William Holyman and Sons Pty Ltd, Launceston, 12 March 1941.

⁷⁷ QVM LCC3: 20/1.10 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee, 11 March 1939.

⁷⁸ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1937, p. 3.

⁷⁹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *City Engineer and City Building Surveyor's Report*, 1939, p. 53.

model of the Tamar needed to be consulted.⁸⁰ In recognition that the design had not been perfected, engineering consultant H. H. Dare continued to be consulted on issues relating to the project until 1941.⁸¹

Once war began, the scheme had to be suspended due to a resultant shortage of expertise and materials. From September 1939, various LCC departments began to suffer from serious staff and skills shortages which limited their capacity to realise large projects. In response to a memorandum from Mayor Boatwright's request for a progress report on the five major projects nearing finalisation and on the agenda of his department in May 1940, the City Engineer reported that he only had sufficient staff to 'clear up arrears of work'. The transfer of staff to the Defence Services had also resulted in a skills shortage. Potts admitted that several of his more capable staff were still very junior and required further training (perhaps inferring that this would be necessary before any ambitious projects could realistically be attempted).⁸² The enlistment of Pott's Assistant Engineer, Mr. Smith, would have been a serious loss to the project.⁸³ There is no indication that funds were made available for further testing and preparatory work for the remainder of the war and no serious effort was made to push ahead with any scheme until 1956.⁸⁴

3.1.7: A Model Authority

The LMB was another public authority confronted with difficult policy choices. Hunter's report of 1912 had identified major faults with the River that needed to be rectified for Launceston to remain a viable port. Among the recommendations were that specialist equipment including a powerful bucket dredge be purchased to

⁸⁰ QVM LCC3: 20/1.10 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Report from (H. H. Dare) the Consulting Engineer to the Town Clerk, 16 May 1939 & Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 16 October 1939. Dare stated in his report that: 'The proposal with which we have been dealing is entirely on the lines of that agreed upon in 1937, since none of the information obtained since then causes me to doubt its effectiveness, nor to make any essential change in its general features'.

⁸¹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1939, p. 2.

⁸² QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee, 22 April 1940.

⁸³ QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Report on the 'Flood Protection Scheme Report No. 3' prepared by H. H. Dare, 24 March 1941.

⁸⁴ C. G. Burrows, 'Protection from Floods', p. 4.

enable the full and proper dredging of the upper reaches. W. Henry Hunter, the marine engineering expert engaged by the LMB, also recommended an end to tidal discharge of sewage into the river and the commencement of treatment works. It was apparent that the size of commercial ships was increasing and failure to act would have endangered the future economic growth of the city.⁸⁵

The actions of the LMB contrast greatly with the LCC. The LMB was in general, more likely to invest in infrastructure if there were a genuine need for intervention, regardless of any lack of reproductive potential. Sir Raymond Ferrall reflected on how well the old Marine Board took up the challenges laid down by Hunter:

Although the Wardens of the Board blanched a bit when they started to examine the costs involved in implementing Hunter's Report, they nevertheless took the bit between their teeth and at one called tenders for the considerable amount of plant involved. Coincidentally they sought Parliamentary approval to borrow £800,000 so they could get a start. Implicit in the borrowing permission, there was the right to tax the whole of the Tamar Valley.

Of course, the policy of increased taxation provoked critics, but a subsequent plebiscite held in the Launceston, Beaconsfield, Lilydale, St. Leonards and George Town municipalities revealed that most voters favoured reforms. In 1914 the LMB had purchased the dredge, *Ponrabbell* but it had been sunk by the German Raider *Emden* on its voyage to Australia. The dredge was insured and a new one was ordered in 1920, arriving in 1921. It was immediately used to begin channel deepening along the Tamar.⁸⁶ Several key recommendations of the Hunter scheme had been implemented by 1950, although it is clear that the Second World War slowed overall progress.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston*, pp. 39-41.

⁸⁶ *Examiner*, 9 April 1921, p. 7. The second *Ponrabbell* actually ran aground in Portugal, but was refloated and eventually arrived safely in Tasmania. The plebiscite resulted in 4,466 voting in favour as opposed to 660 against. See: R. A. Ferrall, *The Story of the Port of Launceston*, pp. 41-2.

⁸⁷ Former General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Port of Launceston Authority, J. K. Edwards, recalled the major achievements that predated his initial employment in 1951: King's Wharf, Charles Street Bridge, Bell Bay and Beauty Point Jetties, the part removal of Porpoise, Bombay and Garrow Rocks near George Town and the acquisition of extensive land at Bell Bay in preparation for the establishment of the planned major port. See: J. K. Edwards, 'Some Aspects of the More Recent History of the River Tamar and the Port of Launceston', *LHSPP*, 10 (1998), p. 27.

3.2: Major Infrastructure Project Case Studies 1919-1939

The establishment of a water filtration plant, an updated city abattoir and a crematorium in the city of Launceston during the interwar period appear to attest to the Progressive credentials of its local government. However a closer analysis of all three of these projects reveals an underlying reluctance to engage in reforms to the city infrastructure simply on their Progressive merits. Increasingly throughout the interwar period, the LCC obstructed the realisation of this emerging vision of the city held by its Progressive elite. In contrast to the LCC's rational economy, local Progressives advocated a wider social agenda, although still tempered by economic pragmatism.

3.2.1: A Water Filtration Plant

The need for the incorporation of a water filtration scheme within the water supply infrastructure of Launceston had been evident decades before 1925. CHO, J. S. C. Elkington, and CMO, L. Grey Thompson, had clashed moderately over the nature of the exact standards of water quality in 1907. Thompson had argued:

By experience it has been learnt that it is almost impossible to discover any water, even at its source, which does not require some purification to raise it to a recognised standard. All streams become more or less tainted by the access of organic matter as they course along and through the country – acting as drains to all intents and purposes, and receiving contributions from every direction.⁸⁸

Elkington warned the LCC in 1908 concerning their obligations in regards to water supply: 'The local authority of Launceston must therefore be held answerable for any disaster which may arise from their neglect to secure reasonable protection for

⁸⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1907*, p. 1.

the city water-supply by exercising the powers vested in them'.⁸⁹ Little had been done though, even by 1924, to rectify the potential danger of a contaminated water supply to the city. Instead, the LCC continued to rely on isolated chemical analyses of samples and the benefits of sealing the St. Patrick's Race with concrete from the dam to the tunnel intake. However, a filtration system of some kind had been identified as a necessity by 1914.

The LCC acted slowly on Elkington's criticisms. In a report from both the city engineer and an expert consultant in 1914, City Engineer David admitted that the St. Patrick's River supply was not as clean as it had once been, and attributed that to the increase of settlement along its banks and the construction of roads that could not be drained anywhere else. The LCC had indeed engaged the advice of filtration expert Professor Percy Franklin, who in turn had recommended a large filtration storage dam for unfiltered water, and in order to allow sedimentation, he had argued that filtration shouldn't exceed the rate of 2,000,000 gallons per acre daily, the depth of fine sand should be considerable, and filtering materials should be renewed frequently. David had located a possible site for a storage dam for the purpose of filtration, combined with possible usage as an auxiliary power station, at Duck Ponds.⁹⁰

The LCC's construction of a water filtration plant was agonisingly delayed. Another report on the state of the water supply system prepared by consulting engineer, Mr. W. B. McCabe, in May 1920, focused on the need to impose a filtration system in order to improve the quality of the water.⁹¹ By 1923 the need

⁸⁹ QVM LCC2: *Health Department July to December 1908*, Memo/Report to The Town Clerk from CMO, L. Grey Thompson, citing CHO Elkington's comments on the Launceston water supply in his Annual Report dated 30 June 1908.

⁹⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of City Engineer on Improvement in Water Supply*, 1914, p. 1.

⁹¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1921, p. 2. McCabe was to later become the first consultant engineer on the even more horrendously delayed flood prevention scheme for the city of Launceston. W. B. McCabe (????-???) was born in Dublin, the son of the Commissioner of the Irish Local Government Board. He studied chemistry and bacteriology. He became the Hydraulic Engineer for the City of Dublin. There he was in charge of a large department responsible for a water filtration plant. In 1903 he became Chief Engineer for Calcutta. In that position he greatly improved the filtration system and helped to lower the local mortality rate, saving an estimated 90,000 lives. He later became a consultant and in the course of his work visited Launceston during 1920. He later recalled that he was surprised to find, despite the fact that water filtration in the more temperate states of Australia was exceptional, that Launceston did not have a water filtration facility. McCabe also produced a

was dire, and this was publicly recognised by the LCC. Mayor Shields acknowledged:

Owing to the greatly increased area of cultivation in the St. Patrick's River basin, the sawdust dumps of the now numerous sawmills, and the long period over which the wet weather has extended during the past year, and the water supply has, on many occasions, been discoloured and turbid. The time has now arrived when the question of purification must be seriously considered. Experiments on a small scale have been conducted by the City Engineer's staff, and reports are now being prepared on a complete system of mechanical filtration and treatment. We have an abundant supply of water of excellent quality and of a soft nature, and, when the necessary (sic.) works are completed, it will be second to none in appearance and quality. The estimated cost of the scheme is £20,000.

There was an official, glum acceptance by the LCC then, that action was immediately required. Following closely on from the untimely death of City Engineer Charles St. John David, Mr. G. D. Balsille, who had been filling in for him during his leave, was appointed to the post and oversaw its construction.⁹²

The final establishment of the filtration plant was further delayed as a result of cost concerns on the part of the LCC. The plant was to be supplied by Candy Filter Co. Ltd., England, and the planned capacity was to be three million gallons per day, with one filter unit held as a spare. Power for cleaning the filters was to be generated at the site of the plant by a hydraulic turbine. A Mr. G. J. Robertson was appointed as filter plant chemist, reportedly prepared for the transition by conducting experimental research work in connection with the treatment of the city water.⁹³ Ever conscious about keeping costs down, the LCC petitioned the Minister for Trade and Customs to cover the £800 to be paid on the import of a filter from England to the value of £8000. The LCC argued that the work was being carried out principally in the interests of the industrial development of the city, and that the plant could not

report on water filtration for the HCC. He returned to Launceston in April 1930 and spoke on the issue to the LFTL in one of their weekly luncheons. He acted as a consultant on the earliest phases of the Inveresk flood protection scheme, producing a report in conjunction with G. D. Balsille the Director of Public Works and W. E. Potts, the City Engineer dated 12 December 1930. See: *Mercury*, 5 July 1921, p. 4; 23 September 1926, p. 5; 8 April 1930, p. 5 & 19 March 1931, p. 5.

⁹² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 1.

⁹³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of City Engineer*, 1924, p. 1.

be obtained in Australia at a commercially reasonable price.⁹⁴ The LCC ultimately appeared to be as equally pleased with receiving a refund on its duty fee as they were in gaining a fully functional filtration plant for the city.⁹⁵

The establishment of a water filtration plant proved to be an expensive proposition for the LCC. Capital expenditure for the following year was estimated as having been £33,115/11/03, and that was mainly attributed both to the construction of the filtration scheme and new animal saleyards at Kilafaddy.⁹⁶ However, the construction of the Launceston water filtration plant was at the same time the most valuable infrastructure achievement of the interwar period. When the water supply to the Trevallyn high level district was transferred from the South Esk to the city main supply in 1925, all city residents were enjoying the potential health benefits of filtered water.⁹⁷

3.2.2: A New City Abattoir

Another vital Progressive infrastructure reform that occurred in Launceston was the construction of a new abattoir and saleyards. There had been a growing awareness since the turn of the century that the current city abattoir represented a potential threat to public health. In 1918, the LCC appropriated the approximately 300 acres of land it required for its new facility. Mayor Coogan identified the motivation behind the decision:

The time has arrived, I believe, when the city of Launceston should possess modern abattoirs with sale yards adjoining, as is the case with other cities of the Commonwealth. The purity of the food supply is a matter of paramount importance, and the Council are alive to the question of securing for the citizens meat of a thoroughly

⁹⁴ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 2.

⁹⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1925, p. 4.

⁹⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 1.

⁹⁷ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of City Engineer*, 1925, p. 1.

wholesome character prepared under the best possible sanitary conditions.⁹⁸

However, there appear to have been underlying reasons why the LCC made the move towards a modern facility, and more pragmatic reasons as to why it took a further decade to actually realise.

The LCC officially saw that the construction of a modern abattoir was a way of best achieving better regulation and at the same time expanding the local export market. In 1919 the LCC had become concerned about a legal loop-hole that permitted private slaughtering within the city boundary. While legislative reform provided a solution for the LCC, this event also appeared to further focus the aldermen's attention on the need to upgrade the facilities. The LCC was determined that it should have ultimate powers of supervision over the city's meat supply.⁹⁹ There was also some concern that failure to upgrade the abattoir would have a detrimental effect on future commercial opportunities for the city. The Superintendent of Abattoirs and Inspector of Stock, Mr. G. D. Burgess, articulated the argument fully:

Some 2000 sheep were slaughtered on behalf of the Commonwealth Meat Administration Board, and the carcasses exported to Port Said. This was an important happening for Launceston being the first occasion on which mutton was prepared at our abattoirs for export abroad, and is suggestive of the possibilities of Tasmania taking her place among the meat exporting States of the Commonwealth. This should be a further incentive for expediting the matter of providing new and commodious premises, failing which, this export trade develop, the business may be taken to other parts of the State to the detriment of the Northern Capital.¹⁰⁰

The loan of £50,000 secured by the LCC was subsequently split between works on the tramway system and for General Purposes (specified as the purchase of the stated area of the Killafaddy estate and the erection of new abattoirs.)¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1918, p. 3.

⁹⁹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1919*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Superintendent of Abattoirs*, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Treasurer and Accountant*, 1919, p. 1. That loan also emphasises that the LCC had, by this time,

Even long after the purchase of the land, in 1923, the LCC still appeared divided on the need for a new abattoir. Some aldermen were still advocating a redevelopment of the current city site in Balfour Street.¹⁰² In a very Progressive move, the LCC commissioned an expert consultant, and this appears to have ended the debate over a solution to the abattoir problem. Mr. J. B. Cramsie, Chairman of the Australian Meat Council and Deputy Chairman of the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board of New South Wales, endorsed the concept of the Killafaddy site.¹⁰³ The tramway was thus extended to the Killafaddy site in 1923, a sign that the LCC had become committed to the venture, at least in the long term. There were still lagging economic effects of the recent war, and even that mini-project was delayed through a lack of materials.¹⁰⁴ As a result of the consultation with Cramsie, the LCC appeared very keen to take universal control over the meat supply, even down to the transport to retailers, just like some mainland authorities.¹⁰⁵ Importantly he added: 'It is hoped that ere long modern Abattoirs will be erected on the Killafaddy site, when the latest and most approved methods for handling the city's meat supply will be adopted, thus bringing the city of Launceston into line with many of the most important cities of the Australian Commonwealth'.¹⁰⁶

become used to neglecting issues until they became very serious and then borrowing to fix them rather than raising the annual rate in order to cover the expenditure.

¹⁰² UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1922, pp. 2-3. This was despite the inconvenience of the smell from a site no longer on the periphery of the city and the subsequent requirement to transport livestock through the streets.

¹⁰³ John Bold Cramsie (1871-1944) was born at Balranald, New South Wales. After spending some years on the land in New South Wales and Queensland, he became an authority on the cattle industry. Cramsie was renowned for taking an interest in all aspects of the industry from the perspective of both the breeder and the market. He held several industry positions becoming president of the New South Wales Advisory Board in 1923, producer's representative and president of the Australian Meat Council and chairman of the Metropolitan Meat and Industry Board. He also worked as an industry consultant, which incorporated trips to South Africa and Argentina. Cramsie was also a member of a Royal Commission investigating bush fires in 1927. He retired in 1931 and died at Edgecliff, New South Wales. See: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1944, pp. 4, 10 & *Canberra Times*, 28 November 1944, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 2-3.

¹⁰⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 3. The Mayor explained: 'On the Mainland some abattoir authorities accept the responsibility for the slaughtering and delivery to butchers, also the offal treating, and success seems to mark the undertaking. The undoubted progress of the City warrants up-to-date arrangements'.

¹⁰⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 3.

The subsequent delays threatened to compromise the general quality of the meat produced at the Balfour Street abattoir: the LCC was reluctant to pump money into a facility that was eventually going to be abandoned. Although timber had been purchased for the new buildings, the project had been shelved pending further consideration in 1921.¹⁰⁷ By 1922, some money had to be directed at maintaining the old yards.¹⁰⁸ That occurred again in 1925.¹⁰⁹ By that time Mayor James could at least describe the Balfour Street facilities in the following manner: 'Although old and somewhat dilapidated, cleanliness is the cardinal characteristic of the premises from which the greater portion of the meat supply of the city is derived'.¹¹⁰ It was clear, though, that the state of the facility posed a potential threat to the health and well being of the population of the city.

But the argument that the facilities were adequate was not the widespread community view. In December 1926, the Australian Meat Industry's Employee Union (AMIEU) wrote to the LCC expressing the central concern that: 'There is not another public abattoirs (sic.) in Australia where the work of slaughtering is carried out under such obsolete and laborious conditions'. In illustrating its argument, it pointed to such drawbacks as having offal lying about the floor all day, and the fact that in the circumstances it was impossible for any man to inspect each and every, carcase. The AMIEU was clearly concerned about both food hygiene and the occupational safety of their members. The letter also added: 'We also beg to point out that, although only minor accidents have happened so far, something serious may happen any day, owing to the rotten state of some of the timbers in the buildings and yard'.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1921, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1922, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1925, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 2. Still there were some inherent health problems associated with the old premises. In 1928 the Mayor explained some of the health benefits of the proposed facilities which included ideas is to remove many undesirable features of the exiting arrangements for dealing with meat supply including the carting of the carcase meat to the meat salesmen and the dealing with offal in the vicinity of operation instead of carrying such material through the city. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 5.

¹¹¹ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.4, Letter from the Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union, Launceston Sub-Branch, 7 Waugh Street,

The AMIEU also claimed that the old Balfour Street facility lent itself to animal cruelty.¹¹² While the concerns of the AMIEU were virtually ignored, a protest by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and its threats of prosecution were taken very seriously indeed. The SPCA had been disturbed by the practice of herding animals into the killing yard for two days without providing food or water. Inspector, H. N. Lacey, blamed the LCC for being responsible for the system, the manager of the Abattoir (for not reporting the practice to Town Hall), and also the drovers (which he described as unlicensed, unregistered and uncontrolled). The LCC acted immediately engaging the City Veterinary Officer to provide a full report on the issue. The Abattoir Committee then resolved that animals could be held in the facility for slaughter for only 24 hours.¹¹³ City Veterinary Officer, B. C. Veech, attributed the problems solely to the condition of the facilities.¹¹⁴

By the latter part of the decade then, there was official recognition that the old premises were in a state of advanced dilapidation and that there was an urgent need for a new abattoir.¹¹⁵ The following year it was reported that: 'Preliminary sketch plans for the lay-out of a new abattoir at Killafaddy were prepared and approved'. Also a section of land had been cleared and levelled on portion of the Killafaddy estate near the southern boundary.¹¹⁶ The LCC proved typically fastidious in detail, organising a delegation to Sydney in 1928 lead by Alderman Shields and including

Invermay to the Mayor, 1 December 1926 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union, 8 August 1927. The Town Clerk reply included this comment: 'As far as the condition of the cattle yards is concerned, owing to the continuous wet weather the Supt. of Abattoirs reports that they were dirty but not to the extent complained of by you. However, he has had attention given to them and now reports that they are in good order'.

¹¹² QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.4, See specifically: Letter from the Secretary of the Australian Meat Industry Employee's Union, Launceston Sub-branch to the Mayor, 11 July 1927; Memo from the City Veterinary Officer to the Chairman of the Local Authority, Town Hall, Launceston, 5 April 1929 & Memo from the Town Clerk to the Superintendent of Abattoirs, 24 April 1929.

¹¹³ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.5, Letter from H. N. Lacey, Inspector, SPCA to the Town Clerk, 28 March 1929.

¹¹⁴ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.5, Memo from the City Veterinary Officer to the Chairman of the Local Authority, Town Hall, Launceston, 5 April 1929.

¹¹⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1926, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1927, pp. 2-3.

the City Building Surveyor and Superintendent of Abattoirs with a mission to inspect state of the art facilities, and glean ideas that could be incorporated into their own project.¹¹⁷ The new abattoir and saleyards were finally completed in 1929.¹¹⁸

Several factors caused continued delays in establishing the new facility, but ultimately they can be reduced to concerns over expenditure. There had been initial delays between 1915 and 1918, as the aldermen were not at first satisfied with the proposed location of the new facility.¹¹⁹ Mayor Monds in his 1921 address openly blamed the economic disruption resulting from the First World War as the major cause of the delay.¹²⁰ The LCC was intent on preventing any unnecessary expenditure on the project and complicated it by insisting on utilising relief labour in the construction. The original reciprocal pound for pound scheme had only recently been introduced and after some negotiations. There was a subsequent State Government agreement to provide £500, half the funding needed for the labour associated with the project.¹²¹ Another reason for the delay may have been the fact that the City Building Surveyor and City Architect Department headed by W. H. White was understaffed and eventually another draftsman was contracted on a temporary basis to work a night shift, initially for two months, in order to get the plans completed. While this involved forcing White to work more hours, it was considered by the aldermen to be the most economical option.¹²²

¹¹⁷ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 6.

¹¹⁸ LLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1929, p. 5.

¹¹⁹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1916, p. 1.

¹²⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1922, pp. 2-3. Mayor Monds specifically reported that due to financial stress and supply problems owing to the war, extension of the tramway to Carr Villa and the construction of three new cars had been suspended that year, pending a decision on the new abattoir and saleyards.

¹²¹ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.4, Letter from the Minister for Lands and Works to the Town Clerk, 3 August 1927; Letter from the Town Clerk to the Minister for Lands and Works, 5 August 1927; Letter from the Town Clerk to the Hon. the Chief Secretary, 16 August 1927; Letter from the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department to the Town Clerk, 18 August 1927; Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Engineer, 19 August 1927 & Letter from the Secretary for Public Works to the Town Clerk, 16 September 1927.

¹²² QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards* (1928-1929) 1/ 2.5, Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Building Surveyor, 7 February 1928. In fact White was called to a special meeting of the Council to explain why the plans for the building had not been completed. See: Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Building Surveyor, 26 January 1928. White was to explain that the work done enforcing the Building Act was more than enough work for one man,

The final cost of the new facility was significant, estimated to have been approximately £10,000. Some of that expenditure at least was expected to be recaptured through the sale of the Balfour Street property and cottage. There was also no real economic incentive to centralise the meat market in the city.¹²³ The City Treasurer had warned that were the LCC to conduct all of the slaughtering for the city, its wage bill would drastically increase. In fact, despite increased revenue from charges associated with fully regulating the meat industry in the city, the new facility was expected to run at a loss of £475 per annum. This fact more than anything else, probably encouraged delay on the part of the LCC.¹²⁴ Internal correspondence suggests that the LCC genuinely felt that it was a policy decision made in the best interests of the health and well being of the city.¹²⁵ However, it was one the LCC entered into reluctantly as a result of the expected cost of the venture.

and the equally heavy Architectural workload was currently being done in odd-times and overtime. His first suggestion was for the Council to hire a full-time Architect. See: Memo from the City Architect to the Abattoirs Committee, 3 February 1928.

¹²³ There was also widespread dissatisfaction amongst primary producer advocate groups who also interpreted this policy as a shameless grab for cash, claiming that it would also result in lower profits and higher living costs. See: QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards (1928-1929)* 1/ 2.5. See specifically: Letter from the Warden of Westbury to the Town Clerk, 31 July 1928; Letter from the Council Clerk of Scottsdale to the Mayor, 15 August 1928 & Letter from E. O. Lucas, Secretary of the Tamar Farmers and Fruitgrowers' Association, 13 October 1928.

¹²⁴ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards (1928-1929)* 1/ 2.4, Memo from the Town Clerk and Treasurer to the Chairman and member of the Finance Committee, 10 March 1927. Even with the increase of the levies on cattle and sheep, the costs associated with running a central and modern facility were discouraging for a Council overly conscious of the bottom line. An increase of 1s on cattle (amounting to £250) and 1d on sheep (equalling £145) could not fully offset an additional wage bill of £2, 184!

¹²⁵ QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards (1928-1929)* 1/ 2.5, Memo from the City Veterinary Officer and Superintendent of Abattoirs to the Abattoirs Committee, 21 September 1928. Attached to the memo is a news clipping from the *Sydney Morning Herald* dated 13 September 1928, n. p., entitled 'Diseased Animals'. There is a paper attached with the following written on it: 'To show that we in Launceston are correct in our move for reform in spite of what opponents say we submit attached here to a cutting from the Local Government Column of the *Sydney Morning Herald* for September 13'. The article discusses health problems associated with country districts near Sydney which do not have a centralised system of inspection in relation to abattoirs.

3.2.3: A City Crematorium

After 1929, Progressives actively argued for the establishment of a crematorium in Launceston. The case they presented though was not economically orientated. The establishment of the Carr Villa Crematorium in Launceston ultimately illustrates the economic, rather than Progressive, criteria used by the LCC to determine infrastructure projects during the interwar period. When the cremation movement was to organise itself again in Tasmania there was a strong Launceston connection. Following the establishment of a Crematorium at Fawkner Cemetery, Victorian cremationist Charles Lucas was invited to speak at a public meeting in Hobart, held on 23 December 1929.¹²⁶ At that meeting there was a motion to form a new state-wide society, with Launceston Mayor, Alderman Robert Martin Osborne as President.¹²⁷ Launceston was indeed identified as the most suitable location by the Cremation Society of Tasmania, as it was more accessible to a greater percentage of the state's population.¹²⁸

Despite the lobbying from the newly reconstituted TCS, the LCC was very reluctant to invest in the establishment of a crematorium at the outset of the decade. The LCC compromised and decided to offer the TCS the same option it had provided it in 1912: use of the acre of land still vacant at the Carr Villa site, on the basis that it raised the necessary funds within two years.¹²⁹ The LCC was still opposed to the establishment of a facility which would threaten the profits of their publicly owned cemetery.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question*, p. 169.

¹²⁷ Please refer back to 3.1.4, p. 124 for biography of Robert Osborne (18??-1931).

¹²⁸ Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question*, p. 269.

¹²⁹ QVM LCC3: 6/2.7 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1932-1935)*, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Cremation Society of Tasmania, 22 November 1933.

¹³⁰ QVM LCC3: 6/2.7 – *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1932-1933)*, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary of the Rookwood Cemetery Trustee Board, 22 June 1932. This reluctance was strong, despite the fact that the Mayor of the City Robert Martin Osborne was President of the Society. See: Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question*, p. 269. This may have been partly the reason for the new TCS's preference for Launceston as a potential site for a crematorium in the state. The reformation of the Launceston Cremation Society as the Tasmanian Cremation Society is a further indication that the years 1926-1933 represented a significant period of increased Progressive activity in Launceston led largely by the business and professional classes of the city. Please refer to Appendix B: 'A Launceston Interwar Time-Line'.

The rebuttal strategy did not succeed in deflecting the second incarnation of the movement. The owner and operator of the newly constructed crematorium in New Town, Hobart, Alex Clark Senior, applied to construct a crematorium on the site.¹³¹ It was late in August 1936 that the LCC decided that it would deny planning permission to Clark for his own operation. Then in September 1936 the LCC officially resolved to establish its own crematorium and began negotiations with the Department of Health for approval.¹³² While the LCC did not see the project as a necessity or even desirable, it was better to establish and operate its own rather than face direct competition from a private businessman.

In planning the facility both technological and aesthetic issues were considered by the City Engineer and City Building Surveyor, W. E. Potts. On the surface, this fact also appears to undermine the more cynical argument for basic monopolisation. The LCC wanted to be in full control of the entire process as well as remain its primary beneficiary. The ultimate outcome was of great concern to the local aldermen: they desired the most state of the art and aesthetically pleasing/spiritually uplifting facility that was possible and suitable for the locality. There were numerous choices open to the aldermen in considering a design for the Carr Villa crematoria. On his information gathering visit to the mainland, the City Engineer,

¹³¹ See: AOT: HSD1 General Correspondence, HSD 1/11350, Launceston – Crematory – Carr Villa Cemetery – Approval by Launceston City Council for Approval of Site, Letter from Alexander Clark Senior to the Hon. Chief Secretary, Hobart, 12 May 1936. There are three additional letters addressed by Clark to the same party sent on the same day and titled: ‘Application for approval of plans and specifications of a building and equipment and apparatus to be used for the purposes of a crematory’; ‘Notice of Intention to Apply for Approval of a Site for a Crematory’; ‘Notice of Intention to Apply for Approval of a Site for a Crematory’. Forms ‘L’, ‘J’ and ‘K’ were also included, all standard application documents related to gaining permission to establish a crematorium from the Public Health Department. The New Town Crematorium had opened on 5 May 1936. For evidence of TCS support see: QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1935-1937)*, Letter from J. H. Wilson, Hon. Secretary, The Cremation Society of Tasmania to the Town Clerk, 28 September 1936.

¹³² QVM LCC3: 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1935-1937)*, Letter from the Town Clerk to Mr. Alex Clark Senior, Tasmanian Cremations Pty Ltd, 6 August 1936. It was explained to Clark that the LCC was ‘not prepared to lease to any private person or company land at the Carr Villa Cemetery for this purpose’. The Minister for Public Health was also notified of the decision: Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Public Health Department, 6 August 1936. The very same day a memo was sent to City Engineer Potts requesting an updated proposal of his original 1933 report: Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Engineer, 6 August 1936. In same folder see also: ‘Report of Whole Council Committee from meeting 14 September 1936.’ The report is stamped with date the motion was approved. The LCC published their intention to establish their own crematoria 2 October 1936, see: *Examiner*, 2 October 1936, n. p.; *Mercury*, 2 October 1936, n. p. The LCC project was approved in early November 1936. See: QVM LCC3: 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1935-1937)*, Letter from the Director of Public Health, Public Health Department to the Town Clerk, 4 November 1936.

W. E. Potts, visited several crematoria in Melbourne and Sydney. He noted that some were located away from their associated cemetery. He also observed that the development of the grounds was a critical factor in creating an effective facility. The choice of fuel was another issue that had to be considered: the main choices being coke, oil fuel and gas. A specific method of dispatch also had to be decided on: either through a wall, wheeled out by hand or lowered through the floor. The last, which imitated the act of earth burial, was described by Potts as being 'very fine'. The LCC also had to decide on what methods of memorialisation were to be available to the public as those encountered by Potts included simple collection and scattering, depositing at foot of a memorial, fitting in wall niche or placement in an urn in the columbaria.¹³³

Before making a decision about the choice of fuel the LCC – in true progressive style – contacted the original Cremation Society in London. Its Secretary, George Noble, drew attention to a couple of articles confirming his belief that nearly all the crematoria built in England in the preceding years had been gas fired.¹³⁴ The main benefits of gas had been identified as being that it was clean, did not have to be stored and provided immediate heat that was controllable by unskilled labour.¹³⁵ Still, the LCC negotiated with the Launceston Gas Company and found its offers to be unfavourable.¹³⁶ George Noble was contacted again for information about the new electric furnaces, which had just been installed at Harrogate and Croydon

¹³³ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Memo from City Building Surveyor to the Whole Council Committee, 17 August 1936. As much attention is given to the aesthetic aspects such as the architecture and a garden of remembrance as to the technology necessary to realise the facility. Approximately £1,800 was spent on the laying out of the grounds in 1938 (this included basic grounds and roads, a pool of reflection, wall of memory and a front fence), further indicating the emphasis on the aesthetic nature of the facility. See: LCC3 6/2.12 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1938-1939), Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Centennial Park Cemetery Trust Incorporated, Epworth Building, Pirie Street, Adelaide, SA, 3 March 1939.

¹³⁴ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Letter from the Secretary of the Cremation Society, 23 Nottingham Place, London, to the Town Clerk, 5 January 1937. One wonders if it would not have been more efficient to have contacted the local Cremation Society, who would have been in possession of such information which was regularly published in the British Cremation Society's quarterly journal *Pharos*.

¹³⁵ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Memo from the City Building Surveyor to the Whole Council Committee, 19 April 1937.

¹³⁶ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Launceston Gas Company, Esplanade, Launceston, 15 June 1937 & Letter from the Town Clerk to The Secretary, Launceston Gas Company, Esplanade, Launceston, 15 July 1937. Originally the Gas Company refused to lock in the price of supplied gas for more than ten years. They made a second more generous offer locking an arrangement in for twenty years but by that time documents suggest that an oil furnace was being seriously considered.

crematoria. The costs associated with the technology proved to be prohibitive.¹³⁷ Initially it was also thought that the alterations and additions to the building structure would make oil untenable, but further investigation proved there would be little difference in the overall cost. The City Engineer finally recommended the installation of an oil fired furnace.¹³⁸ The final unit was comprised of single furnace and operated on the 'down-draft' principle.¹³⁹ It proved so efficient and reliable that a second furnace, of exactly the same manufacture, was later installed in 1950.¹⁴⁰

The LCC was faced with the formidable challenge of achieving a fully functional crematorium. This involved building good relationships with local undertakers, fulfilling all the legislative demands made necessary by the *Cremation Act* and taking its place among the international cremation community. Undertakers were offered a ten per cent discount for their work in providing services related to the preservation and collection of ashes.¹⁴¹ The LCC also had to officially forward an annual statement to the Minister that had been previously verified by two

¹³⁷ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Letter from the Town Clerk to Mr, George Noble, Secretary, The Cremation Society, 23 Nottingham Place, 25 October 1937 & Letter from the Secretary, the Cremation Society, 23 Nottingham Place, London, to the Town Clerk, 12 November 1937.

¹³⁸ QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Letter from the Town Clerk to The Secretary, Launceston Gas Company, Esplanade, Launceston, 15 July 1937 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Borough Engineer, Borough Engineer's Department, Municipal Offices, Harrogate, 21 December 1937.

¹³⁹ More specifically the draft passed over body and down through hearth, then dividing and passing over the crown of the furnace, passing finally into stack. The furnace had an average fuel cost per cremation of £1/9/2 (for the 1st adult cremation it consumed twenty five gallons, fifteen Gallons for the 2nd and ten gallons for the 3rd if performed sequentially). See: QVM LCC3 6/2.44, *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1948-1949), Paper entitled 'Details of Transformers', dated 12 April 1949 and sent to Brisbane Cremations Pty. Ltd. in response to their request for technical data on the Carr Villa facility.

¹⁴⁰ QVM LCC3 6/2.48 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Report of Works Committee, 13 February 1950. The motion was adopted by the Council on 13 March 1950. The decision to add a second furnace was in part made as the necessary repairs to the original unit would have meant lost business and it was also recognised that cremation rates were increasing by that time. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.49 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1948-1949), Memo from the City Architect & Building Surveyor's Office to the City Engineer, 16 September 1949.

¹⁴¹ City Engineer W. E. Potts for instance had disclosed in his report following his mainland tour that, he had learned from those operating Crematoriums in Melbourne and Sydney that it was very necessary for Municipal governments that ran crematoria to maintain good relationships with local undertakers. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 9 November 1936. The discount offer was made by way of simultaneous letters in November 1938. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.11 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1937-1938) *January 1938 to 15 November 1938*, Letters from the Town Clerk to C. T. Finney, 16 Brisbane Street; A. Doolan, 136 Wellington Street; Armitage & Armitage, 116 St. John Street, 8 November 1938.

independent auditors.¹⁴² Also the system of pre-paid cremation deeds had to be considered: this proposal was initially rejected but eventually accepted as it was a typical service provided by crematoriums. The concerns of the LCC may have been that a reciprocal system by its very nature meant accepting a lower fee for providing services and relying on other institutions to reimburse the costs.¹⁴³ The system did require some minor fine-tuning over time but in the main, the examples of regulations regarding other crematoria were followed closely.¹⁴⁴

The Carr Villa Crematorium opened in February 1939 and cost the LCC a total of £10, 300 to build. A credit to the LCC, the resulting facility was fitted out with state of the art appointments and a great deal of care was taken in the laying out of the grounds.¹⁴⁵ Despite the cause of cremation being a key Progressive cause, it is

¹⁴² LCC3 6/2.12 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1938-1939), Letter from the Town Clerk and Treasurer to Dr. B. M. Carruthers, Director of Public Health, 14 April 1939.

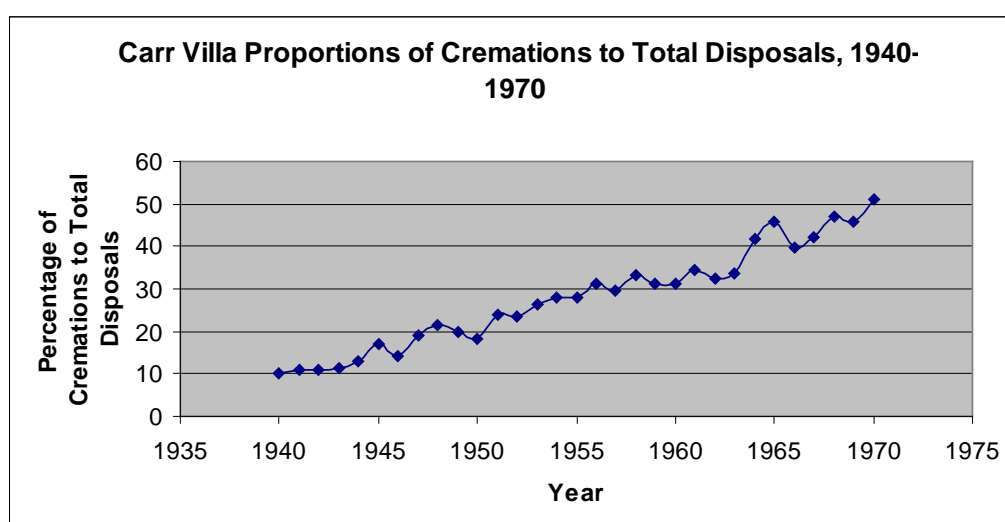
¹⁴³ The initial stance towards cremation deeds was brief but held long enough for the CST to be informed. The issue was always left open to being reconsidered. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.12 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1938-1939), Letter from the Town Clerk & Treasurer to Mr. R. C. Norman, 22 November 1938. The policy appears to have been altered by the following February. Advice on specifics was at that time being actively sought out. See: Letter from Mr. F. H. Farrar, the Secretary of the Woronora General Cemetery and Crematorium to the Town Clerk, 20 February 1939. The LCC basically adopted the normal arrangements and fee structures adhered to by all Australian states. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.39 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1948), Letter from Secretary of Rockhampton Crematorium Limited to Town Clerk, 30 September 1948 & Town Clerk to the Secretary of the Rockhampton Crematorium Limited to Town Clerk, 11 November 1948: in the latter, the Town Clerk noted in regards to negotiating an agreement with the new Crematorium in Rockhampton, that: 'The Council is prepared to enter into a reciprocal agreement with Company in respect of Cremation Deeds. We have a similar arrangement with all other bodies in Australia controlling Crematoria in this respect, and the fee fixed for honouring of each others pre-paid Cremation Deeds is £5 per cremation'.

¹⁴⁴ QVM LCC3 6/2.13 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (June 1939 to December 1939), 'Application for a Cremation Deed in City of Launceston': One of the original clauses regulating Cremation Deeds had to be re-considered in July 1939. Clause 3 originally specified that 'Deeds may not be presented until twenty eight days have elapsed from the date of purchase, except in cases of accidental death'. For those who swiftly took ill and died soon after purchasing them, this may have meant that their deeds were invalid and the full cremation fees might need to be paid in addition to the original cost. Admitting their error, the LCC adjusted the clause so that it was only necessary to then pay the gap between the discounted and full fees. See also: Letter from Mr. G. R. Garner to the Mayor and Aldermen, 27 July 1939 & Letter from the Town Clerk to Mr. G. R. Garner, 27 July 1929. The clause had been based on other arrangements observed through enquiries made to the Cremation Society of NSW and Springvale Cemetery and Crematorium. See also: QVM LCC3 6/2.11 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1937-1938) January 1938 to 15 November 1938, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, NSW Cremation Society, 19 Bligh Street, Sydney NSW, 3 November 1938 & Letter from the Secretary, Cremation Society of New South Wales, 19 Bligh Street Sydney, to the Town Clerk, 8 November 1938; Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Springvale Crematorium, 11 November 1938 & Letter from the Secretary, The Necropolis, Dandenong Road, Springvale to the Town Clerk, 15 November 1938.

¹⁴⁵ QVM LCC3: 6/2.9 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1935-1937), Letter from the Town Clerk to the Borough Engineer, Borough Engineer's Department, Municipal Offices, Harrogate, 21 December 1937. In fact, the laying out of the grounds had equalled 30 per cent of the cost of the structure and

doubtful that the crematorium would have been built if not for the determination of Alex Clark Senior to establish his own operation and the willingness of the Department of Health to support and encourage him. Despite Clark's defiant plan to establish a crematorium on the other side of Quarantine Road opposite Carr Villa, in the municipality of St. Leonards, it was never going to be practical if the LCC persisted with its own plans. It is highly likely that the aldermen's decision to establish their own facility was motivated by the desire to effectively shut out any potential private operation by making it economically unviable.¹⁴⁶ Although the LCC had been pressured to make the decision to establish a crematorium, it was eventually realised in a way that surpassed all Progressive expectations.

Table 3: Carr Villa Proportions of Cremations to Total Disposals, 1940-1970



(Source: *Reports of the LCC City Engineer and Building Surveyor's Department*)¹⁴⁷

nearly 20 per cent of the total cost of the project, reiterating the importance placed on the aesthetic quality of the facility

¹⁴⁶ QVM LCC3 6/ 2.8 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa (1932-1935)*, a Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary, Rookwood Cemetery Trustee, 22 June 1932 and more importantly the reply, Letter from Arthur L. Paton, Secretary of the Trustees Office, 337 Pitt Street, Church of England Cemetery Necropolis, 1 July 1932, confirmed the likely loss of revenue to the cemetery as a total operation.

¹⁴⁷ Conveniently, the summaries of operations provided in both the annual Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Departmental Report of the City Engineer provides both statistics on revenue versus expenditure as well as cremation numbers for the years 1940 to 1970 (minus 1963). These figures have been used to calculate the annual proportion of cremations to total disposals for this period. The number of deaths each year is of course variable, and therefore it is necessary to express the annual statistics as a percentage of all disposals in order to provide a more accurate indication of how the actual popularity of the process changes over time. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Reports of the City Engineer, 1940-1944*,

On purely fiscal grounds, the aldermen's concerns over the overall viability of a single crematorium proved to be well grounded, at least in the short term. Even after the local economy began to recover from the effects of the war, profitability was negligible until approximately 1950. In fact cremations did not account for fifty per cent of all human disposals in the city until 1970 as illustrated in the table above. The reasons for the slow acceptance of the practice of cremation in Launceston were varied, and related mostly to both relative cost to burial and religious beliefs.¹⁴⁸ The establishment of the crematorium in the city was a Progressive achievement but financially it was very much only a gradual success.

3.2.4: The State of the City Infrastructure by 1940

By 1940, the depression, the London Loans affair and the onset of war had financially crippled the LCC. The dire situation certainly contributed to the continued postponement of several vital infrastructure projects.¹⁴⁹ The LCC was still bearing the burden of the London Loans affair, and with alarm it was realised that the full £150, 000 was due for repayment on 1 July 1946, with an additional

1946-1949, 1952-1970 (and *Reports of City Building Surveyor, 1941-1944*); UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Reports of the City Engineer, 1945, 1950-1951* (and *Report of City Building Surveyor, 1945*).

¹⁴⁸ While the cost of a cremation was marginally greater in this period, the subsequent cost of memorialisation was less and this should have acted as an incentive. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.39 *Cemeteries – Carr Villa* (1948), Report entitled 'Crematorium Charges' and produced by the City Treasurer's Department for the Works Committee, 19 July 1948 & article entitled 'Cremation: Total Costs Lower than for Burial', *Examiner*, 28 February 1939. Also the removal of the papal ban on the process in 1963 opened the potential market to incorporate Catholics for the first time. See: Robert Nicol, *This Grave and Burning Question: A Centenary History of Cremation in Australia* (Adelaide, 2003), p. 299. There was also a sustained smear campaign that alarmed Potts and the aldermen that involved propagating several myths about the process of cremation aimed at discouraging potential patrons. See: QVM LCC3 6/2.13 *Carr Villa – Cemeteries* (June 1939 to December 1939), Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Building Surveyor, 9 June 1939 & Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 19 June 1939.

¹⁴⁹ QVM LCC3: 20/1.11 *Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee, 22 April 1940. The five projects of the City Engineer's Department requiring finalisation in 1940 were:

- (a) The flood protection scheme
- (b) Design and construction of the Margret Street Pumping Station..
- (c) South Launceston and Newstead Sewerage.
- (d) Various sewerage and drainage projects.
- (e) Water supply – two new Reservoirs (design and construction).

exchange rate off £37, 500. More money was to be set aside in order to retire that debt from that financial year. In fact, a total of twenty per cent of the entire city's revenue base was being devoted to accounts for Interest and Sinking Funds.¹⁵⁰ As a result, vital infrastructure maintenance began to suffer. While in 1937 the sewerage system had been upgraded in South Launceston, the long proposed interception of the York and Margaret Street sewers had been cancelled.¹⁵¹ By 1941 there were insufficient funds for the provision of a larger pumping station at the end of the Margaret Street outfall to replace the inadequate one near York Street.¹⁵² Overall costs of materials and services were rising and it was openly recognised by Mayor Boatwright in his 1941 address that the annual rate would have to be lifted. The war had led to shortages of such vital maintenance materials as bitumen.¹⁵³

Essentially the city infrastructure began to be neglected as well. The worst affected aspect was the permanent tramway system. This was directly due to difficulty in obtaining supplies of rails and other steel products used in track work as well as petrol rationing, which had led to the curtailment of the new bus services in the city. Both problems placed pressure on the system, and led indirectly to its physical deterioration.¹⁵⁴ Sir William Goodman, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust of Adelaide, found the Launceston tramway system in a very poor condition: many sections of track were corrugated and loose and many tram cars were obsolete.¹⁵⁵ While his final verdict related to his own view that tram

¹⁵⁰ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1937, p. 3.

¹⁵² LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1941, p. 2.

¹⁵³ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1941, p. 1.

¹⁵⁴ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1941, p. 4. This led to the innovation of interim maintenance techniques including the electrical rebonding of rails. In 1945 after the cessation of hostilities, the Mayor made the following statement in regards to the state of the tram system: 'Capacity loading, the condition of the permanent way, and the shortage of skilled labour have been responsible for the difficulty at times to provide the number of cars required for traffic; however the possibility of the release, in the near future of members of the staff from the Defence services together with the necessary repairs and renewals to the tracks generally should overcome many of the difficulties now being experienced, although a strenuous time will be ahead in maintaining the necessary services before rehabilitation is under way'.

¹⁵⁵ William George Toop Goodman (1871-1961), born Ramsgate, Kent, England and the son of a carpenter. Toop first worked as an engineer for the firm Poole and White. Migrated to Australia and installed the first electrical plant at the Mount Lyell mine. He then worked as the assistant

systems were not viable in cities where the population was less than 200,000 and to the relative good state of the overhead wires and feeder system, his recommendation for the introduction of trolley buses was in part a result of the neglect that had been inflicted on the system due to the war. The LCC immediately committed itself to the implementation of a new publicly subsidised transport system from 1946. This indicated that the former neglect was more due to wider circumstances rather than a complete rejection of the ideal of municipal socialism, which had led directly to the original implementation of the tram system in 1911.¹⁵⁶

electrical engineer on the tramway construction branch of the Department of Public Works in NSW between 1897-1900. Goodman was subsequently employed by Boyes Brother Pty Ltd and built the tracks of New Zealand's first electric tramway in Dunedin. Afterwards he became the City Electrical Engineer and began work as a consultant, inspecting tramways on an international basis. He was appointed the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Adelaide Municipal Tramways Trust in 1907, a position he held until his retirement in 1950. Goodman was knighted for his services to the state of South Australia in 1932. He was also awarded the Peter Nicol Russell Memorial Medal by the Institution of Engineers of Australia in 1945 for his contribution to the science and practice of engineering. See: *Mercury*, 1 January 1932, p. 6; *Argus*, 28 November 1945, p. 4; (Adelaide) *Advertiser*, 29 November 1950 & 6 February 1961.

¹⁵⁶ Ian G. Cooper, *Launceston Municipal Transport 1911-1955* (Sydney, 2006), pp. 94-6.

3.3: Conclusions

Theme 1: The sustained attempt by the local administration to achieve a general improvement of the urban environment, despite wider economic concerns.

The LCC deserved full credit for the rapid and successful municipalisation of Launceston before the First World War. The success of municipal socialism between 1889 and 1918 effectively raised the ambitions of local Progressives. Progressives appear to have been frustrated by the manner in which the LCC restricted itself to reforms devoted to providing cheap services to the general population. Ironically, during the interwar period, the most obstructive influence on Progressive reform in the city was to become the LCC itself. While wider economic and political circumstances were both factors, the central reasons for the overall lack of reform that occurred can be largely attributed to the rejection by the local aldermen of the ‘alternative social economy’. In contrast, the LMB experienced many of the same challenges and provided several essential reforms as dictated by W. Henry Hunter’s recommendations of 1912.

The LCC gradually retreated from municipal socialism, reverting to what might more accurately be considered municipal trading. The established non-essential municipal services offered by the LCC were regularly used to subsidise shortfalls in other departments in order to avoid expenditure, and allow the aldermen to keep the annual rate level as low as possible. Reflecting a trend towards fiscal conservatism, the LCC consistently exhibited enthusiasm for projects which had the capacity to be reproductive: a new city abattoir, a modern sports ground, a crematorium, a new trolley bus service etc. Increasingly, projects that were inherently less reproductive, but otherwise vital to the health and well-being of the city were often delayed or cancelled. These included the proposed municipal housing, comprehensive sewage treatment or flood protection schemes. If embraced by the LCC, the ‘alternative social economy’ social agenda may have resulted in an unprecedented degree of reform to the urban environment which would have largely benefited the lower orders.

Progressives insisted on a direct link between the ongoing health standard of the race on one hand, and to the condition of the urban living environment on the other. Subsequent pressure on the LCC to engage in Progressive reforms came from diverse sources. Firstly, the Progressive agenda enjoyed the ongoing endorsement of the leading Progressive voice in the city, the successive editors of the *Examiner*, Prichard and Dryden. They reflected the core Progressive assertion that improving the urban environment was crucial to improving the overall condition of society. Their editorials both endorsed and explained the underlying assumptions and concerns shared by most Progressives on this issue. Most importantly they insisted that government departments at both the state and federal levels had a distinct role in placing direct or indirect pressure on the LCC to act. Some action on sewage treatment soon followed a 1924 inspection by the Director of Sanitary Engineering for the Commonwealth Department of Public Health. State Government pressure was also evident in the movement towards a comprehensive flood protection scheme. It may also explain the success in regards to the establishment of an expensive but economically unviable water filtration plant. There had been strong criticism from CHO, J. S. C. Elkington, over the water quality of the city in 1907. These concerns had been reinforced by the report of consulting engineer, Mr. W. B. McCabe, in May 1920.

There was no sustained attempt by the local administration during this period, to achieve any systematic improvement in the urban environment. Though some observers of the city had anticipated that the LCC might soon be investing in such projects as subsidised housing for the poor, this and several other achievable initiatives never eventuated. When the Progressive conscience of the LCC was effectively pricked by the State Government, the local media or a groundswell of public support, the effect on the urban environment could often be astounding. The establishment of the Carr Villa Crematorium is a prime example of what could have been potentially achieved in the period, a state of the art facility offering an affordable, efficient and clean method of body disposal for the local community. Typically, the motivation behind the project was largely economic. While the aldermen often attempted to cultivate a Progressive image, their consistent failure to intervene damages their overall Progressive credentials.

Chapter 4: The Search for Efficiency, 1919-1939

4.1: Introduction to the Second Thematic Analysis

Theme 2: Evidence of the 'new bureaucratic orientation', particularly in regards to reforming the operations of local government.

What is the use of all the science and experience of all the ages if we do not make use of it to help us?

- C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands Australians*.¹

4.1.1: The New Bureaucratic Orientation

The international success of what Robert H. Wiebe in *The Search for Order* labels the new bureaucratic orientation, led to its rapid integration into the life of the city of Launceston during the interwar period. He describes the bureaucratic orientation in the following way:

The ideas that filtered through and eventually took the fort were bureaucratic ones, peculiarly suited to the fluidity and impersonality of an urban-industrial world. They pictured a society of ceaselessly interacting members and concentrated upon adjustments within it.

The core component was a scientific approach to all social problems - however it was more a reliance on a scientific procedure than adherence to a fixed set of rules. At the heart of this trend was an adaptive form of 'regularity and predictability'. There was a degree of concurrence between the United States and Australia in relation to adoption of this new orientation: it emerged after 1900 and rapidly gained mainstream acceptance after 1910. This movement subsequently reached a

¹ C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands Australians*, p. 36.

peak in both countries during the 1920s. It was particularly influential in regards to reforming systems of local government.²

In his definition of the new bureaucratic orientation, Wiebe explains that it had two aspects. Firstly, it was a trend concerned with adjusting interactions according to the 'wishes and needs of the people involved'.³ This directly influenced the approaches of many 'humanitarian' Progressives as they strove to reshape society on a more equitable basis. Secondly, the bureaucratic orientation possessed an inherent emphasis on economy and efficiency. Those adhering to this approach argued that the overall aim of the movement was to 'regulate society's movements to produce maximum returns for a minimum outlay of time and effort'. This translated more directly into organisational and later, business, progressivism.⁴

The scientific management theories of Frederick W. Taylor were a part of this overall shift to the new bureaucratic orientation. In the United States, Wiebe argues that before reconstruction and in specific reference to business management, there was a 'feeling that customary ways were the best, even in the factory'. 'Taylorism' though underwent some modification, as it was in truth a 'rigid form of rules and laws'. Progressives insisted that the new approach needed was in fact a 'shift from laws to orientation, from efficient laws to orientation, from efficient rules for individuals to efficient attitudes among groups'.⁵

A central feature of Wiebe's thesis on the bureaucratic orientation is his identification of the integral role played by the emerging urban middle-class. He argued that the new orientation was viewed by Progressives as 'the power to guide men into the future'. To him, the new middle classes was the 'heart of progressivism', their ambition to fulfil this 'destiny through bureaucratic means',

² Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), pp. 145-50 & 165. Wiebe noted that the new orientation could be observed in reformed municipal systems aimed at supplanting the notion of the 'City Beautiful' with the 'City Useful'.

³ This ethic was itself directly influenced by the philosophical theories of both William James and John Dewey. Wiebe argued that James' pragmatism was transformed by Dewey into a theory capable of turning people into the 'plastic stuff of society'. See: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 151. The importance of James on Progressivism, even in the Australian context, was later endorsed by Michael Roe. See: Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960* (St. Lucia, 1984), pp. 4-5.

⁴ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 154-5 & 169.

⁵ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 17-27, 151.

driving the wider movement forward. In reality, Progressives were part of a wider, longer-term trend intent on rejecting the conventional beliefs in 'individualism, laissez-faire... and a divinely ordered social system'. The primary mission of this movement led by the new middle-class was to 'search for organising principles around which a viable social order could be constructed in a new, largely impersonal world'.⁶ This argument is complemented by Peter Coleman, who in regards to the spread of the new orientation, specifically views bureaucrats themselves as having been the primary 'gatherers and disseminators' of information. According to Coleman this was a transnational process which operated in two ways: bureaucratic investigators went out into the field to observe and report and also, international data was published and studied. There was intense interest in the United States during the 1920s in Australasian bureaucratic reforms.⁷

The bureaucratic orientation as endorsed by Progressives during this period however was flawed, and it often failed to deliver the social progress, economy and efficiency that it promised. The specific vagueness of the concept sometimes resulted in a lack of coherent focus. Wiebe observes though, that it was best articulated in regards to health policy reform, with a particular emphasis on the lowering of the IMR on an international scale.⁸ However, the wider uptake of the orientation was hindered by the Progressive assumption that a scientific approach would ensure that there would be consensus between leaders and the public. There was also another false assumption among Progressives that 'frictionless bureaucracy' was actually possible and therefore that petty human conflicts would not interfere in the development and implementation of policy.⁹

⁶ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 154-5 & blurb.

⁷ There was particular interest amongst bureaucratic reformers in the United States during the 1920s in Australasian (specifically New Zealand) reforms in regards to taxation, industrial relations, pensions and compensation schemes. See: Peter Coleman, *Progressivism and the World of Reform: New Zealand and the Origins of the American Welfare State* (Kansas, 1987), p. 159.

⁸ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 115-6.

⁹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 154-5, 161-2. Martin J. Schiesl also identified this failing among the Progressives championing this brand of reform. See: *The Politics of Efficiency, Municipal Administration and Reform in America 1800-1920* (London, 1977), pp. 189-90. As discussed in section 1.1.2.

4.1.2: The New International Outlook in Launceston

One positive outcome of the First World War was the dawn of what has been described as ‘the age of internationalism’.¹⁰ An increased global movement of people, technology, institutions and ideas characterised the early interwar period.¹¹ The most obvious expression of this ‘internationalism’ was the formation of a League of Nations, of which Australia was a founding member.¹² The new international outlook helped to facilitate the adoption of the new bureaucratic orientation as an integral ingredient of administrative reform in Australia.

As a microcosm of these wider perceptual changes following the end of the First World War, residents of Launceston began to reject the label of an isolated colonial outpost, and assume the mantle of a regional capital with an international vision. In addition, the city became very aware of the potential benefits inherent to ongoing contact with the international community: this included more than just trade and immigrants, but also technology and other ideas. One indication of this change was the amount and stature of the international dignitaries visiting the city during the first decade after the war. While previously confined to visiting Governors and other Commonwealth officials, local aldermen hosted increasing numbers of foreign visitors of high rank. They eagerly showed off the facilities and services available to the citizens. For instance, His Highness the Maharajah Tana, Sir Bhawani Singh, Bahadur of Jhalawar, Knight Commander of the Star of India from Rajputana, India visited on the 13 June 1925. He was accompanied by his ‘suite’, and given a tour of the city. He viewed and showed great interest in the filtration plant, the power plant, the cliff grounds and some of the industries in the city. That same year a group of American servicemen, as well as a team of English cricketers

¹⁰ *Examiner*, 1 March 1939, n. p. The term was used on the eve of the Second World War to celebrate the first two decades of the operation of Toch H, a international humanitarian organisation which emerged from the trenches of World War One. Toch H probably best exemplifies the open manifestation of the ethic of ‘mateship’, one that in many ways transcended national boundaries.

¹¹ Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake defined transnational history as that which seeks to ‘understand ideas, things, people and practices which have crossed national boundaries.’ See: ‘Introduction’, in Curthoys & Lake, eds, *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra, 2005), p. 5. A fundamental premise of this thesis is that between 1919 and 1939, there was evidence of this transmission of global Progressive ideas into the city of Launceston.

¹² Ernest Scott, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Vol. XI: Australia During the War* (Sydney, 1936), pp. v-vi, 740-52.

who played against a Tasmanian XI, likewise visited to the delight of the local population.¹³

4.1.3: The Influence on Town Planning in Launceston

The new bureaucratic orientation manifested itself in Launceston in town planning, health and local government reforms. Increasingly the local media drew attention to the ‘intellectual traffic’ of ideas.¹⁴ One method was to report on the experiences of locals who had returned from international tours. For example, the *Examiner* interviewed Mr. Alexander Robertson in May 1937 about his views on urban renewal in Scotland. Robertson, formerly a Manager of the Malahide Estate, had just returned from a two-year trip to his native country. As Scottish immigration had declined, local and state authorities had co-operated in order to eliminate slums and create first-class suburban estates for the working-class. In addition to housing, streets and sewage systems had been replaced. Given the highly Progressive leanings of the *Examiner* at that time, the article clearly infers that the adoption of such a scheme on a local basis would be of great benefit to the city.¹⁵

By the end of the First World War, the LTPA, formed in 1915, had virtually ceased operation.¹⁶ The local media were very critical of this sustained inaction.¹⁷ The organisation remained largely informal and ineffectual before its formal re-

¹³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor’s Valedictory Address*, 1925, p. 4

¹⁴ For the origin of this term please see: Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (London, 1998), p. 376.

¹⁵ *Examiner*, 5 May 1937, n. p. The title of the article is ‘Clearing away slums: how the problem is met in Scotland’, inferring that similar problems existed in Australia and specifically Launceston, Tasmania. While Robertson was not fully informed about the financing arrangements between the various levels of government, it is significant that he was asked. There was sustained editorial attention on this issue. Launceston’s clearance of slum areas had preceded a major effort to do the same in Britain, whose major program of urban redevelopment occurred following the end of the First World War. By the end of 1937, Minister for Labour, Mr. E. Brown, was able to report that in the year actually ending in September, 58, 439 had been demolished. In the year previous to that 45, 148 houses had also been demolished in areas designated sub-standard. Brown at the same time was able to note that 103, 274 houses with accommodation for 764, 689 persons had been provided for the displaced. There had been no such effort in Launceston. See: *Examiner*, 1 January 1938, n. p.

¹⁶ *Examiner*, 1 August 1935, p. 5.

¹⁷ *Examiner*, 15 August 1919, p. 4.

organisation in 1933.¹⁸ As C. E. W. Bean insisted, Progressives regarded town planning as central to the efficient development of any town or city.¹⁹ Launceston's town planning movement though proved to be more of a sleeping tiger: when the *Examiner* published a proposal to build a stand of high rise flats in July 1919, there was an immediate professional protest. Mr. A. J. Higgins, a member of the local association and a fellow of the Australian Engineers Society, published a damning letter: "Members of the above association have had considerable experience in such buildings in England and America and contend that they are a most undesirable building and would be a blot on the fair city of Launceston." Predictably, he received support from *Examiner* editor F. J. Pritchard, who noted that the proposed flats would be a 'blot on the fair city of Launceston'. While the existence of the LTPA attests again to the importance of the expert, professional dynamic to the existence of a Progressive culture within a city, the support of the local government was vital. When the aldermen were lobbied by that Association to act, they were relieved, it appears, to discover that passing a motion was unnecessary as no plans had been or were subsequently submitted.²⁰ Throughout this period, the CMO, L. Grey Thompson, continued to lobby the aldermen to impose more stringent housing standards and create a LCC subsidised housing estate, but to a large extent his suggestions were ignored.²¹

4.1.4: The Influence on Health Policy in Launceston

The importance placed on the monitoring of the quality of milk supply to the city and the establishment of baby health clinics reflect the Progressive preoccupation with the health of women and young children.²² In 1919, the CWA hosted a lecture

¹⁸ *Mercury*, 18 October 1933, p. 5.

¹⁹ C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands, Australians* (Melbourne, 1918), p. 26.

²⁰ *Examiner*, 29 July 1919, n. p.

²¹ L. Grey Thompson, who not only felt that a housing estate should be erected and maintained by the council but argued that *pise de terre* buildings be utilised. He argued that they would be ideal for the following reasons: they could be rapidly erected; they were generally vermin proof and were easy to cool and heat. See: *Examiner*, 17 November 1920, p. 4. This fits Wiebe's view exactly as he noted that a common factor of the bureaucratic shift was the local medical community insisting on the 'renovation of an entire city'. See: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 165. The other standout advocate for urban planning was City Manager F. W. Nicholl whose contribution to the Progressive culture of local government will be discussed in section 4.2.

²² Again I refer to Michael Roe's identification of the Progressive tendency towards 'social engineering'. See: *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 5.

by Dr. Truby King at the Mechanics Institute on the importance of breast feeding and also securing safe supplies of milk for those fed artificially.²³ During mid-winter that same year, an inspection of all the mill-producing and milk-vending establishments within a three mile radius of the Launceston Post Office was conducted by a Dairy Expert, with the co-operation of the government appointed Chief Veterinary Surgeon. The fact that these two incidences were reported together in the next Mayoral Address underlines a link between the emphasis on the quality of the milk supply and issue of lowering the IMR.²⁴

By far the most consistently Progressive authorities in Launceston were successive Chief Medical Officers, L. Grey Thompson and J. M. Pardey. They both demonstrated a sustained tendency to intervene and determine responses to specific health issues based on expert advice. During the 1920s, there was a consolidated effort to eradicate tuberculosis (tb) from the city milk supply. This disease often rivalled cancer as a primary cause of death, but, unlike the latter disease, it was seen as preventable.²⁵ This was to require a co-ordinated response between both the City Health Department and the State Government operated Department of Agriculture.

The quality of milk had been a long standing problem in Launceston.²⁶ International municipalities such as St. Helens, Merseyside, England had already undertaken the municipalisation of their milk supply in order to lower their IMR.

²³ Dr. (Sir) Frederic Truby King (1858-1938), native of Wellington, New Zealand, Medical Practitioner and founder of the Plunket nursing movement. The system was named for the Governor of the Dominion, Lord Plunket, whose tenure coincided with the establishment of Society for the Health of Women and Children in 1907. See: *Examiner*, 5 December 1919, pp. 4, 11 & 14 February 1938, n. p.

²⁴ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health*, 1919, p. 1.

²⁵ In 1915 it was reported that there were thirty seven deaths due to cancerous diseases as opposed to twenty two deaths attributable to various forms of tb. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Medical Officer of Health*, 1915, p. 2. Diphtheria as always was very prevalent but it was not often a terminal disease. The gap between deaths attributed to cancer and those to 'tb' varied greatly, but could close with surprising speed. In 1915 cancer accounted for ten per cent of all deaths in the district, while 'tb' related diseases accounted for only five per cent. The following year the ratio was seven per cent (cancer) compared to eight per cent for 'tb' related deaths. Climatic variations may have played a part as it was noted that it was an unusually wet year. TB related deaths also appeared to strike the prime demographic of twenty five to fifty years as opposed to cancer, where terminal cases were mostly clustered in the over 50 age range, peaking between sixty five and seventy years. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health*, 1917, pp. 1-3.

²⁶ Samples of milk were being sent to the Government Analyst as early as 1898, although TB was not mentioned as a concern. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1898, p. 2.

This process was evidence of a Progressive driven international shift from a municipal emphasis on the rights to producers, to an intense advocacy of the rights of consumers.²⁷ In 1907 a local dairyman suggested to Thompson that all cows be inspected and issued with a certificate from a veterinary surgeon. A report from the Royal Commission went further and recommended the banning of the sale of milk from cows infected with TB.²⁸ In 1908 Thompson commented: 'The diseases of man and those of the lower animals have so much in common that any defence that is set up should operate to the advantage of both'. In true Progressive tradition, he was aware that the tainting of milk with virulent tubercle bacilli was an international problem. The great hope was that Professor Hyman's method of inoculation might prove to be a prophylactic against bovine tb.²⁹ Compulsory testing of cows for tb first began in 1918.³⁰ In 1920 testing continued and the Public Health Departments prosecuted offenders.³¹

The main impetus for reform came from the State Government, which appointed a Dairy Inspector in 1920. A proposal that the State Government should take control of the milk supply was also being considered and this prompted the Mayor to admit that as an issue 'the purity of milk supply is a vital one, and demands the earnest

²⁷ Hamish Fraser, 'Municipal Socialism and Social Policy', in R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger, eds, *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* (London, 1993), pp. 270-1.

²⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1907*, p. 3. It is not entirely clear but it is probable that the report to which Thompson was referring was the British Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the relationship between Human and Animal tb between 1901 and 1911. Chaired by Sir Michael Foster (Professor of Physiology, Cambridge), its remit was to find if tb in animals and humans was the same disease and if cross infection was occurring. The interim report in 1907 did conclude: 'Our results clearly point to the necessity of measures more stringent than those present enforced being taken to prevent the sale or consumption of such milk'. See: *Royal Commission on Tuberculosis (Human and Bovine) Interim Report of the Royal Commission, Appointed to Inquire into the Relation of Human and Animal Tuberculosis presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty* (London, 1907), p. 37. This is proof that Thompson had an active interest in current research and acting promptly on its advice in his professional life.

²⁹ Indeed he comments that milk in the cities of London, Birmingham and Manchester exhibited infection rates of eight, fourteen and nine per cent. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1908*, p. 2.

³⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1918*, p. 1. The reasons for the delay are unclear: Thompson was CMO for that entire period. Certainly testing continued and in 1914 he noted that the milk was of a good standard, despite the high incidence of tb in the population (there were twenty five deaths attributed to TB that year, compared to thirty three deaths from cancerous diseases). See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1914*, p. 1.

³¹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1920*, p. 1. It was estimated that six per cent of all human tb infections were 'bovine in origin'.

attention of the Council'.³² The arrangement with the State Government appeared to be mutually agreed on to be the most efficient option to deal with the problem. Although ultimately deriving all powers from State Parliament and being answerable to its various departments, the LCC had traditionally resented any usurpation of powers.³³ It had become clear that for a number of years the City Health Department had been inadequately staffed to perform its assigned duties.³⁴ The reason for the inaction and the subsequent acceptance of the need to co-ordinate with the State Government may have reflected a lack of resources. A bill to transfer powers over controlling the city milk supply to the State Government was passed by the House of Assembly in 1922, but blocked by the Legislative Council.³⁵ There was an overall shift in LCC policy in 1923 for the transfer of power over both the meat and milk supply of the city to a Veterinary Surgeon as 'one of the most important factors in the production and maintenance of national health and efficiency'.³⁶ The Veterinary Department then was established and the following year the Mayor proudly stated that overall the supply of milk was being supervised with more care and that when defects were detected then expert advice was being sought.³⁷

The program of tuberculin testing became both efficient and successful. 'No city in the Commonwealth can claim not only to have milk of such quality, but also drawn from such a high percentage of cows which have been successfully submitted to

³² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1920, p. 5.

³³ This was best illustrated by the termination of the decentralized policing system in 1898, as a result of which the LCC lost control of its own municipal police force. The Mayor noted at the time: 'As regards advanced municipal government, it is a retrograde step, and I greatly doubt if the advantages anticipated by its advocates will be realised, while I am inclined to think that it will not be long before the abolition of the municipal police will be found to be a loss to the city'. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1898, p. 2. There was an element of resentment in the Mayor's reporting of the State Government intention to intervene due to 'municipal inspection having allegedly failed'.

³⁴ Thompson's successor, J. M. Pardey was to officially note that there was still a desperate need for an additional Inspector in 1927 as all the technical work was by that time conducted by himself, Inspector Gavitt and an assistant. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health*, 1927, p. 3.

³⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1922, p. 3.

³⁶ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 3.

³⁷ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 3.

tuberculin test', boasted the Mayor in 1929.³⁸ James M. Pardey, in the capacity of CMO, was to report the same year that there had been an overall improvement in the rate of notifiable diseases in the city, particularly in regards to tb.³⁹ Rather than blanket testing, testing occurred among herds where the disease previously found, if any disease was detected among animals when slaughtered for sale and among herds where owners had requested that testing occur.⁴⁰

The reasoning behind the reform to monitor the city milk supply was Progressive in nature: both the state and the LCC arguing that intervention was necessary for practical reasons and that it should be based on sound scientific principles. The Mayor linked the quality of the milk supply to the health of the race in 1927: 'As a pure milk supply is one of the greatest assets the city can possess, especially for its young citizens, particular attention has been given to the examination of the dairy cows from which the city's supply is drawn'.⁴¹ Veterinary Officer B. C. Veech echoed the Mayor's Progressive rhetoric, relating the importance of the program to the preservation of the race:

I well and truly recognise, in spite of what my opponents may say, that the first and most essential thing to be considered in dairy inspection, is that the animal should be at least free from disease and more so highly contagious and infectious diseases which exist among animals and above all free from disease which the animal is capable of transmitting to human beings, especially children'.⁴²

Although it eventually improved its approach to monitoring the milk supply, the LCC's first instinct was to delegate full responsibility to the State Government. When the Legislative Council appeared reluctant to either have the LCC transfer its responsibility over milk monitoring or to have the State Government take on the financial burden of the role, the LCC arrived at a shrewd compromise: in response

³⁸ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1929, p. 5.

³⁹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health*, 1929, p. 64.

⁴⁰ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Veterinary Officer*, 1929, p. 67.

⁴¹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 3.

⁴² LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Veterinary Officer*, 1929, p. 67.

to the need for greater intervention, the LCC created a separate department and appointed a City Veterinary Officer, but at the same time utilised the expertise and resources of the Department of Agriculture.

4.1.5: The Influence on Local Government Reform in Launceston

Robert H. Wiebe argued in *The Search for Order* that following the onset of the new bureaucratic orientation after 1900, the concept of ‘what constituted good government changed’.⁴³ At the heart of the reforms was the acceptance of the idea, by organisational Progressives, that it was necessary to utilise both expert advice and scientific methodology in order to achieve a truly efficient system of government. The LCC formed long-term coalitions with expert consultants and state government departments in order to achieve greater efficiency, particularly in the area of health services and regulation. With the implementation of a form of the American inspired city manager model of government, the LCC was one of the earliest Australian municipal authorities to attempt to institute such widespread organisational reforms designed to increase the efficiency of their operation and eliminate any wastage of resources.

The LCC proved much more adventurous to effecting administrative change during the 1920s than it had in previous decades. There was a flurry of administrative changes that occurred within the LCC organisation in the early part of the decade. These changes and experiments followed a spate of retirements or deaths. The most significant departure was that of Town Clerk, C. W. Rocher, who had served the LCC for over fifty years.⁴⁴ In retrospect, it has been suggested that he ‘ruled the city’ for many decades.⁴⁵ The LCC also lost two crucial departmental heads in 1923: City Engineer Charles St. John David and Chief Medical Officer, L. Grey Thompson. However, there were several organisational changes which increased the efficiency of specific departments. The role of City Building Surveyor and

⁴³ Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 161.

⁴⁴ *Examiner*, 18 June 1919, n. p. The end of his forty seven year tenure was viewed as the end of an era. While the editorial advice is for Acting Town Clerk Rowe to take his place and ensure continuity, it is perhaps no coincidence that there are several important reforms to the operation of council following his retirement and death.

⁴⁵ John and Donald Morris, *History in Our Streets* (Launceston, 1988), pp. 76-7.

Architect was then separated from that of City Engineer, a Mr. W. White (an experienced officer of the department) appointed to the office.⁴⁶ This presumably increased the time both officers could devote to both specialised tasks. After City Engineer David's death in 1923, an Assistant City Engineer replaced him. As discussed, following L. Grey Thompson's death in 1923, the LCC Veterinary Department was established, involving the appointment of a City Veterinary Officer to work closely with the Department of Agriculture.⁴⁷ Despite the organisational changes, there was a continuity of approach between the departing officers and the new appointments. Thompson was to be replaced by an even more ardent Progressive, James M. Pardey. Pardey's recommendations on various issues mirrored those of Thompson, although at times it appeared he was even more anxious for direct intervention than his predecessor.⁴⁸

As the local economy faltered following the First World War, small adjustments to financial procedures were made in order to maximise revenue. From 1918, a discount was made available to promptly paid annual rate bills. This change was made through the passage of legislation. State Parliament extended the LCC's powers to determine that it was only owners and not occupiers who were liable and

⁴⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1924*, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Until 1910, the full title of the CHO was City Health Officer and Inspector of Stock. Following the death of the Sub-Inspector of Stock, Mr. M. Curtin in 1909, a new Department was formed under the direction of the Superintendent of Abattoirs and Inspector of Stock. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1909, p. 2 and Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1910, p. 4. The Mayor noting in the later report: 'Many improvements made to the structural and working arrangements with their management being placed under the control of a qualified veterinary surgeon'.

⁴⁸ In 1920, fed up with neglectful absentee landlords, Thompson had called for the extension of Council powers to intervene, make necessary repairs and bill the owners for them! See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1920*, p. 2. Pardey certainly took up Thompson's calls for closer policing of housing standards with an almost religious intensity. He claimed that with 'ownership comes responsibility', adding that the onus to maintain properties properly was a 'fundamental principle of good citizenship'. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 3. Pardey was obviously thrilled when an amendment to the Public Health Act in 1940 made it necessary for all properties to be inspected by the local health department before they were rented out. Despite the immense increase in workload, Pardey noted at the time: 'Although this has greatly increased the work of the Department, it has proved an excellent innovation which is certainly a safeguard to public health'. The new regulation was enforced with relish: in the year 1940-41, 1, 737 inspections were carried out, 1, 391 Certificates were issued, 346 orders were served and 321 re-inspections were made. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1940*, p. 76 & LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1941, p. 5.

that interest could be charged on overdue accounts.⁴⁹ By 1920, the LCC was enjoying the benefits of prompt payment, with only £3, 097 outstanding by the end of the 1919-1920 financial years. Still overall rates rose by 1s. and 1d. in the pound. This was normally a policy anathema to the LCC but the Mayor defended it: 'Although the Council knew that such a substantial rise in the amount of rates would meet with some adverse criticism, they were justified in taking the step, as it was felt that progress could not be retarded, and that the works and improvements of the city must proceed'. By 1920, the local economy was showing signs of recovery. To a degree the global economy had forced the hand of the LCC as interest rates had risen and as payments on existing loans had increased, it was decided that further works would have to be paid for through taxation.⁵⁰ The fact that the subsequent rate decline which occurred between the financial years 1922-1923 to 1925-26 was threatened by the spectre of rising wage costs, suggests that the rising cost of labour immediately following the First World War may have also had an influence on the unusual rate decision in 1920.⁵¹ But there was an atmosphere of administrative reformism in the air in Launceston during 1920-1921. Mayor Shields even mentioned an unprecedented plan to cut the number of aldermen to five and pay them a salary – in effect professionalising local government in the city. Although the proposal was defeated, the Mayor remarked that: 'I am convinced that the present system is too cumbersome and that reform must come sooner or later'.⁵²

⁴⁹ An indicator of how much trouble the Council had experienced in the past with late rate payments was that the discount was available to all who paid their bills within 3 months and 14 days after the due date! See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1918, p. 2.

⁵⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1920, pp. 3-6. Annual LCC revenue collected also increased from £117, 783 in 1919-1920 to £172, 440 in 1920-1921. See: *Examiner*, 1 January 1923, n. p.

⁵¹ A planned Court of Arbitration decision to shorten working hours in 1926 threatened to increase labour costs and therefore create a rise in annual rates. The Mayor explained at the time: 'Any increase in the cost of labour would preclude the possibility of reducing rates until the resultant increased cost of living brought with it increased rents, followed by higher assessments, upon which the rates are struck'. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1926, p. 1.

⁵² QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1920, pp. 3-6.

4.2: Case Study: The City Manager Experiment, 1921-1922

At the end of the First World War, there was an increasing public perception that the aldermen of the city were a ‘sleepy lot’ and there was a definite need for civic reform. The LCC was failing to deal with some pressing problems, such as an inadequate and unreliable supply of hydro-electricity and water. This was attributable to the negative effects of war, drought and strike. However, when a deputation of forty citizens approached Town Hall in late 1919 concerned about the cost of water and restrictions during a very hot summer, the Mayor admitted that the problems were partly due to the fact that the LCC had hesitated to act on certain problems in good time.⁵³ Within days of the deputation, a letter to the editor commenting on the issue of civic reform was soon followed up by an enthusiastic editorial in the *Examiner*, reiterating the call for the institution of a more streamlined form of local government run on a commission model.⁵⁴

4.2.1: Calls for Reform

The first proposal for a commission model of government among the city aldermen was made by Alderman J. F. Ockerby.⁵⁵ The centre-point of Ockerby’s scheme was

⁵³ Mayor Shields admitted the following: ‘Instead of looking ahead and providing for reasonable contingencies, aldermen had slept on good intentions’. See: *Examiner*, 2 December 1919, p. 4.

⁵⁴ See: Letter to the Editor, ‘Launceston Civic Reform’ by Ratepayer, *Examiner*, 28 November 1919, p. 8 & an editorial entitled ‘Civic Affairs’, *Examiner*, 4 December 1919, p. 4.

⁵⁵ John Featherstone Ockerby (1864-1951) Educated at Batley Grammar School, Yorkshire, he later studied Chemistry and Electricity and obtained a South Kensington Science and Art Departments certificate for each subject. At the age of eighteen he was given the management of Messers Joseph Firth and Sons Brickworks, Crowborough, Sussex, where he had previously been a timekeeper and learnt the business. He was responsible for the management of a workforce of forty to sixty men and held position for twelve months. He was offered an interest in the business, but wished to come to Tasmania instead. On arrival he was appointed Accountant to Messrs George Peacock of Hobart (the predecessors of Henry Jones and Co.). When he came North, he worked for Mr. David Cocker and after a few months entering into a partnership with him and his son. By 1922 he was the sole proprietor of Cocker and Ockerby, the largest forwarding business in Tasmania in addition to a large Custom House Agency. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of, 1921*, J. F. Ockerby to Mayor and Aldermen, 25 July 1921. Ockerby was first elected to the local council in 1918. When he was elected Mayor in 1924, Simon Harris noted that: ‘His first act was to reinstitute long-forgotten prayers and ceremony, and declare the Council cupboard dry’. See: *Examiner*, 16 December 1924, n. p., as cited in Simon Harris, ‘Selling Tasmania Boosterism and the Creation of the Tourist State 1912-1928’, unpublished PhD

the appointment of an American style municipal business manager. His main motivation was improved economic outcomes, not a wider Progressive vision.⁵⁶

He recognised that as the LCC had become a growing business concern, there was a need for better co-ordination between departments. Ockerby initially called for a full time business manager, and a decrease in the number of aldermen to four. He likened the position of Mayor to that of a Director of a Company. The American influence of grafting a business management structure onto the system of local government was very obvious from the outset. His suggestion was not unanimously supported by the LCC though, Alderman Sadler describing the proposed analogy between Mayor and Company Director as ‘odious’.⁵⁷

The call for the appointment of a city manager represented one of the strongest Progressive crusades in the history of the city. Central to the success of this push was the support of the *Examiner*, one of only two local dailies still operating. The role of the *Examiner* as a catalyst for Progressive change was best illustrated by the attempted city manager reform of local government. Senior editor Stanley Dryden was directly responsible for garnering sufficient local support to overcome the

thesis, University of Tasmania, 1993, p. 264. Ockerby was a famous wowser and conservative but he was not an eccentric. He consistently enjoyed the solid support of an increasingly conservative council during the interwar period – he was simply by his own admission, more out-spoken in relation to his beliefs than most. He once famously quipped: ‘Most people know on which side of the fence I get down’. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1937, n. p. His election to the House of Assembly attests to his mainstream support. In Parliament he clashed several times with the Progressive Premier A. G. Ogilvie. See: Michael Roe, ‘A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen’s Land with Tasmania’, *Bulletin of the Centre for THS*, 1, 2 (1986), p. 48. The redeveloped former public cemetery, Ockerby Gardens, in Charles Street was named for him. He was twice Mayor of the City. For an indication of the scope of his career, and information on the precise succession of Mayors, please refer to Appendix C: ‘A List of Launceston Mayors, 1889-1939’.

⁵⁶ While Ockerby was to eventually become the most vehement opponent of the chosen system and the man who was given the position, he was at first a very strong supporter of the City Manager reform. While Progressivism was a conservative movement, their actions were often focused on the well-being of the lower orders and their means were often radically creative. Ockerby was typical conservative and most of interests lay in economic management and the reinforcement of Christian values. He was very rarely creative on any level. He was not a Progressive and his support for this reform was in keeping with his preoccupation with better financial outcomes. The irony of his initial support was not lost on the general public. See: *Examiner*, 26 January 1920, p. 8, letter to the editor entitled ‘Municipal Efficiency’.

⁵⁷ To Ockerby there was a good case for the adoption of ‘managerial methodology’. The recent bungles relating to the blow-out in cost in purchasing rails for the Mowbray tram line was given as an example of something that could have been avoided if there had been greater co-ordination between departments. See: *Examiner*, 2 March 1920, p. 5. Alderman Storrer was one of the older set who believed that the question of amalgamating adjoining municipalities into the city boundaries was a more pressing reform. See: *Examiner*, 27 April 1920, p. 5.

deflection of the increasingly unimaginative and anti-reformist LCC. There was no sense of a definite model being endorsed, simply the need for and the inherent validity of Progressive reform.⁵⁸ The paper did favour City Manager Nicholl in his power struggle with the local aldermen.⁵⁹ Nicholl found that the *Examiner's* support was a useful means of countering the otherwise near omnipotent power of the aldermen.⁶⁰

In his role as a participant in the Progressive movement, Stanley Dryden became increasingly critical of the evasive attitude of the majority of the local aldermen towards the concept of improved local government:

The conservative element in the council is still very strong, its faith in itself is deep-rooted. To it modern methods make no appeal. The change in the corporation from the exception of its founders to the large business proposition it is to-day has been so gradual that some people find it hard to realise that quite a new system is necessary. It is not enough for aldermen to say that their grandfathers got on very well in the way in which they are going. We live in a progressive age. And we have to progress with it. That is why in municipal matters business methods are urgently required.⁶¹

There was a general inference that failing the normal practice of delaying, the plebiscite had been purposely derailed by conservative opponents. Dryden was insistent that while the means were radical, the ends were sound and ultimately conservative: 'There is nothing revolutionary about it. It is distinctly evolutionary

⁵⁸ There were a plethora of editorials written by Dryden on the issue and most were simply broad endorsements of the idea rather than suggested frameworks – although the views of aldermen on developing the mechanics (particularly those of Ockerby and James) were widely published. Editorials supporting the initial reform include: 'Civic Reform', *Examiner*, 17 April 1920, p. 6 & 'Municipal Reform, Business Manager Supported, Wanted: Energy and Push', *Examiner*, 22 April 1920, p. 4. Two articles supporting the Ockerby and James proposals in turn were: 'Municipal Reform, A View in Favour, Mayor Should Be Manager, Efficiency and Economy', *Examiner* 14 July 1920, p. 4 & 'Business Manager, Launceston Proposal, Committee to Report, Several Aldermen Opposed, Reduction of Numbers Urged', *Examiner*, 18 January 1921, p. 5.

⁵⁹ In relation to Nicholl's treatment by the aldermen, Dryden commented: 'He had a free hand and was loudly applauded by aldermen for what he did in straightening up of outside staffs, but when he touched the Town Hall the difference in the atmosphere was amazing'. See: *Examiner*, 6 June 1922, p. 4.

⁶⁰ For example, Due to his increasing irritability with the Council's obstructive attitude to his proposed reform program, Nicholl made the following public comment in the *Examiner*: 'My responsibility ends when I have told them what needs doing. If they do not agree they should the responsibility... Three years of eight shilling rates would, I believe relieve the situation'. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

⁶¹ *Examiner*, 17 January 1921, pp. 4-5.

and it is sound'.⁶² The *Examiner* was one of the central reasons the concept of 'scientific government' was eventually given a trail run in the city in its capacity as a catalyst for Progressive change.⁶³

Conservative resistance to the reform continued to delay its adoption. As there were no less than four former Mayors still serving as aldermen, the current Mayor felt obliged to insist that the proposal was no reflection on current or past Mayors and their respective administrations. A number of the older guard appeared to resent any reference to the LCC's financial problems. Former Mayor David Storrer, for instance, expressed regret that Alderman James had inadvertently denigrated their collective record of service. In his reaction to the plan, Alderman Hart noted that the affairs of the LCC had always been well-conducted and that it had always been solvent. One of the aldermen who favoured reform remarked: 'If we get the right man and he does no more than put departments on a better course with a more efficient focus, then it will be worthwhile'. The Mayor was to starkly announce from the outset that the position of City Manager would be subservient to the aldermen, and that he would be ultimately responsible for carrying out their policies. The motion, with the *Examiner* watching the process like a hawk, was somewhat begrudgingly passed with only two dissenters (Shields and Storrer) after some minor amendments to specific clauses.⁶⁴

The subsequent reform was to be the highest profile, local expression of the spirit of bureaucratic reformism typical of the period. Aldermen Claude James and H. K. Fysh were elected in 1921 on a platform to institute the reform in the form of a City Manager.⁶⁵ Alderman James explained the reasoning behind the change and the type of man needed to fill the position:

⁶² *Examiner*, 22 February 1921, p. 4.

⁶³ This is the term given to the concept by Robert H. Wiebe. He noted that it was a key aspect of urban Progressivism, noting that by the First World War, 600 smaller cities in the US had already adopted some version of this reform. See: *The Search for Order*, pp. 170 & 177.

⁶⁴ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, Notes relating to Council deliberations on the motion of Alderman James to appoint a City Manager, undated. In regards to its credit history, the LCC did require Parliamentary sanction in order to retire its debts at the turn of the century. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1901, p. 5. Storrer and Sadler were the only remaining aldermen from that time to still be in office.

⁶⁵ R. J. K. Chapman, 'An Experiment in Australian Local Government: The City Manager in Launceston, 1921', *Public Administration: The Journal of the Australian Regional Groups of the Royal Institute of Public Administration*, 27, 2 (September, 1968), p. 386.

The Council... could now be regarded as a large business concern, and should be conducted on modern business principles. A Manager would be able to co-ordinate the work of the various departments, bringing about greater efficiency and practice economy wherever necessary. He should be the type of man that any large firm or Company would appoint as Manager, because of his general business expertise and organising ability.⁶⁶

The proposal was presented tactfully to the Whole Council Committee by virtue of a motion passed by Alderman James, on 25 April 1921.⁶⁷

4.2.2: An American Influence

The city manager system of local government was a product of a larger movement for scientific government that largely emerged in the United States after 1900. Martin J. Schiesl has argued that the new problems of the industrial age and rapid demographic growth after 1880s, made the traditional forms of local government in

⁶⁶ QVM LCC3: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from City Manager to Mayor and Aldermen, 17 August 1922.

⁶⁷ R. J. K. Chapman, 'An Experiment in Australian Local Government', p. 386. Claude Ernest Weymouth James (1878-1961) born at Launceston and was the son of a Clerk. He was educated at Launceston High School and first went to work as a Clerk at the local firm of Walch Brothers and Brichall. He was then employed as a junior Clerk at the Town Hall, eventually becoming Accountant of the Electric Light Department. He served as City Treasurer and Account between 1912 and 1917. He replaced T. Gladman in the position. James left in 1918 to work in the local commercial firm of W. G. Genders Pty. Ltd., but his skills were clearly valued as he was retained for twelve months in a consultative capacity. He was elected as an Alderman on a reform ticket in 1921. James served a single term as Mayor of Launceston in 1924. He resigned from the Council in 1928 when he won a House of Assembly seat representing Bass. He was subsequently appointed Chief Secretary and Minister for Railways and Mines between June 1928 and June 1934 in the McPhee Government. His conservative disposition often alienated him from the more radical elements of the working class, particularly the union movement and communist party. An effigy of him was burnt at Franklin Square in Hobart in 1933 by the Hobart branch of the United Workers Movement after the orchestrated changes to the rules for the state unemployment relief scheme. While he clashed with Ogilvie on the floor of State Parliament, he was clearly respected by the Premier who made him Agent-General in London in 1937. James served the longest term ever in that capacity, leaving the post to return to Launceston in 1950. He had been rewarded with a Knighthood in 1941. His political career came to an end when he unsuccessfully attempted to win a seat in the House of Assembly in the state elections of September 1951. He was married twice (siring four sons through his first marriage and a son and two daughters by virtue of his second). Aside from his political and civic careers, James was strongly involved in the community as a Rotarian and a Mason. A lifelong Anglican, he was cremated at the Public Crematorium at Carr Villa. See: QVM LCC8: *Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1918, p. 3; LLLS Stack Serials, *Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1928, p. 6; *Examiner*, 1 June 1933, n. p.; 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', *Bulletin of the Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1986), p. 48; *Examiner*, 28 August 1961, n. p.

the US appear 'sluggish'. Schiesl described this reform movement as one that was structural in nature and tied very closely to the new bureaucratic orientation that had emerged. The science of this new system of urban government supposedly depended on the adoption of three key principles: non-partisanship, a strong executive, and a separation of politics from administration. Another central principle was the importance of the expert who alone had the formal training to 'manage the business of the city.' Armed with the new techniques of administrative control, these structural reformers developed a template for the 'total reorganization of city administration'.⁶⁸

The first commission form of city government developed in the United States actually involved the adoption of a 'business like model of management'. Schiesl insists that a new 'polity' in relation to local government emerged across the United States after 1900, reflecting middle-class concerns of reducing costs and limiting the capacity for lower-class radicalism.⁶⁹ Contemporary Progressive historian Chester E. Rightor concisely articulated the ideological foundations behind the system:

A city is a great business enterprise whose stockholders are the people... Our municipal affairs would be placed upon a strict business basis and directed, not by partisans, either Republican or Democrat, but by men who are skilled in business management and social science; who would treat our people's money as a trust fund, to be expended wisely and economically, without waste, and for the benefit of all citizens. Good men would take an interest in municipal government, and we should have more statesmen and few politicians.

The central assumption was that those methods and values which had proven successful in the free market were also best suited to become integral components of the structural design of a new system of urban government. The system that first emerged then was an amalgam of the new bureaucratic orientation and corporate values.

⁶⁸ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 1-4.

⁶⁹ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, p. 140.

Early commission system of local government in the United States was heavily criticised for both its corporate approach and undemocratic nature. Its design better reflected a collective desire to increase fiscal efficiency and limit access to power rather than address a wide range of social issues. On the surface there was some logic in attempting to ensure that only competent individuals were appointed to each position in conjunction to their ability to maximise the overall efficiency of government. However, by transplanting corporate values into a system of government, many Progressives were critical of how the emphasis fell on fiscal efficiency rather than social improvement. This model also clearly limited opportunities for the lower orders' access to government and even more importantly less popular critical evaluation of policy.⁷⁰

Contemporary Progressive historian Harry Aubrey Toulmin Jnr., in *The City Manager a New Profession*, credited Americans with the final outline of the concept of city manager government, but acknowledged a European intellectual pedigree. He argued that it was the Germans who 'first experimented with the notion of applying a city manager to municipal affairs'. Toulmin explained that in Germany on the local level, chief executive power was commonly held by a 'Magistrat', which consisted of a number of administrators and one or two burgermeisters, or professional administrators. Toulmin rejected any link with the English innovation of the position of Town Clerk, which he described as merely being the chief legal officer of a municipality. In contrast, he considered the American position of City Manager to have 'entire control of the city, and entire responsibility for all departments with the power of appointment and dismissal'.⁷¹ While the new system of local government was being democratised, the position of City Manager appears to have been a compromise with those that still argued that politics had no role in the administration of a city. The position of City Manager

⁷⁰ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 139-47. Among the more vocal critics of the commission form of government amongst the wider Progressive movement were Vincent Starzinger and Walter G. Cooper. In his case study of the first example of commission government in Galveston, Texas, Schiesl observed that of a five man commission, three were appointed by the Governor and two were elected. Each headed a municipal department and together made policy collectively.

⁷¹ H. A. Toulmin Jnr., *The City Manager A New Profession* (New York, 1917), pp. 23-31. Toulmin defined the position of Town Clerk in the English system in the following manner: 'In short an executive officer, adviser to the council and a representative of the municipality on a number of matters that involve technical legal problems'.

evolved from a number of European and American innovations aimed at improving the overall efficiency of local government. While the public would have input into the development of policy by electing commissioners, the method of implementing that policy would remain the responsibility of an expert administrator.

The adoption of a commission-manager form of government by the city of Dayton, Ohio, in the United States reflects an increasing preoccupation within the scientific government movement for a balance between democratic accountability and efficient, impartial administration. Dayton had instituted a commission-manager model of government in 1914. The city had been struggling financially for a number of years, and the city's administration had been infamous as an example of bad local government. Following the reforms, five commissioners were elected and then appointed a City Manager, who in turn appointed all department heads. Working through them, the City Manager decided how best to implement policy as designed by the commissioners. Administration of Dayton was effectively handed over to a non-political, professional manager, skilled in administrative techniques and the principles of the emerging human sciences.⁷² Another contemporary Progressive historian, Charles E. Rightor attempted to describe the continuing business management model influence on the system:

The organisation of the Dayton government is similar to that found in modern business corporations. In private business the ownership rests with the stockholders, who delegate their powers to a board of directors, which in turn select a general manager to have direct charge of the work. In the city of Dayton, ownership is vested with the citizens, who delegate their powers to the commission, which in turn select a city manager to execute their policies. The duties of the board of directors in either case are to decide questions of policy as to what shall be done, and to provide the funds.

Previously in the commissioner model, the commissioners were largely appointed and then directly assumed the positions of separate departmental heads as well as the role of policy development, whereas this system sought to clearly 'separate the brain from the body', in order to make it both democratic and efficient. In short, this

⁷² Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 172-6. He argues that the central aim was to create a system that was 'more sensitive and responsive to the demands of all groups in the city'.

model then sought to separate accountable policy development from the ‘science’ of administration.⁷³

J. F. Ockerby’s initial proposal for a ‘business manager’ was directly based on reforms to local government that had taken place in the United States. By 1920, around 120 cities had adopted some variation of the scheme. This had resulted in an average increase of twenty per cent in services offered and most importantly to Ockerby, a ten per cent saving in rates expenditure.⁷⁴ A committee was formed to put together a workable model. Typically, the American schemes involved fewer and full-time councillors. It was decided that the number of aldermen would be reduced from nine to five, each paid £200 per annum and responsible for electing a Mayor who would serve a three-year term.⁷⁵ The proposal failed, but led directly to a short-lived dalliance with the concept in Launceston. Stanley Dryden, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, noted the peculiar level of resistance from the aldermen of the LCC, particularly in relation to their tendency to obstruct decisions. Dryden insisted that Ockerby had not convinced him that his proposal was the best choice, but the *Examiner* nevertheless threw its weight behind the call for Progressive change.⁷⁶ The subsequent plebiscite in July 1920 failed, but Dryden remained undaunted. Ever the Progressive optimist, he explained that it was the model, not the concept that was actually rejected.⁷⁷

The specific design of the model that was eventually adopted in Launceston involved grafting the commission-manager model from Dayton, Ohio, onto the pre-

⁷³ C. E. Rightor, D. C. Sowers & W. Matscheck, *City Manager in Dayton: Four Years of Commission Manager Government 1914-1917: and Comparisons with Four Preceding Years Under the Mayor-Council Plan, 1910-1913* (New York, 1919), pp. 1-3, 16-22. There is no indication though, of how differences between the Commissioners and the City Manager might be resolved or that the possibility of that occurring had been considered. It appears to have been assumed that policy implementation would be a one way process. There is included though, an excellent chart on p. 19 emphasising the parallels between the contemporary business model of administering a factory and that of this commission-manager model.

⁷⁴ *Examiner*, 2 March 1920, p. 5. See also Appendix C of this thesis.

⁷⁵ *Examiner*, 24 March 1920, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *Examiner*, 3 March 1920, p. 3.

⁷⁷ *Examiner*, 30 July 1920, p. 4. The official vote was 373 in favour to 2007 against. It is probable that many were keen on reform but rejected the accompanying component of reducing the number of aldermen and professionalising their status. It is interesting to entertain the idea that the attempt by Alderman Shields to add a reduction in Aldermanic numbers attached to James’ motion may have been a sly attempt to muddy the waters and derail the reforms again! See: *Examiner*, 18 January 1921, p. 4.

existing system of local government.⁷⁸ While directly influenced by the Dayton system, the intended hybrid system was never intended to result in the same level of structural reform to the nature of local government in Launceston. The main items of contention were the City Manager's dual role as a Manager and a Town Clerk, as well as his powers in relations to the various heads of department. From the very start it was intended that while the legal powers and responsibilities of Town Clerk were to be invested in the position of City Manager, the day-to-day work of that traditional position was to be carried out by his deputy, leaving him free for his managerial duties. Furthermore, all staffing decisions made by the City Manager would have to be approved by the incumbent Mayor. Still, there was to be a certain amount of latitude inherent to the position, Alderman James stating that the right man would create his own duties. Mayor Shields reassured the LCC that it would surrender none of its powers.⁷⁹ But the issue of setting specific boundaries in relation to the City Manager's powers proved to be an insurmountable problem.⁸⁰

In its deliberations on the issue of the reform, the LCC wanted an administrative officer capable of streamlining operations and maximising their efficiency, not provide a panacea for its macro-economic problems. Policy development was from the outset to remain the exclusive province of the aldermen. Reorganising the operation of local government along business model principles became a common

⁷⁸ As mentioned, it was Alderman Claude James, voted in on a reform ticket, who started a new push for the adoption of a city manager scheme in January 1921. See: *Examiner*, 17 January 1921, p. 4. James appears to have been far more informed than Ockerby about the history and the full range of potential improvements the concept offered. See: *Examiner*, 18 January 1921, p. 4.

⁷⁹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, Memo from Alderman James to Acting Town Clerk, 5 May 1921 & Notes relating to Council deliberations on the motion of Alderman James to appoint a City Manager, undated. Calling the position 'City Manager and Town Clerk' removed any need for a bill to amend the Corporation Act though, while officially occupied by one officer, the City Manager and Town Clerk positions were in practice to be fulfilled by two separate people, the Secretary to the City Manager operating in the capacity of Town Clerk. While the position of Town Clerk was one which was defined in law, the position of City Manager was one which was to be tailor-made for city and he was in essence to be a 'General Manager', with all his powers and responsibilities delegated to him (or not) by the Council, who saw themselves as a 'Board of Directors'.

⁸⁰ *Examiner*, 21 April 1921, p. 4. One of the main criticisms of the core three opponents to the reform from the older set of aldermen (Monds, Storrer and Hart) was the lack of detail about how the system would work. The balance of power was disrupted when Alderman Sadler defected from their ranks. From the outset it was clearly not going to be a system that could be planned down to the finest detail, and individual chemistry and chance were going to always play a role in determining its success. The issue of a clear demarcation line between the powers of the aldermen and the City Manager remained the central issue of contention. Alderman Heyward noted mid-way through the experiment that 'as aldermen they had to be careful not to surrender what was the birthright of an alderman, and that was ultimately the control of the city's affairs'. See: *Examiner*, 10 January 1922, p. 6.

theme between the first and second push for the reform. According to James, the City Manager was to 'stand to the council in the same relation as a general manager did to a board of directors'. It was not intended for the candidate to be an expert in any field, only an expert administrator. His main qualities in part ironically were to be 'tact and organising ability'.⁸¹ In truth, the fact that the central motivation behind the scheme was mainly economic lessens its Progressive credentials. It was in part a local expression of a larger Progressive trend towards reorganisation of local government and management along rational lines. It also is notable for facilitating several Progressive initiatives instigated by a highly organised, if somewhat ultimately ambitious and tactless, City Manager.

4.2.3: An Underrated Success?

The aldermen cast a wide net in an attempt to recruit the right man and the response was a healthy one.⁸² The choice of candidate to fill the new position may also reinforce the argument that the aldermen were determined from the outset not to surrender any of their ultimate authority. Engineer, F. M. Nicholl filled the new position as City Manager and Town Clerk.⁸³ Nicholl was a qualified and

⁸¹ *Examiner*, 18 January 1921, p. 5.

⁸² QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of*, 1921: Loose-leaf memo listing newspapers and the regularity of notices. The net was spread across all of the Australian states and New Zealand, placing an advertisement for the position in at least one of the main dailies in every capital city, the applications closing on 1 August 1921.

⁸³ Frederick Mitchell Nicholl (1879-????) was educated at King Edward's High School, Birmingham and later at Central Technical College, London. Nicholl spent more than four years with Messrs Tangyes Ltd, (over 2 years in Hydraulic, Steam, gas and Pump Erecting and Testing Shops, one and a half years in Drawing and Estimating Offices and one year as Chief Assistant to the Works Manager). He then secured the post of Chief Draughtsman with Messrs Edmundson's Electricity Corporation Ltd., London. He then joined British Westinghouse Co. Ltd., and was employed by them as an erecting Engineer for six months. He rejoined Edmundsons when offered the post of Engineer and Manager of Frome Electricity Supply. Nicholl remained for three years during which he built and equipped a power station, laid mains and established supply business. He was then appointed by Messrs John Taylor and Sons, London to the post of Electrical Engineer and Chief Assistant Mechanical Engineer with the Nundydroog Gold Mining Company on the Kolar Gold Field, Southern India. After two years more service he was promoted to Chief Electrical Engineer to the five mining companies on the Kolar Gold Field and also Chief Engineer of the Kolar Mines Power Station Ltd. While working there he served for eight years on the committee responsible for water supply on the field as well as the standardisation of wages in engineering and allied departments. In March 1919 he was appointed Technical Assistant to the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Hydro-Electric Department (Government of Tasmania). In April of that year he was directed to assume charge of Transport Department, and in May he was appointed Chief Operator in addition to former duties. In June 1919 Nicholl was appointed Electrical Engineer and then in July he was appointed Assistant General Manager. After being relieved of the roles of Chief Operator in September, Electrical Engineer in January 1920

experienced engineer. His previous work experience which had culminated in his appointment as Deputy Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Hydro-Electric Department, had given him extensive managerial expertise. While Nicholl was certainly a suitably qualified applicant for such a complex managerial role he was arguably not the best candidate for the position.⁸⁴ His strength was his engineering

and of transport duties in February, he was then appointed Deputy Chief Engineer and General Manager, a position he had held for eight and a half months. There is some evidence in the file that he was by 1927 working in some capacity for the Bank of New South Wales. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Document entitled 'Appointment of City Manager and Town Clerk, Particulars of Appointment, Powers and Duties', specifically the section entitled 'Schedule, Powers and Duties of City Manager and Town Clerk', p. 2. He would return to Launceston to speak at a weekly luncheon dinner held by the LFTL in May 1933. He had recently been on a tour of England and spoke on the issue of how to best deal with unemployment and the role of technology in exacerbating the problem, particularly amongst the middle-aged. He was well received and there is an indication that he was living in Melbourne, Victoria. See: *Examiner*, 30 May 1933, n. p. In 1934 he returned to the employ of the Hydro-Electric Commission as Deputy Chief Engineer. He was again involved in controversy over expenditure on the Tarraleah Power Scheme in 1940, revealing again that when driven to achieve a goal he had a tendency to ignore protocol and could be tactless. There was pressure to complete the scheme as power was urgently required. In his defence he told a Board of Inquiry: 'We do some extraordinary things when we have to get a job done'. See: *Mercury*, 30 November 1940, p. 2.

⁸⁴ There was at least one other applicant among the 47 candidates that applied, who was by far more experienced specifically in administrative reform. R. H. Truman for instance, had worked as a Town Clerk, Administrator, Public Accountant and Auditor. During his career, Truman had been appointed Administrator for the defaulting municipalities of Grafton and Brewarrina, for which he provided proof in the form of media coverage and references that attested to his ability to successfully implement reform. He was described by one local paper in the following way: 'Mr. Truman is a man of strong personality and possesses the eminent quality of level-headedness'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of, 1921*: Letter from R. H. Truman to Mayor, 21 July 1921. That quote was originally from: *Shire and Municipal Record*: 2/6/1916. A Reference from J. Garlick Esq., Under Secretary, Department of Local Government describes his credentials: 'For the period 23rd April 1913, to 12th August 1914, Mr. Truman acted as Administrator of the Municipality of Brewarrine, and from 12th May 1916 to 9th March 1917, he acted in a similar capacity at Grafton. Both of these positions he filled very ably... In both of these Municipalities Mr. Truman had to re-organise the services from top to bottom and to do it in the face of opposition from an important section of the people'. One of the key concerns of the Council was being able to attract a suitably qualified and experienced candidate for the position with a mediocre salary being offered. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, Notes relating to Council deliberations on the motion of Alderman James to appoint a City Manager, undated but probably May 1921. James expresses this concern himself in the meeting. While Truman states that the turn-over in his business for the year had totalled £240,000, he appeared to be aware that he would be accepting far less and he justified the move by stating: 'My liking, however, is Municipal work, hence this application'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of, 1921*: Letter from R. H. Truman to Mayor, 21 July 1921. It is possible though that as Truman was experienced in taking over civic powers from Council's who had had their powers temporarily revoked, that he might have potentially represented too great a challenge to their authority. Many of the applicants were experienced Town Clerks, but those short-listed while possessing great managerial experience, also appear to have been selected on the basis of having additional professional qualifications, particularly in regards to business or engineering. Applicants seriously considered for the position were granted either one or two pencil crosses. Another viable candidate appears to have been J. N. Jonas of Broken Hill, who was then already serving in the capacity of a 'City Manager'. He described himself as having 'direct oversight and control of the City's trading enterprises and other activities'. But direct authoritarian control over various departments does not appear to have ever been considered by the LCC and also Jonas provided no

expertise rather than his human management skills.⁸⁵ While age and other similar factors probably played a part in the selection, it is probable, that with crucial negotiations with the State Government looming over its allowance from the state electricity grid and the Duck Reach Power Station being the largest and most important enterprise, Nicholl's links with the Hydro-Electric Department would have made him a more attractive choice in the short-term.⁸⁶

Traditionally the City Manager experiment in Launceston 1921-22, has been labelled a failure (in part due to the high profile clash between Nicholl and the aldermen of the LCC, as well as the short-term nature of the appointment). It is clear though that in an administrative sense, Nicholl was able to initiate, if not achieve, a high level of administrative reform for the city. From the outset he began to reform the administration of LCC operations from root to branch. Some of the more trivial initiatives included the decision to standardise the stationary used by the various departments and install a national standard cash register in Town Hall.⁸⁷ However, he did identify major defects in the record-keeping procedures of the LCC, noting in sheer disbelief that there was 'in fact not even an approximately correct plan of the city... available'. Nicholl complained loudly about the situation in late 1921:

indication of any outside professional qualifications. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, List of Applicants for the position of City Manager and Town Clerk, Letter from J. N. Jonas of Broken Hill to Mayor, 11 July 1921.

⁸⁵ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, documents entitled: 'Particulars Relating to the Training and Experience of F. Mitchell Nicholl, MIEE, MI MECH E, MIE (Aus)'. This file contains Nicholl's complete CV, including his references which are impressive.

⁸⁶ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, List of Applicants for the position of City Manager and Town Clerk. The youngest applicant 27 and the eldest was 58, Nicholl was at the upper middle range of that spectrum. Engineering experience on Hydro-electric schemes appear to have been highly valued in the process of selecting a successful candidate. Future Councillor J. F. Ockerby seemed to be very aware of the age issue, noting in his application for the position of City Manager that while he was 57, 'I feel nearer 40'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment of – 1921*, Letter from J. F. Ockerby and Aldermen to Mayor, 25 July 1921. One of Nicholl's initial major concerns was the arrangement with the state government over supplying the bulk of the power requirements of the city. At the time of the report, he was planning to meet with the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Hydro-Electric Department within a week. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921.

⁸⁷ QVM LCC2: *Secretary to the City Manager*, Memo from City Manager to the Secretary to the City Manager, 21 December 1921. Nicholl had apparently counted 24 different forms for various purposes. Also, the installation of a National Cash Register he argued would save more than £100 annually in stationary and labour costs and also help to keep a closer check on receipts for money. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921.

At the moment there are no ready means of quickly ascertaining when a certain street was constructed or repaired, and much of the information has to be sought for in an Overseer's note books, which are kept at his home. In the same way no one can tell me, at all events without an expensive search through account books, how much has been spent upon any road or street within a certain period. Some of the executive Officers complain that they have not been able to ascertain for years past what a particular job in which they are interested has cost to date.⁸⁸

He was to add: 'Under ordinary circumstances I should consider the Officials concerned guilty of culpable negligence but find that it is not their fault, as they have repeatedly been refused the staff they needed to prepare such records'.⁸⁹ While his efforts were undoubtedly effective in achieving valuable reform, his approach alienated both his staff and aldermen.

Nicholl's first report on the state of the LCC's affairs was overwhelmingly negative. He found that general work practices amongst employees were part of the reason that there was a deficit of over £1, 500 on working expenses alone for the first three months of the current financial year. Nicholl argued that there were great savings to be made in reforming the way in which 'outside work' was organised, particularly in relation to the Engineer's Department. He argued:

There is no proper sequence in the system – or lack of system – under which work is observed, reported, recommended, authorised, executed, and costed: there is nothing automatic about it. The time-keeping system also leaves a lot to be desired. The way in which plans for new buildings are dealt with is lax in the extreme.⁹⁰

Both the lack of time he spent in the position and the amount of resistance from the departmental heads thwarted the scope of Nicholl's administrative reforms. In his

⁸⁸ LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921. However this project was not realised and it was not until the preliminary work on the flood protection scheme was underway in 1937, that a detailed survey of the entire city area was being completed. See: LLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer and City Building Surveyor*, 1937, p. 49.

⁸⁹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921. There is evidence that the various departments were indeed starved of clerical staff during this period and staff were often shared between department heads with impractical workloads. See also: Memo from Acting Town Clerk to Mayor, 28 January 1921.

⁹⁰ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921.

first meeting with the assembled heads of departments, he commented that he wanted there to be more co-operation between the various departments. While the value of the idea was appreciated by the Curator of the Museum, other Heads were resistant, resenting bitterly any insinuation of past negligence.⁹¹

Nicholl immediately began to institute the administrative change set out in his first report, notably by eliminating a number of positions.⁹² In fact, expenditure on wages in November was lowered more than five per cent, in comparison with October. Nicholl also negotiated an increased productivity agreement with LCC quarry employees and persuaded Tramways Employees Association to postpone its increased wage demands until the current agreement expired in June 1922.⁹³ In relation to the degree of reform the LCC hoped that a City Manager would provide, the appointment proved to be a great success.

Significantly, Nicholl achieved his greatest success in the realm of fiscal policy. Ignoring divisions between the policy and administrative arms of government, Nicholl restructured LCC finances and effectively placed them once again on a sound footing. He objected strongly to the policy of the aldermen to ignore the advice of the City Treasurer to levy higher rates in order to provide the necessary revenue to cover necessary expenditure. Furthermore, he questioned the wisdom of having the aldermen approve spending like inspectors when they, he argued, were not in a position to offer informed opinions. Instead, Nicholl was asked to reduce expenditure and succeeded in saving the value of his own salary within a month. He immediately cancelled further constructions of new tram cars, postponed the duplication of a track in Charles Street and terminated the employment of a number of what he considered to be surplus positions. He therefore reduced expenditure by £12,000.⁹⁴

⁹¹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Minutes of Staff Conference No. 1, 22 November 1921.

⁹² Including two horses 'which have not been earning their keep' and which were 'declared unsound by the veterinary surgeon'. They were replaced and another added to their number, presumably to work on the refuse disposal and sanitary pan services. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921.

⁹³ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921.

⁹⁴ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921.

Nicholl also succeeded in averting a financial catastrophe. Since the bank through which the LCC had traditionally conducted its loans had changed hands and policies, it was no longer willing to offer money on short-term arrangements. Nicholl noted that the recent federal and state initiatives to induce those with capital to invest in loans with high levels of interest had proved unwise. As the situation was not monitored, changes in the market had meant that it was not worthwhile for people to leave their money in the Corporation. Specifically, he argued that the aldermen's practice of accepting loans 'at call' or for short periods had been damaging, resulting in institutions being reluctant to provide funds in the present economic climate. Nicholl suggested the LCC continue to act as a bank and float a loan of £150,000 locally. This would enable the LCC to pay off loans which were falling due and cancel the overdraft, as well as provide money for critical projects. Nicholl argued that 'citizens will readily appreciate the advantage of investing their money in such a way that the interest paid on it will be spent in their city or at least in Tasmania'.⁹⁵ The loan was a success, with more being raised than anticipated: 192 investors subscribed the amount of £156,445. Nicholl noted at the time that some had doubted the wisdom of offering seven per cent interest, but he realistically argued that any decision lowering the rate of return would have failed to attract the money required.⁹⁶

In addition to being an organisational Progressive, Nicholl championed the benefits of town planning. Anthony Sutcliffe's book, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914*, documented a movement that spread across many countries, including Britain, Germany, the United States and France. Supporters of the concept pointed to town planning as a solution to the social evils arising from industrialisation. Town planning was an intellectual movement that grew out of the process of municipalisation. Urban planning practices in Germany influenced Britain in three ways: provision of cheap land to organisations and individuals to provide working class housing, large scale municipal land purchases and the provision of transport to and from outer

⁹⁵ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921.

⁹⁶ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 December 1921. About ninety per cent or £95,360 were subscribed by 149 investors residing in Launceston.

districts.⁹⁷ Andrew May and Susan Reidy argued that the internationalised town planning movement became preoccupied with several specific issues related directly to shared concerns over city and urban improvement: slum clearance, architectural controls, zoning, provision of public parklands.⁹⁸ Stefan Petrow has observed that the movement spread to Australia and recognised its link to Progressivism: ‘As one of the most urbanised countries in the world, Australia also experienced these social problems and was not immune to the interplay of ideas emerging from the town planning movements abroad’.⁹⁹

In Launceston, City Manager Nicholl was enthusiastic for town planning. There are indications that Nicholl would have preferred that there had been legislative reform to allow Launceston as an incorporated city, to better regulate its own development. During Nicholl’s tenure, a Committee was formed and a proposal put forward to draft a short Act which would ‘enable this Corporation to control, to some extent, the layout of additions to the city’, but no real action was taken.¹⁰⁰ Nicholl resolved to hire an engineering assistant to work as a survey draughtsman to prepare a complete street plan. He attributed the lack of town planning to poor-record keeping practices, and argued that a complete street plan would help the LCC develop the city along ‘modern lines’.¹⁰¹ This was the most important planning initiative to occur in the city until the formal re-organisation of the LTPA in 1933.¹⁰²

However, successful from a pragmatic standpoint, the new duties which the City Manager had been creating for himself increasingly conflicted with the aldermen’s

⁹⁷ Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914* (New York, 1981), p. 69.

⁹⁸ Andrew May & Susan Reidy, ‘Town Planning Crusaders: urban reform in Melbourne during the progressive era’, in Robert Freestone, ed., *Cities, Citizens and Environmental Reform: Histories of Australian Town Planning Associations* (Sydney, 2009), p. 91.

⁹⁹ Stefan Petrow, ‘Making the City Beautiful: Town Planning in Hobart circa 1915 – 1926’, *THRAPP*, 36, 3 (September, 1989), p. 100. Hobart’s own urban planning coalition is the subject of Petrow’s analysis in that article.

¹⁰⁰ QVM LCC3: 20/1.1 *Enquiries General (1921-1923)*, Letter from F. W. Nicholl, City Manager, LCC to Messrs. Stephenson & Meldrum, Collins Court, 374 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, 9 June 1922.

¹⁰¹ LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921. However as a result of his termination, this project was not realised and it was not until the preliminary work on the flood protection scheme was underway in 1937, that a detailed survey of the entire city area was being completed. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer and City Building Surveyor*, 1937, p. 49.

¹⁰² *Mercury*, 18 October 1933, p. 5.

view of how much power they were willing to delegate. Having raised the necessary loan, Nicholl then set out to determine how the available surplus, £60,000, should be spent by prioritising spending projects into three categories: necessary, possible and desirable. Under the heading of necessary spending he listed upgrades to the power system. Under the possible expenditure list, he noted the work to be done on the West Launceston water supply and new Abattoir and Saleyards (estimated then by the City Engineer to cost £15,000). Desirable spending included a tram shed extension and new tram cars.¹⁰³ But these were in fact matters traditionally determined by the aldermen. While his economic strategies were approved up until this point given the dire nature of the LCC's financial situation, not surprisingly the aldermen wanted to reassert their authority. Increasingly, Nicholl saw his fiscal reforms being blocked by aldermen intent on retaining responsibility for all issues of policy, particularly those economic in nature. In a letter to the aldermen in August 1922, Nicholl expressed his frustration at their reluctance to 'leave the Corporation's business in my hands'. An Advisory Committee had been formed, perhaps in order to find some middle-ground, but it was clear that the Whole Council Committee refused to endorse its decisions.¹⁰⁴ This had in fact been one of Alderman James' original reform ideas to which the aldermen had agreed to in principle.¹⁰⁵ A further disgruntled memorandum to the Mayor later that month forced the aldermen to terminate his position: among various other criticisms, he again noted that while an Advisory Committee had been instituted, it had been denied the power to act.¹⁰⁶

4.2.4: Reasons for Termination and Abolishment of Position

By the time a version of the 'Dayton System' had been adopted in Launceston, problems in its design had already become evident in the United States. Firstly, business structuralists worked to undermine the democratic aspect, using the

¹⁰³ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Statement Showing, Approximately, main items of estimated expenditure with respect to finds available from new loan, 12 December 1921.

¹⁰⁴ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk*, *Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Letter from City Manager to Mayor, 2 August 1922.

¹⁰⁵ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1920*, Notes relating to Council deliberations on the motion of Alderman James to appoint a City Manager, undated.

¹⁰⁶ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk*, *Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from City Manager to Mayor, 17 August 1922.

centralised administration to avoid debate and further their own interests. The 'Dayton System' also clearly favoured higher socioeconomic sections of society which could afford to engage in expensive lobbying. Smaller, wealthier and almost exclusively white cities adopted the system more enthusiastically than other types of communities. Drawing a line between policy development and implementation guaranteed the most conflict. Martin J. Schiesl points to a 'reluctance of many managers to restrict themselves to the housekeeping chores of municipal administration'. Despite this, the 'Dayton System' set a trend that had extended to 270 cities in the US by 1923.¹⁰⁷ Launceston then began its experiment at the height of this international trend.

R. C. K. Chapman has suggested that the prime cause of the breakdown in relations between the LCC and its City Manager was the reluctance of the aldermen to relinquish their authority on many issues, while they remained accountable to the public for all decisions made.¹⁰⁸ But it seems clear that the aldermen generally had a very clear idea of the purpose and limitations of the position from the outset of the experiment. One of the primary motivations for the appointment of the City Manager was to partially relieve the LCC's exacerbating financial problems. In 1920, the financial management situation of the LCC was still dire: loan indebtedness amounted to £583,000, Net income for the year ending June 1920 had been £134,353, while expenditure equalled £145,148 and sinking funds amounted to only £115,000.¹⁰⁹ Although these details were published in the literature sent to applicants for the position, the aldermen were determined to find the solution themselves by continuing to determine fiscal policy. The role of the City Manager was in part designed to free their hands of administrative concerns.¹¹⁰ The main

¹⁰⁷ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 176-88.

¹⁰⁸ R. J. K. Chapman, 'An Experiment in Australian Local Government', p. 395.

¹⁰⁹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Document entitled 'Appointment of City Manager and Town Clerk, Particulars of Appointment, Powers and Duties', p. 3.

¹¹⁰ QVM LCC2 – *City Manager 1920*, Notes relating to Council deliberations on the motion of Alderman James to appoint a City Manager, undated. Again Heyward appears to have been very enthusiastic about the idea of administrative concerns being taken care for them as a way to save their valuable time.

financial gain from the creation of the position was meant to be a decrease in the amount of administrative waste in relation to time, materials and procedures.¹¹¹

There was a divergence in how the aldermen and Nicholl envisioned the nature of the position. Certainly, Nicholl was to claim that in truth he had not been allocated a position concurrent with the term City Manager:

There is no disguising the fact that at present I am not the City Manager in the sense of the term as it is used in the country where it originated. The City of Dayton is an outstanding example of how the scheme can be inaugurated to the advantage of all concerned, and, if the Council really desire to find a way out of the present difficulties, their easiest course is, undoubtedly, to copy the system covered by the Dayton Charter.

Nicholl argued that his position should have been empowered to be the financial advisor of the LCC, and have had authority over all departments and departmental heads. He also insisted that while he should act under the guidance of the aldermen, he should be concerned with the development of policy rather than administration.¹¹² One of his convictions was that the LCC should increase the annual rate to ensure it could adequately fulfil its obligations.¹¹³ Eventually, this was to bring him into conflict with all the aldermen, even the experiment's originator, Alderman Claude James.¹¹⁴ Nicholl argued that the position that he

¹¹¹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of, 1921*: Letter from Alderman Claude James to Town Clerk, 5 May 1921. The City Manager was to confirm in his first official monthly report that much time was wasted by referring relatively trivial matters to the Council. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921.

¹¹² QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, documents entitled: 'Particulars Relating to the Training and Experience of F. Mitchell Nicholl, MIEE, MI MECH E, MIE (Aus)'.

¹¹³ *Examiner*, 14 February 1922, p. 4. Nicholl wanted the Council to set a 7s rate much to the irritation of the aldermen. Later in June, Nicholl commented publicly on the issue of how the LCC could best account for its growing maintenance bill: 'The rate of 4s 8d this year has proved inadequate and if that rate were not raised the deficiency next year would be equal to and cancelled by the product of increased assessments, but it will take approximately 2 1/2d to clear the deficiency on this year's working'. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ In response to James' criticisms of Nicholl's ability to set estimates, Nicholl returned fire noting that as a former City Treasurer he was only experienced in book-keeping and that local government was an 'engineering concern', which was quite different! See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

ultimately came to fill was in fact different from the one for which he had applied.¹¹⁵

Nicholl's resignation was postponed as there was an attempt to more clearly define his role.¹¹⁶ Nicholl clearly felt indebted to the ratepayers of Launceston and decided to persevere, although he was dubious about the chances of success.¹¹⁷ There is very little difference between the original and modified schedule of powers defining the nature of position: the gesture appears to have been more an attempt to better define the parameters of his authority in relation to control of the various departments and their staff. The City Manager then had the right to appoint, dismiss and control staff, 'provided that any member of the staff or employees dismissed by the City Manager reduced in status or whole salary or wages is reduced shall be at liberty to appeal to the Council against such dismissal, loss of status, or reduction in salary or wages, and, provided further that such right so given the Council in any

¹¹⁵ Then why did he take the job? Nicholl claimed that the LCC were indiscreet in the publication of his appointment and that act compromised his position with the Hydro-Electric Department. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. He recalled in retrospect: 'When I reached Launceston for the interview I therefore realised that I had to take the appointment more or less as it was offered, or suffer in consequence... but at the meeting aldermen were so cheerful about the whole business, and spoke in a way which gave the impression that I was to take full control without let or hindrance, that I considered it wise not to press for more specific details of my powers'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from City Manager to Mayor and Aldermen, 17 August 1922. Acting Town Clerk, George Bowe was called to account for the leak by the Mayor, but he could offer no explanation. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Memo from Acting Town Clerk to Mayor, 28 January 1921. The proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* were affronted about the scoop and the fact that they had been left out of the loop. The issue was never resolved and Alderman McKenzie even claimed he had heard the news of the appointment on the tram on his way home from the meeting! See: *Examiner*, 19 August 1921, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ But the changes were not liberating for Nicholl and merely served to set boundaries over his already mild authority. He was to attend all meetings of the Council but only for the purpose of submitting reports and advising, not to vote. There were very considerable restraints in relation to his control over staff. Most significantly, his contract was altered to allow termination with 1 months notice. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Drafts of New Agreement, probably written March 1922. They make an interesting watered-down contrast to the original 'Schedule, Powers and Duties of City Manager and Town Clerk'. Nicholl was never authorised to vote at meetings but there is a greater sense of autonomy in the original position description, particularly in regards to input into policy and control over staff. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Document entitled 'Appointment of City Manager and Town Clerk, Particulars of Appointment, Powers and Duties', specifically the section entitled 'Schedule, Powers and Duties of City Manager and Town Clerk', p. 2

¹¹⁷ LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Letter from City Manager to Mayor, 20 March 1922. See also: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. Nicholl wryly noted at the conclusion of the meeting that he owed the ratepayers something as they had supported him more than the Council.

expenditure other than that authorised by the Council'. Also in relation to any disagreement with a head of department when filing a report on any issue, the City Manager was to collect a separate report from the department head and present it to aldermen if requested.¹¹⁸ Therefore, there was certainly no attempt to give Nicholl more of a 'free hand' in relation to his position.¹¹⁹ It is probably not surprising that it did not take long for tensions to simmer to the surface again. Nicholl noted in a memorandum written in August of that year: 'It is evident that enthusiastic service on my part, in the interest of ratepayers and the city generally, is resented by certain aldermen who would prefer me to content myself with carrying out their ideas with the servility which has made municipal inefficiency a byword'. There were still fundamental differences held over the inherent nature of his position between Nicholl and the aldermen of the LCC. The refusal of the aldermen to follow his advice in relation to advising against the contracting out of all the LCC's works infuriated him. He explained:

...I am convinced that at the present time, the wholesale letting of the Corporation's work by contract would be attended by appreciable loss, less satisfactory results, and heavier taxation. The City Engineer says so, the City Electrical Engineer holds the same opinion, and I unhesitatingly confirm their views and if the Council intends to entirely disregard the advice of their technical officers, it is only fair that they should accept all responsibility. I therefore wish it to be clearly understood that, unless I am permitted to carry out the current year's work in the way I consider best and without further interference, I can accept no responsibility whatever for the figures shown in the annual estimates.¹²⁰

Nicholl's public disclosure of his dissatisfaction resulted in the aldermen terminating his contract with one month's notice on 19 October 1922.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from Special Committee to Mayor and Aldermen, draft of revised schedule of powers, 20 February 1922.

¹¹⁹ It was Alderman Fysh at the public meeting following Nicholl's initial resignation who intimated that the City Manager had not been granted a sufficient 'free hand'. Alderman Heyward – who initially had been very enthusiastic about the reform – was one of a number to retort: 'He has!'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922.

¹²⁰ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from City Manager to Mayor and Aldermen, 22 August 1922.

¹²¹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Letter from Mayor to City Manager, 19 October 1922 and Letter from Ritchie Parker, Alfred

Was it the attempted implementation of an inept model or a clash of personalities which led to the failure of the reform? There was an attempt to redefine the role clearly after Nicholl first resigned from the position, but this move only reinforced the aldermen's consistent position on the division between responsibility for policy and administration.¹²² At a public conference in February 1922, Mayor Monds clearly stated that 'Council governs city not City Manager and this must be clearly understood'. While many of the acts which had infuriated Nicholl involved blocking his reforms (particularly in regards to finance and staffing) and refusing to consult him on important matters such as staff appointments, personal clashes aggravated the overall dispute. Still, the real source of the clash derived from the intended purpose and powers of the position. Mayor Monds, a late defector to the cause, was to admit that the problems with the experiment lay in the details and the failure to compromise and co-operate:

I have previously stated to the Council that I consider the difficulties were attributable to misconception as to what powers of control were to be granted to the Manager and what he expected would be given him. More than one agreement was entered into with the object of overcoming the difficulties and for a time seemed to work smoothly. Eventually, however, differences arose which led to the termination of the Manager's engagement.¹²³

The aldermen had set out to find a 'strong man' capable of whipping the administration into shape but had succeeded in recruiting an officer intent on remaking the LCC in his own image.¹²⁴ What was missing was his ability to

Green and Co. to Mayor, 14 October 1922. They advised that one month notice was all that was necessary, and it was not necessary to give a reason for his dismissal.

¹²² See again: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Memo from Special Committee to Mayor and Aldermen, draft of revised schedule of powers, 20 February 1922.

¹²³ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1922, p. 3. Alderman Shields was particularly disgruntled and perhaps in a 'told-you-so' frame of mind was to publicly state when the job description was being reassessed after Nicholl's initial resignation, that the purpose of the position was to 'give his whole time to the problems and furnish all information to Council in order to permit them to decide. This is not the City Manager's view. He says you do what I say or you don't want a City Manager'. See: QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922.

¹²⁴ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. The term 'strong man' comes up several

compromise and accept limitations, something that ironically might have been possible with another candidate such as R. H. Truman, who despite having a ‘strong personality’, was recommended on behalf of his ‘level-headedness’.¹²⁵

The interpersonal dimension cannot be ignored in any analysis of the LCC’s decision to terminate Nicholl’s employment and abolish the position. Among Progressives, the lack of ability to properly negotiate and compromise was not an isolated characteristic.¹²⁶ Nicholl demonstrated poor interpersonal skills throughout his career.¹²⁷ The aldermen were also partly to blame for the breakdown in relations. Nicholl evoked a high level of public sympathy for his treatment.¹²⁸ The local media were also critical of the role of the aldermen in the failure of the experiment.¹²⁹ The aldermen appeared to be very sensitive to these criticisms, perhaps feeling that their side of the confrontation had not been properly reported or interpreted.¹³⁰ Alderman Ockerby the most affronted by what was interpreted as petulant behaviour, and was the most offensive in his remarks. For instance, he described his resignation letter as being akin to something that might have been

times during the meeting, and it appears to have been the core quality the Council valued in terms of a personality profile.

¹²⁵ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk – Appointment of, 1921*: Letter from R. H. Truman to Mayor, 21 July 1921. See specifically quote from: *Shire and Municipal Record*: 2/6/1916.

¹²⁶ The same ability to alienate when striving for Progressive reform was detectable in the Director of Education W. L. Neale who was less successful than his more conciliatory and effective successor, W. T. McCoy. See: G. W. Rodwell, *With Zealous Efficiency: Progressivism and Tasmanian State Primary Education, 1900-1920* (Darwin, 1992), pp. 28-40.

¹²⁷ Nicholl was later criticised for his professional behaviour in the capacity of Deputy Chief Engineer of the Hydro-Electric Commission by the Commissioner of the Board of Inquiry into the HEC in 1940. In his rulings Commissioner W. E. Maclean observed: ‘The Deputy Chief Engineer although essentially honest in his work perhaps lacked the tact necessary to weld the men together in the different branches. Another slight trouble might be that he was unable to delegate detailed work to others.’ See: *Mercury*, 13 December 1940, p. 5.

¹²⁸ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. When some of the underhanded tactics of Aldermen Heyward and Fysh were publicly noted there was an outburst of applause from the gallery, although the Mayor went on to stress that there would be no further interruptions of that nature!

¹²⁹ One editorial reminded readers of a Latin proverb: ‘Audi alteram partem’. This translates as ‘Hear the other side’. See: *Daily Telegraph*, 8 February 1921, p. 4.

¹³⁰ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. Alderman Shields was to comment that he thought public criticism of Alderman had taken place without ‘knowledge of facts’. The *Examiner* duly reported: ‘The applause that greeted those remarks by the manager showed that he had the sympathy of the large gathering of ratepayers which listened to the discussion. Indeed time and again they made their sympathy and their backing felt’. See: *Examiner*, 14 February 1922, p. 4.

written by a 'hysterical woman'. He also dismissed popular sympathy with a terse comment: 'There is too much crying of stinking fish about Launceston'.¹³¹

The city manager concept was another Progressive bastion heavily influenced by Taylorism. The process of government was approached by reformists in the same way as any other type of work-place. Taylorism involved the evaluation of all roles and tasks within any work place in order to ensure they could be performed in the most efficient manner.¹³² The effect of such reforms again tended to be a 'separation of brain and body', wherein workers were to 'operate like a hand, watched, corrected and controlled by a distant brain'. Such top-down orientated systems tended to both alienate and antagonise workers.¹³³

By demonstrating a lack of tact and empathy, Nicholl also provided an excellent example of the way in which many Progressives undermined their own successes. Often their 'top-down' approach was perceived as arrogance. In the case of Nicholl, the alienation that resulted from among the general work-force particularly might have been a result of his total insistence on abandoning all customary work practices, to responsive ones in the pursuit of improved economy and efficiency. Robert H. Wiebe has identified this tendency in relation to American Progressives:

They were an impatient, sometimes arrogant lot who abided very few human failings. The delusive assumption that all good citizens shared their goals – or would as soon as these were explained - led them to trample sensibilities without regard for the resentment that was accumulating about them.¹³⁴

Nicholl's fate demonstrated how the arrogant Progressive characteristics of impatience and self-assuredness undermined many of their successes. This tendency

¹³¹ QVM LCC2: *City Manager and Town Clerk, Appointment, Resignation and Re-Appointment*, Handwritten notes from meeting, 13 February 1922. There was clearly a very personal clash between Ockerby and Nicholl, although Ockerby was a new Councillor and would not have had the stature and influence he was to enjoy in later years. His role in the decision to eventually terminate Nicholls and the position would have been peripheral at best.

¹³² Previous to Taylor, best productive capacity had been sought through various means of enforcing rules and removing distractions in order to ensure diligent, intense and uninterrupted work. By methodically analysing and assessing a work place, Taylor raised this trend to a new level by insisting on the precise manner in which work was to be performed.

¹³³ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1974), pp. 90 & 125.

¹³⁴ R. H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 17-27, 212-3.

to alienate the less educated and those who possessed different values systems often caused a disproportionate backlash. If Nicholl had not provoked such strong feelings of resentment from among both his peers and the residents of the city, many of his reforms might have been retained and sustained. It was only among the like-minded, hard-core Progressives that Nicholls found support: three candidates aimed at reinstating him as City Manager ran for local office in 1922, but Aldermen Monds, Crawford and Fysh were all returned instead.¹³⁵ The devoted, although small, level of support that Nicholl enjoyed among the local population suggests that a wider network of citizens had begun to both appreciate and adopt Progressive ideas.

Once the position of Town Clerk was reinstated, the Aldermen hired George Bowe, who had somewhat fittingly served as Secretary to the City Manager.¹³⁶ Following his death in 1924, the positions of Town Clerk and City Treasurer were combined.¹³⁷ Thus the LCC would continue to see the benefits of administrative reform, although it would not attempt to institute any similar administrative reform, perhaps for fear of undermining its own power, for several decades.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 4. Typical of the conservative political landscape in Launceston, after a dalliance with a degree of radical conservatism, there was a sudden snap-back to those considered to possess 'safe-hands'. It is probably significant that consistent opponent of the reform, Alderman George Shields, was appointed Mayor in 1923. See: Appendix C.

¹³⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1919, p. 1. He came to that position following the resignation of C. W. Rocher as Town Clerk in 1919.

¹³⁷ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 1. From 1 September 1924, F. C. Crawford accepted both roles.

¹³⁸ Alderman James, the precipitator of the said reform, was to serve an uneventful and unimaginative term as Mayor as well in 1924. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, p. 1 & UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 1. As mentioned in the Introduction, the City Manager experiment was not even mentioned in the 100 year retrospective of the history of the Council in 1953, the incident seemingly ignored to the extent that it was stated multiple times that the City had only ever had four Town Clerks, rather than five! See: *Examiner*, 7 March 1953, n. p.

4.3: Conclusions

Theme 2: Evidence of the 'new bureaucratic orientation' particularly in regards to reforming the operations of local government.

Following the First World War, Launceston emerged as a regional capital with a more distinctly international outlook. The city was not unique in its adoption and adaptation of the new bureaucratic orientation by organisational Progressives. The humanitarian or social Progressivism aspect of this trend, focusing on increasing social equity, in Launceston mostly consisted of a minor town planning and health reform coalitions. It was the second aspect of the trend - the emphasis on economy and efficiency - that gained ascendancy in the city. A prime example was the comprehensive strategy between the LCC and the Department of Agriculture to eliminate tb from the city milk supply. It also complimented the Progressive preoccupation with health, especially that of the child.

The city manager experiment was definitely the most high-profile expression of the new bureaucratic orientation to manifest itself in Launceston during the interwar period. This dalliance with scientific government can be attributed directly to a small reform movement led by a select few aldermen and the enthusiasm of the local daily, the *Examiner*. Aldermen Claude James and H. K. Fysh recognised the opportunities inherent in standing on Progressive reform tickets. The experiment was a result of a direct pedigree of reformist thought emanating directly from Dayton, Ohio, in the United States and is evidence that Progressive ideas were beginning to appeal to the popular imagination in Launceston. While the differences of opinion over the demarcation of lines of power undermined his efforts and resulted in his removal, City Manager Nicholl's efforts in organisational reform were both sincere and long-lasting. The experiment could also be seen as the point when Progressive ideas began to spill out into the general population, particularly leading to their adoption by the local business community by the middle of the decade. Three private citizens also stood for election following his termination, on the basis of having him reinstalled, attesting to the level of popular approval of his agenda, rather than his methods or character.

The reasons for the abrupt termination of the city manager system of government in Launceston can in part be attributed to the inherently impersonal nature of the new bureaucratic orientation. Robert H. Wiebe argued that it was unrealistic in any context to expect that once rationalism was fully embraced all parties would simply ignore their own interests and agree on policy and its implementation.¹³⁹ Martin J. Schiesl also observed a tendency among organisational Progressives to appreciate the degree of interdependency that exists in any work place.¹⁴⁰

The commission-manager system of government had been in part developed out of the original commission model, in recognition that the process of policy development required an element of democratic accountability. This was done in order to best service the needs of all residents: to shift the reform emphasis from the fiscal back to the social. The new system was an attempt to ‘separate mind from body’ and ensure that while those that formulated policy were both democratically elected and accountable, the officer in charge of implementing that policy agenda would be free to comply on the best ‘scientific’ grounds. This was the system that was grafted onto the pre-existing system of local government in Launceston between 1921 and 1922.

However, in the case of Launceston, its City Manager made ambitious moves for control over policy and was checked by its elected officers. Furthermore, Nicholl’s autocratic style of management may have also inadvertently contributed to the demise of the experiment. He did not seem to appreciate that a simplistic top-down approach in management style was often counter-productive. This was unfortunate, as the city manager system of government had provided valuable reforms and had certainly improved the overall efficiency of the administration.

¹³⁹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 161-2.

¹⁴⁰ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, pp. 189-90.

Chapter 5: A City of Coalitions, 1919-1939

5.1: Introduction to the Third Thematic Analysis

Theme 3: The existence of political, professional, community and/or business coalitions at the local level that champion pro-growth, but particularly Progressive ideas.

The transition from individualism to social unity is logical as well as historical.

- Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order*.¹

5.1.1: The Age of the Coalition

The interwar period was also the age of the coalition. It was very common during the first half of the twentieth century for reformists to formally combine their efforts in order to pursue a common cause. However, not all of these coalitions were specifically Progressive. Many were coalitions with a limited scope of concern, formed to deal with a single issue or limited agenda.² Progressive coalitions, whether social, business or political in origin, were often motivated by a more coherent array of concerns and shared convictions over how they could be addressed. These Progressive coalitions were often formal and ongoing arrangements, with memberships drawn from both the professional and business classes. These coalitions also drew heavily on the expertise of members and their

¹ Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order. A Study of Post-War Reconstruction* (New Town, 1919), p. 88.

² For instance Mayor Shields offered support for the idea of a housewives market – despite the fact that it would conflict with business interests in the city – as it was an effective way to improve the health of poor, particularly children. The Housewives Association was one of the larger lobby groups, in 1920 it possessed 700 members. They lobbied local and state government on issues relating to domestic concerns such as the need for a market designed for individual buyers to help families better provide. See: *Examiner*, 11 & 17 June 1920, n. p. Another example was the Inveresk and Invermay Progress Associations Flood Levy Association which lobbied for select issues of direct relevance to them such as the levy protection scheme. See: *Examiner*, 4 December 1930, p. 4.

contacts from within their profession, but who were often based outside their region. David W. Gutzke explained: ‘Characteristic of progressives was their almost uncanny ability to forge diverse coalitions on specific issues for short-term campaigns, appealing to individuals across political divides.’ Gutzke used the term consistently through his book to describe this phenomenon, typical of Progressivism. However, while he argued that in the UK during the interwar period that they were diverse and short-term in nature, the membership tended to be uniform and the coalitions quite long-term in nature in Launceston.³

During the interwar period then, Launceston witnessed a decided flowering of social, business and political coalitions, all aimed at achieving a range of Progressive reforms. Generations of political neglect by colonial governments had encouraged a culture of self-reliance in Launceston.⁴ The achievements of municipalisation by 1900 had encouraged local Progressives to call for more ambitious reforms.⁵ Perhaps as a result of both of these trends, Launceston had developed a discernable culture of civic altruism. The mid-1920s represented a pivotal period when many Progressive ideas diffused to the general population and gained momentary acceptance and widespread popularity. These new Progressive alliances were concerned with instituting reforms aimed at creating a more efficient (and therefore more healthy and productive society). This increasing level of civic engagement in Launceston resulted directly in the formation of the CWA and the LFTL.

5.1.2: The Continuing Importance of the Professional Dynamic in Launceston

Progressive ideas were transmitted specifically between professionals and the business-class of the city through both their professional and social activities. Informal groups of middle-class professionals and businessmen often served to

³ David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (Dekalb, Illin., 2006), p. 4.

⁴ Again this is the view of Stefan Petrow on the issue, see: ‘The Best Governed City in Australia: Launceston 1885-1914’, *Launceston Historical Society: Occasional Papers*, 2 (1995), p. 57.

⁵ Please refer back to section 2.1.6 for a more details.

transmit, refine and reinforce Progressive ideas. Informal associations often formed the basis for later formal coalitions as in the case of both the TCS and the LTPA. The editorial sections of the *Examiner* provided a forum for like-minded urban professionals and business-men to share their ideas. Discussion of the importance of a pure milk supply, for example, received extensive coverage in the paper and its editor offered a critique of the various positions. Discussion centred on both the degree of intervention and the issue of responsibility. The underlying motive appears to have been to stimulate further public debate on select issues.⁶

The original LTPA was an informal, professional group with the aim of encouraging the uptake of 'scientific planning methods' in the city. The original association had fallen into a semi-permanent recess by the early 1920s. It appears this was attributable to a lack of legislative reforms that would have facilitated the imposition of 'scientific' planning methods.⁷ The LTPA was reformed and revitalised in late 1933 as the Northern Tasmanian Town Planning Association (NTTPA). Those appointed to the Provisional Committee were either professionals or business-men who had been heavily involved in multiple civic organisations such as Mayor Hollingsworth, Superintendent of Reserves William McGowan Senior and several office bearers of the LFTL.⁸ The subsequent association became

⁶ *Examiner*, 17 November 1920, pp. 3, 4-7. Dr. Gustave Hogg expressed concerns about the urgent need for action, but typically of a Progressive stressed the benefits of self-regulation. Morris was personally in favour of increased government regulation but insisted that public opinion was not in favour of such intervention and argued that universal tuberculin testing on the scale that Hogg was proposing would destroy the state dairy industry in a matter of months! Dryden characteristically called for more intervention for the sake of children and gently berated both local and state governments for their tendency to 'pass the buck'.

⁷ In 1923 E. Morris, Director of Public Health called for an urban Planning Act to help combat infectious diseases. He singled out Launceston as a city in need of urban renewal. See: *Mercury*, 24 January 1923, p. 10. The following year John McPhee succeeded in getting a motion passed to facilitate the introduction of such a bill into the House of Assembly. He cited South Australian legislation as an example and noted that it would give municipal authorities greater control over the layout of urban areas and control over housing standards. Premier Joseph Lyons wryly commented: 'How are you going to introduce sunlight in Launceston?' The main obstruction appears to have been devising legislation that did not contradict the rather liberal land legislation in existence in the period. See: *Mercury*, 12 December 1924, p. 2.

⁸ A. H. Masters, a holder of various positions in the executive of the LFTL, delivered a lecture at a weekly LFTL luncheon in August 1933 on the benefits of reforming the LTPA. The long-term aim would be the overall improvement of the lay-out of the city. The idea to establish a reserve behind the suburb of Trevallyn was discussed. See: *Mercury*, 1 August 1933, p. 5. Masters was subsequently appointed secretary of the reformed NTTPA. See: *Mercury*, 18 October 1933, p. 5. For a detailed analysis of the LFTL as the primary example of Business Progressivism in Launceston see their case study in section 5.2.2. To better appreciate how the reformation of this association is part of a wider flurry of Progressive initiatives in the city of Launceston from 1926, then please refer to Appendix B.

effectively a lobby group seeking the passage of parliamentary legislation in the form of a town planning bill that would give municipal authorities powers to have control over housing standards and the formulation of subdivisions.⁹

Richard White in his work, *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away*, argued that Progressives viewed leisure time as having a dual purpose. Leisure activities could help to define class as well as provide a model for working-class behaviour.¹⁰ The hedonistic 1920s coincided with an unprecedented increase in the amount of leisure time enjoyed by the general public.¹¹ Progressives believed that environmentalism were in part antidotes for many of the ills of the industrial world.¹² Katrina Ross argues that for many local Progressives, Waldheim Chalet situated in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park became a model for testing physical health and mental character.¹³ Expeditions to the destination then were often made by vehicle, marking them out as middle-class ventures. However, they also served as examples to the lower orders: both in regards to developing appreciation for nature and also the benefits of engaging in tasks that were both physically and mentally challenging. These were the same reasons that the Ogilvie State Government

⁹ In typical Progressive style President Roy Smith asked Secretary Masters to write to Sydney to obtain the services of a lecturer to speak to the association on the issue of urban planning and legislation. Smith also sought to encourage the Southern Town Planning Association to reform in Hobart and on a recent visit had noted that there as some interest, indicating again that the professional dynamic was crucial to encouraging Progressive ideas. See: *Mercury*, 9 July 1937, p. 11.

¹⁰ Richard White, *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away* (North Melbourne, 2005), p. 90 as cited in Katrina Ross, 'Progressives in Nature: The Visitors of Waldheim Chalet', Unpublished Honours Thesis, UTAS (Launceston, 2009), p. 34.

¹¹ Ken Buckley & Ted Wheelwright, *No Paradise for Workers: Capitalism and the Common People in Australia, 1788-1914* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. 166-9 as cited in Katrina Ross, 'Progressives in Nature: The Visitors of Waldheim Chalet', p. 31. By 1914, the majority of states had legislated to reduce shopping hours on Saturdays to half days in part to allow for workers to better exploit weekends through travel.

¹² David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (Dekalb, Illin., 2006), p. 17. Again Gutzke marked out environmentalism as one for the Progressive antidotes for the ills of the modern world, including moral uplift, order and discipline.

¹³ Katrina Ross, 'Progressives in Nature: The Visitors of Waldheim Chalet', Unpublished Honours Thesis, UTAS (Launceston, 2009), pp. 47-8 citing 'To Cradle Mountain by Tractor', *Daily Telegraph*, 19 April 1924, n. p. On 13 April 1924, a party of sixteen professional men, some from Launceston, embarked on a twelve hour drive in an attempt to reach Cradle Mountain in two vehicles (one converted for the purpose). Their aim was to make it to the summit but they were frustrated by bad weather. The first car trip to reach Cradle Mountain had only taken place nine weeks before.

attempted to make fishing less elitist and more accessible by relaxing the policy of the Inland Fisheries Commission in relation to the use of natural bait from 1934.¹⁴

5.1.3: The Cult of the Expert in Launceston

Throughout the interwar period, the LCC itself became increasingly open to the practice of engaging experts on specific issues to advise on policy. The McCabe study on the state of the Water Supply System delivered in May 1920 is a prime example. That appeared, in retrospect, to be a crucial factor in the LCC accepting the inevitability of the introduction of a water filtration system.¹⁵ By 1939 the Launceston Permanent Tramway had become seriously dilapidated. City Electrical Engineer, R. J. Strike visited Sydney in 1940 to observe methods of construction and maintenance employed in the tramway system there.¹⁶ In 1944 the LCC engaged the services of Sir William Goodman, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Adelaide Tramways Trust, to consult on Launceston's future public transport requirements.¹⁷ This report indirectly led to the full cancellation of tram services by 1952.¹⁸ Consultation with Mr. J. B. Cramsie, Chairman of the Australian Meat Council and Deputy Chairman of the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board of New South Wales was also able to smooth over divisions between the aldermen over the need for, design and positioning of a new abattoir for the city.¹⁹ The LCC increasingly recognised that employing expert advice was the best way to develop efficient strategies for dealing with complex issues.

¹⁴ Ogilvie remarked in relation to the Commission's policy to prohibit the use of natural bait in favour of the artificial variety: 'This has rightly been construed as reserving our wonderful inland fisheries for the pleasure of a select few'. See: AOT: NS603 Personal, Ministerial and Political Papers of Neil L. C. Batt, NS 603/1/8, Typescript – A. G. Ogilvie's Policy Speech, p. 31.

¹⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1921, p. 2.

¹⁶ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1940, p. 3.

¹⁷ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1945, p. 5.

¹⁸ Ian G. Cooper, *Launceston Municipal Transport 1911-1955* (Sydney, 2006), pp. 94-6. For the specifics of Goodman's recommendations see section 3.1.4.

¹⁹ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1923, pp. 2-3.

The importance of establishing an informed, expert approach in pursuing Progressive reform was a key aspect of the coalitions that formed in the city. Experts were used to both inform and legitimise the agendas of these movements. The local child health movement rallied around Truby King during his visit in December 1919. The CWA (later the BHA) literally became a vehicle for the widespread indoctrination of the public in his Plunkett method.²⁰ In the case of the LFTL, experts were invited to lecture and engage in informal questioning on a range of Progressive issues regularly during their weekly luncheons.²¹

5.1.4: Coalitions and the Alternative Social Economy

The history of Launceston's Progressive coalitions serves to highlight the successive shifts in the agenda of the wider movement. Initially, Progressivism in the city resembled what Daniel T. Rodgers has labelled 'social Protestantism'.²² The earliest collective Progressive activity in the city was not entirely secular, but rather characterised by a residual moral impetus, often referred to by several historians as a general 'moral indignation'.²³ Several local protestant clergymen were heavily involved in the formation of the original cremation society. This reflected David W. Gutzke's description of earlier Progressives as 'pragmatic moralists'.²⁴ Local advocates of the new bureaucratic orientation reflected a major shift in the early 1920s towards a more secular, rational brand of Progressivism. The Progressive agenda became one based more around goals of efficiency,

²⁰ *Examiner*, 5 December 1919, p. 2.

²¹ The standard of expert varied but some very distinguished Progressive politicians, professionals and leading businessmen did talk at the weekly luncheons on a wide range of issues including but not limited to Progressive concerns. These included Prime Minister Sir Joseph Lyons, Governor General Sir Isaac Isaacs, former City Manager Frederick Nicholl and local entrepreneur H. J. Solomon. See: *Examiner*, 8 June 1932; 30 May 1933; 14 December 1937; 8 July 1938.

²² Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (London, 1998), p. 63.

²³ These include David Thelen and David Gutzke. See: David Thelen, 'Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism', *Journal of American History*, 56, 2 (September 1969), pp. 323-41 & David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (DeKalb, Ill., 2006), p. 17.

²⁴ *Examiner*, 20 July 1912, p. 6; 23 July 1912, p. 4; 25 July 1912 & 29 October 1912, p. 7. For the use of the term see: David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives*, p. 17. As mentioned previously one of the earliest leading Progressive figures in the city, Samuel Sutton, was both a decided Progressive interventionist as well as a temperance advocate. It could be argued he was morally motivated, but sought pragmatic solutions for the greater good in the mode of a Progressive. Please refer back to section 2.2.1.3.

particularly in regards to improving standards of administration. While the social impetus was to still to be found in justifying the drive to improve the city environment, the emphasis had shifted to concerns of efficiency and economy.²⁵

The depression fostered a third wave of Progressives. This third movement enabled a proper synthesis of the primary concerns and proposed reforms of both the first and second waves. When one of the strongest advocates of the new bureaucratic orientation, former City Manager Frederick Nicholl, returned to lecture at the weekly luncheon of the LFTL in May 1933, his topic was not administrative reform but unemployment. His analysis of the depression was characteristic of an engineer and an administrative reformist, but his response was almost entirely social in emphasis. He regarded the unemployment problem as a primary challenge for society, and proposed the institution of a permanent unemployment insurance scheme.²⁶

Despite the shift towards the bureaucratic orientation, 'humanitarian progressivism' persisted in Launceston. The BHA continued to enthusiastically pursue its social interventionist agenda.²⁷ While Progressives often justified the push for the new bureaucratic orientation on the basis of the improvements to the environment that it promoted and the subsequent social benefits it provided to the lower orders, it was largely a trend concerned with economic rationalism. This was the primary reason the LCC so enthusiastically adopted the city manager system: it was to be a panacea for its recent fiscal mismanagement and suited its ideological shift towards fiscal conservatism.²⁸ In that sense the new bureaucratic orientation was a vehicle for the

²⁵ Please refer back to sections 4.1.1 & 4.3. A core argument of the chapter is that of two trends inherent to the new bureaucratic orientation: humanitarian and rationalism. It was to be the second emphasising economy and efficiency that gained the ascendancy in the city during the early 1920s. See also: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), pp. 151, 154-5 & 169.

²⁶ *Examiner*, 30 May 1933, n. p. During his tenure as City Manager, Nicholl instituted great administrative reforms often at the expense of positions. These were admittedly small in number but several positions were dispensed with without emotion as the operations of the LCC were rationalised. Please refer to section 4.2 for a full analysis of his approach in that position.

²⁷ Please refer to section 5.2.1 for details.

²⁸ Please refer to sections 2.2.1.4, 3.1.1 and 4.2 for a more detail on both the increasing fiscal conservatism of the LCC and an analysis of the city manager experiment. Importantly, Alderman J. F. Ockerby, the earliest advocate for the institution of an American influenced municipal government reform referred to the theoretical position as a 'business manager'. Ockerby was a conservative and an economic rationalist rather than a Progressive like his contemporary Alderman C. E. W. James. See: *Examiner*, 2 February 1920, p. 7

promotion of the ‘political economy’. Daniel T. Rodgers defined the ‘social economy’ as ‘the ambulance wagon of industrial capitalism’, in contrast to ‘political economy’ which he argued was best understood as the ‘science of the augmentation of wealth’.²⁹

The emerging horrors of the depression influenced the wide-scale return of the larger Progressive movement towards social politics. After the crash of 1929, a central feature of Progressive reform on a transnational scale was the emphasis on the ‘social economy’. Daniel T. Rodgers defined this as any co-ordinated attempt ‘within the constraints of political economy itself – to temper, socialize, and mutualise the pains of the capitalist transformation’.³⁰ The LFTL’s history particularly demonstrated the local upsurge in interest in a social agenda following the depression. Originally very much a booster organisation preoccupied with the ‘augmentation of wealth’ and favouring a progressive approach to economic development, it drew members who collectively embraced the ‘alternative social economy’. Their aim was to further both the political and alternative social economies.³¹

²⁹ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 12.

³⁰ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 20.

³¹ Please refer to section 5.2.2 for details.

5.2: Progressive Coalition Case Studies

5.2.1: The Child Welfare Association of Launceston

5.2.1.1: The Child Health Movement and Scientific Motherhood

In 1917, CMO L. Grey Thompson attributed a slight decrease in the infant mortality statistics of Launceston to ‘efforts to raise parenting standards’.³² For the Progressive child health movement of the early decades of the twentieth century, the ‘scientific motherhood’ approach was the fundamental answer to lowering the overall IMR. This wider movement reflected both the importance placed on scientific methodology in solving social problems, and the underlying concerns associated with the health and future of the Anglo-Saxon race. Scientific motherhood was a system of child rearing based on the principles of efficiency, logic and reason which health professionals championed in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the United States, government agencies subsidised the publication of literature on the topic to improve working class exposure to the concept.³³ Again, this Progressive movement was heavily influenced by the scientific management theories of Frederick Winslow Taylor and assumed that an ordered, efficient approach to motherhood would result in a healthier future for the general population.³⁴

³² Despite the fact that the IMR had fallen from 135 to seventy-seven per 1000 births between 1911 and 1916 – Thompson believed it was still too high and preventable. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor’s Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1919*, p. 3.

³³ Parenting was considered a ‘discrete task’ of a higher importance to the majority of housework. Susan Strasser argues that ‘scientific motherhood... required that mothers not merely study their children but read and follow the advice of scientifically trained experts.’ Science was to replace instinct. See: *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (New York, 1982), pp. 232-6.

³⁴ Sheryl Brennan, ‘Nurses and Constructions of Motherhood: Scientific Motherhood and the Rise of Child Welfare Services in Tasmania, 1918-1930’, unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 1995, pp. 8, 20-1.

5.2.1.2: The Launceston Child Welfare Association

The local branch of the CWA was formed during a meeting at the Town Hall, Launceston to discuss the high infant mortality problem in September, 1917, with a core group of local health professionals and their wives the key activists.³⁵ The two main successes of the CWA (later the BHA) were the establishment of a local baby health clinic and the securing of a pure milk supply for newborns.³⁶ The baby clinic concept was given strong support from the local media, particularly the senior editor of the local daily newspaper, *Examiner*, who saw it as a decidedly Progressive development for the city.³⁷

In March 1918, the Director of Public Health, E. S. Morris appointed the first Launceston child welfare nurse, Miss Myrtle Searle, who would operate a local clinic, which the CWA provided, and make home visits. This closely followed the appointment in January of the first child welfare nurse in Hobart, Laura Richardson. The Launceston clinic was first attended by local surgeons, Drs. Hogg, Webster and MacNamara. The senior child health nurse reported directly to the CHO. The senior nurse provided regular reports to the CHO.³⁸ During the mid-1920s, two nurses were appointed to assist Nurse Searle with the increasing workload.³⁹ When

³⁵ In the earliest decades, it was an entirely separate entity from the Southern Child Welfare Association which had formed at a public meeting devoted to the issue of infant mortality in Hobart on 11 June 1917. Lady Nichols was appointed President. The two branches did converse and lobbied together for reforms. Its history is covered in S. Spago, *A Brief History of the Child Health Association (formerly the Child Welfare Association) in Tasmania, 1917 – 1977* (Hobart, 1977). The first President of the Launceston organisation was Maria Susannah Reed (nee Grubb), wife of local philanthropist Henry Reed. In Spago's history however, The Launceston branch however is not mentioned until the 1950s.

³⁶ *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4. The Association appears to have changed its title to the BHA between February and June 1921. See: *Examiner*, 11 February 1921, p. 4 and *Examiner*, 4 June, 1921, p. 10. No reason is given but it may have been to distinguish itself from the Hobart organisation.

³⁷ The CWA and later the BHA received very strong coverage in the press over the course of the interwar period. This was best demonstrated by the summary of the first year of operation included in *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4.

³⁸ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1918-1919, Vol. LXXXI, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 35, ix. Infantile Mortality (Hobart, 1919), p. 15.

³⁹ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1919-1920, Vol. LXXXIII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 40, appendix v. Child Welfare Clinic – Launceston (Hobart, 1920), p. 24. They were nurses Bonnily and Peterson.

Searle resigned in December 1921, she was publicly regarded as being popular and having set high standards.⁴⁰

Scientific motherhood prescribed 'natural feeding' where possible. Local clinic nurses knew breast feeding was often only maintained for a few weeks because mothers often needed to return to work or were so undernourished that they could not produce the milk necessary.⁴¹ The prescribed scientific solution was the securing of a 'pure' milk supply.⁴² This campaign had become a central concern of the child health arm of the Progressive movement in the United States. Improvements in the field of bacteriology during the 1890s had prompted many local public health departments to establish laboratories. Many states soon passed laws for compulsory tuberculin testing. However, by 1911 several had already repealed their acts under pressure from the dairy industry, including Massachusetts, Maine and Wisconsin. A renewed push by Progressives from 1912 met sustained resistance from dairy interests. For instance, there was much resistance to reform from producers in Los Angeles, but eventually a combination of legislation and 'moral persuasion' resulted in increased regulation and improved product quality.⁴³ A pure milk supply was first achieved in Hobart as a result of the efforts of the local

⁴⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1921-1922, Vol. LXXXVII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 46, Appendix iii. Child Welfare Association Baby Clinic Launceston (Hobart, 1922), p. 28. Both Searle and Peterson were then succeeded by Nurses Cumins and Moorehead.

⁴¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1919-1920, Vol. LXXXIII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 40, appendix v. Child Welfare Clinic – Launceston (Hobart, 1920), p. 24.

⁴² At this time a pure milk supply was understood to be one that had been adequately tested for tuberculin contamination. In essence, milk was being produced and sold in Launceston as it had been for more than a century. In late 1920, Mayor Shields and City Medical Officer L. Grey Thompson were both convinced that mandatory testing was essential to lowering the IMR. This was by then the practice in a number of other states. Despite his involvement in the CWA, Local surgeon Dr. Gustave Hogg was sceptical that there was a role for government and that the answer lay in self-regulation. CHO E. S. Morris was in favour of mandatory testing but felt that he did not have public opinion behind him as those prosecuted for not maintaining standards were often dealt with sympathetically in the courts. He also believed that mandatory testing could destroy the state dairy industry. See: *Examiner*, 17 November 1920, pp. 3, 4 & 7. For an overview of the shift towards full tuberculin testing of the milk supply in Launceston please refer to section 4.1.4.

⁴³ Progress was gradual though: a LA referendum in May 1912 failed, and a bill designed to create a commission to supervise local milk supplies was vetoed by the Governor two years later. Legislative reform was finally achieved in 1916. See: 'Putting It To A Vote: The Provision of Pure Milk in Progressive Era Los Angeles', *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 3, 2, (April, 2004), pp. 111-44.

CWA.⁴⁴ The Launceston CWA actively lobbied the Chief Secretary, Walter Lee, throughout 1918.⁴⁵ In March 1919, the Premier granted a request for £500 in order to fund a pure milk supply.⁴⁶ Eventually, an arrangement was made between the clinic and Mr. Genders of Relbia to secure them with an ongoing confirmed pure supply at a fixed price.⁴⁷

5.2.1.3: Dr. Truby King and the ‘Higher Ideal’

The Child Health Association hosted a lecture by visiting health expert Dr. Truby King in December 1919. King was widely regarded as the leading academic expert on the issue of child health in the world, and his methods were fundamental to the methodology of the local health professionals and the operation of the city baby clinic.⁴⁸ His ultimate goal was to make every woman competent in her role of managing a home. Specifically in relation to parenting, King explained: ‘Amongst the savage races a mother’s instinct might be sufficient but when life became more complex instinct was not enough, and it was the duty of every woman to see that she knew enough to protect not only herself but others who might be dependent on her’. He referred to his vision as a ‘higher ideal’, something to which all women should aspire. Mindful of the population problem, he also encouraged wealthy women to set a good example by having larger families, as in terms of intellect and resources they were after all the best equipped to raise them in the best practice.⁴⁹

The mechanics of the scientific motherhood movement in Launceston reflected some of the defining facets of Progressivism. The professional dynamic was

⁴⁴ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1918-1919, Vol. LXXXI, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 35, ix. Infantile Mortality (Hobart, 1919), p. 15.

⁴⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1918-1919, Vol. LXXXI, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 35, appendix v. Child Welfare Clinic (Hobart, 1919), p. 23.

⁴⁶ *Examiner*, 25 March 1919, p. 4.

⁴⁷ *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4.

⁴⁸ The Plunkett system (sometimes also referred to as the Truby King method) emphasised several core skills: hygiene and order in the household; fresh air in the households, particularly the bedrooms; wholesome food; breast-feeding over artificial nourishment. See: Truby King, *Feeding and Care of Baby* (London, 1930), p. 117 as cited in Sheryl Brennan, ‘Nurses and Constructions of Motherhood’, p. 46. For biographical information on Dr. (Sir) Frederic Truby King, please refer back to section 4.1.4.

⁴⁹ *Examiner*, 5 December 1919, p. 2.

essential in fostering support for the scientific approach to the problems of society. In April 1920, Nurses Searle and Bonnily travelled to New Zealand for six months of training at the Karitane Mothercraft House in Dunedin.⁵⁰ Progressive initiatives also often relied on indoctrination. The expert's approach was sacrosanct (in this case the Plunkett system as devised by Dr. King) and once fully indoctrinated Searle and Bonnily would return to Tasmania like apostles. Their mission was to indoctrinate volunteer staff, with whom they would combine their efforts to convert the masses. On her return, Myrtle Searle commented on the 'gratifying absorption by mothers of the principles and teachings of the Truby King System'.⁵¹ CHO, E. S. Morris, even described the role of the clinic nurses as being to 'advocate the Gospel of Natural Motherhood'. This approach confirms the degree to which Taylorism and its philosophy of separation of mind and body in the pursuit of efficiency had clearly influenced the Progressive approach to instruction. Echoing the sentiments of Truby King, CHO Morris openly declared: 'Maternal instinct does not entail material knowledge'. The lower orders particularly were seen as empty vessels into which the knowledge of the experts should be filled.⁵² Nurse Searle condemned common midwifery practices as deficient and felt there was much room for improvement in the field.⁵³ In response to pressure from the CWA, the Government passed the *Hospitals Act* in early 1920 which required that expectant mothers give birth in a registered hospital or at home under qualified supervision.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1919-1920, Vol. LXXXIII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 40, appendix v. Child Welfare Clinic – Launceston (Hobart, 1920), p. 24 & *Examiner*, 10 April 1920, p. 6. This prompted the appointment by the Department of Jessie Peterson as a temporary replacement for Searle. The newspaper reference notes that it was only for three months and does not mention Bonnily at all.

⁵¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1920-1921, Vol. LXXXV, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 65, appendix iii. Child Welfare Clinic – Launceston (Hobart, 1920), p. 32.

⁵² UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1920-1921, Vol. LXXXV, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 65, p. 17. Morris had little faith in the ability of lower orders to care for their infants. He reflected: 'It is most important that this uniformity should be maintained, otherwise mothers are liable to misconstrue methods, and, in an attempt to decide between a variety of systems, discard all of them'. Like all Progressives, Morris believed in 'inculcation of commonsense principles in the rearing of children in each prospective or actual mother'.

⁵³ *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4.

⁵⁴ *Examiner*, 7 February 1920, p. 6

5.2.1.4: Mixed Motives?

The clinic had a definite role to inculcate scientific principles in the working classes in order to save infant lives. Local physicians gave public lectures such as ‘The Care of the Milk’ and ‘The Care of the Baby’. The program was popular among the general population and visits to the clinic in the early years averaged around 200 monthly. Home visits to expectant and new mothers ranged between fifty and one hundred a month. The clinic acted as an ongoing means of distributing garments to needy families with newborns.⁵⁵ By 1921, Nurse Searle had developed a program of six lectures for senior state school girls to help prepare them for their future roles as mothers.⁵⁶

For many local middle-class women, involvement in this coalition represented a rare opportunity for them to assume a public role. Only the clinic nurses enjoyed a professional role in an otherwise male dominated movement. Initial funding was secured through the holding of a ‘Baby Button Day’ in November 1917 which raised £103/14/06. Funding remained the central problem facing the CWA. Women also played a key role in the administration of the CWA, and the post of secretary was first held by Miss Rowlands and later Mrs. J. H. Keating. However, leadership remained the province of men, and either the incumbent Mayor or a leading medical practitioner held the position of President.⁵⁷

The primary underlying motivation behind the formation of the CWA was ensuring the continued health and success of the Anglo-Saxon race was secondary. Relieving the suffering of sick infants appears to have been secondary. To many imperialists, it was hard to justify, let alone fully exploit, an empire that covered the majority of

⁵⁵ Averages of visits have been drawn from the monthly reports of the Association published in the *Examiner*. See: *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4. For examples of successive monthly reports, see: *Examiner*, 16 May 1919, p. 4; 4 June 1919, p. 4 & 4 July 1919, p. 4.

⁵⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1920-1921, Vol. LXXXV, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 65 (Hobart, 1921), p. 18.

⁵⁷ *Examiner*, 2 April 1919, p. 4. The involvement of Aldermen in a coalition in the city normally reflected that a high level of importance was attached to its cause. It was only coalitions such as the CWA, the LFTL or the TCS with Progressive agendas, which attracted this high level of endorsement.

the globe, with a small and feeble population.⁵⁸ The First World War also had drawn attention to many of the physical problems associated with poverty and modern industrial living. F. J. Prichard, Senior Editor of the *Examiner* in August 1919 commented: 'The war has found out many defects, and none more so than the deterioration in physique of our men, and especially those whose occupations are in factories'.⁵⁹ On the shared opening of the Sandhill Baby Clinic in 1938, Mrs. G. H. Hogg stressed the importance of health clinics and kindergartens, commenting that it was necessary to 'look to the children for a fit race in the future'.⁶⁰ Efforts of the local Launceston coalition characterised a wider national movement. Across the country, Progressives led a pragmatic shift towards lowering infant mortality in the national interest.⁶¹

5.2.1.5: A Movement Without Heart?

Like Progressivism itself, the scientific motherhood movement was a pragmatic rather than an emotionally motivated movement. Even by the standards of the age, Progressives betrayed a level of emotional distancing that both served to reveal the deeper motives of their actions and alienate the general population. In 1921, Myrtle Searle lamented the potential damage done to the infants of single mothers, who were removed before they could be breast-fed for a sustained period:

A weakness that has made itself apparent in the work amongst the babies has been the system of dealing with illegitimate children. The removal from their mothers when they most need care and their natural food oftentimes robs the babies of the chance of reasonable development, and it does seem a pity that some method cannot be devised whereby these little ones may be permitted to remain for at least a portion of the period that demands the natural food of the mother.⁶²

⁵⁸ For an example of such a contemporary argument see: 'Our Empty Empire A Plea for Parenthood' by Dr. C. W. Saleeby, Edinburgh, Vice Chairman of the National Council of Public Morals as published in *Examiner*, 24 October 1919, p. 8.

⁵⁹ *Examiner*, 20 August 1919, p. 4.

⁶⁰ *Examiner*, 11 November 1938, n. p.

⁶¹ Sheryl Brennan, 'Nurses and Constructions of Motherhood', p. 26.

⁶² UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1918-1919, Vol. LXXXI. Appendix iii: Annual Report of Child Nurse Clinic Launceston, Paper No. 65, (Hobart, 1921), p. 32.

To Searle, it was the possibility of damaging the health of a future citizen that was the weakness of the system, not forcibly separating parents from children due to illegitimacy or poverty. In *Never Done: A History of American Housework*, Susan Strasser argues that in the United States during this period, the scientific motherhood movement insisted that mothers take on a cold, rational approach to parenting, devoid of emotion. Indeed the process was likened to farming, wherein the best crop would be determined by adherence to expert guidelines.⁶³ This was true in Australia as well, Sheryl Brennan arguing that, Progressives looked on children as a resource that belonged to the nation.⁶⁴

In her book, *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918*, Ellen Ross drew attention to the unpopular nature of visits from health workers to working-class families in England. While Progressives often complained about working-class apathy, resistance to their advice and reliance on untrained midwives in relation to infant health reform, they paid little attention to the damage done to existing intergenerational social bonds. Young mothers were even encouraged to break their reliance on older women for support.⁶⁵

Launceston's working-class offered little resistance when the clinic set standards for mothercraft. By 1921, local clinic nurses were even contributing to a regular column in the *Weekly Courier*, aimed at helping inform and answer queries of country women unable to visit the clinic.⁶⁶ At least one country mother – probably representative of a small independent minority – did object to Searle's insistence on a standardised system of infant care: 'Every mother rears her child in her own way, and it will always be the same. Each has her own particular method, and all nurses

⁶³ Strasser notes that in an Address to the National Congress of Mothers in 1899, the most popular of the American experts on scientific motherhood, Dr. Luther Emmett Holt, compared motherhood to farming. See: *Never Done*, pp. 232, 237.

⁶⁴ Brennan observed that Nurse Olive Green often used the term 'our' babies in her annual reports between 1926 and 1942. The sentiment appears to have been that the children belonged to the nation, mothers were simply interim carers (and had to meet standards for approval). See: Sheryl Brennan, 'Nurses and Constructions of Motherhood', p. 39.

⁶⁵ Ellen Ross, *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918*, (London, 1993), pp. 196-7 as cited in G. R. Searle, *A New England? Peace and War 1886-1918* (London, 2005), pp. 196-7. Searle notes that Health visitors often demeaned the advice and help of female relatives and neighbours, eroding an important avenue of working class 'self-help'.

⁶⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1921-1922, Vol. LXXXVII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 46, Appendix iii. Child Welfare Association Baby Clinic Launceston (Hobart, 1922), p. 28.

in Tasmania will not alter the fact'. This individual wryly observed that the IMR in Launceston was 'not a credit to any system the nurse speaks of' and reminded the readers that Searle and her clinic were unknown outside Launceston and that the IMR was naturally better outside of the filth of the city.⁶⁷ The *Examiner's* editor typically defended Searle and the concept of the clinic, insisting that it primarily existed to help those who could not help themselves. Dryden claimed that independent mothers were also helping to create a national standard. This last notion though, was at direct odds with the clearly top-down philosophy of the clinic.⁶⁸

5.2.1.6: A Qualified Success?

Despite all the efforts of the CWA, its influence on the IMR is debatable. Before the CWA's formation in 1917, the local IMR had been steadily decreasing for a decade.⁶⁹ Compared with 112 infant deaths per thousand births in 1910, there were only fifty infant deaths per thousand births in 1918. In his book, *A New England? Peace and War 1886-1918*, G. R. Searle plays down the effectiveness of the infant health movement in England, noting that a massive fall in the IMR was more correctly attributable to general improvements in urban sanitation and improved living standards.⁷⁰ Occasionally an outbreak of disease caused a spike as in 1919 when the influenza pandemic increased the rate to eighty three infant deaths per thousand births.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Letter to the Editor, 'Child Welfare' by 'Country Mother', *Examiner*, 4 February 1921, p. 8. The criticism appeared to have been mostly provoked by the nonsense claim by Searle that 'a Plunkett nurse could have a feeding of the right strength for a child whose mother was travelling on a train and had sent a telegram to be met at a certain station'.

⁶⁸ Editorial titled 'Child Welfare', *Examiner*, 7 February 1921, p. 4.

⁶⁹ This did not stop CHO L. Grey Thompson from attributing the trend to the Association: 'The infantile mortality has been very low and doubtless the operations of the Child Welfare Association have contributed to the good results'. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1918*, p. 1.

⁷⁰ G. R. Searle, *A New England?*, p. 398. He quotes a fall in infant deaths from 163 to 105 per thousand between 1899 and 1914. He argues that cannot statistically be accounted for by visits to homes by health workers or even more rare visits by expectant and new mothers to health clinics.

⁷¹ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1919*, p. 1.

The CMO, Dr. L. Grey Thompson, a member of the CWA, applauded its efforts.⁷² He believed that such efforts brought results. He possessed the typical Progressive contempt for the hygiene standards of the lower orders. A surge of gastro-intestinal diseases causing a rise in infant mortality in 1920, prompted him to reflect on the dismal habits of the working classes: 'Improper food, carelessly and improperly prepared food and personal and domestic uncleanness are the usual causes of the illness. The whole subject is a difficult one, as very few people can or will do what they are told'.⁷³ In reality, any outbreak of infectious disease could undermine the progress made by health authorities in education. Thompson ignored other factors contributing to the statistical increase in the IMR. The summer of 1919 was extremely hot and there were water supply problems in the city. Furthermore many of the working-class were victims of a maritime strike and this had caused much distress.⁷⁴ Despite the institution of an infant health education program in 1910, by 1922, Tasmania still possessed the highest IMR of all Commonwealth states.⁷⁵

Throughout the interwar period, a shortage of funding hindered the activities of the movement. By 1939, private funds still sustained the initiatives of the child welfare movement. To raise funds for what was now known as the BHA, a fancy dress parade and an American tea were held at St. Peter's Hall at Sandhill in November 1938.⁷⁶ Weeks later, the Director of Public Health, Doctor B. M. Carruthers, publicly commented that the LCC should help support it. Mayor Wyett appeared sympathetic, noting that there was a better case for directly supporting such facilities than general hospitals and that it had a better case for funding than a public library.⁷⁷

⁷² In his 1919 report, Thompson mentions specifically the visit of Dr. Truby King and the CWA's success in helping to secure a pure milk supply for those artificially fed. The last spike in infant mortality had occurred in 1910 when a strain of enteric fever resulted in the IM rate to rise from 107 the previous year to 139 infant deaths per thousand births. See also: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1910*, p. 1.

⁷³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the Officer of Health, 1920*, p. 2.

⁷⁴ For a mention of the water supply problems see the editorial 'City Water Supply', *Examiner*, 2 December 1919, p. 4. For an indication of the degree of distress caused by unemployment owing to the maritime strike of 1919, see 'Distress in Launceston', *Examiner*, 7 July 1919, p. 4.

⁷⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament, 1919-1920*, Vol. LXXXVII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 46 (Hobart, 1920), p. 14.

⁷⁶ *Examiner*, 11 November 1938, n. p.

⁷⁷ *Examiner*, 30 November 1938, n. p.

The state-wide infant health movement had proved itself to be a resilient one. By 1939, various associations had officially combined to become a state-wide organisation, with forty-two branches and a paid membership of 1342.⁷⁸ Despite the lack of an obvious direct effect on the IMR and problems with funding, the Launceston branch had continued to expand. A second clinic had been opened in May 1921 confirming the concept's immediate positive reception in the city.⁷⁹ An updated city baby clinic was established in 1933, under the direction of Sister Olive Green.⁸⁰ By 1939 there were plans to establish a third at Sandhill. Part of the BHA's durability can be attributed to the long-term support of a core group of urban health professionals. Both Dr. Gustave Hogg and his wife, for instance, had remained leading lights of the committee for more than two decades.⁸¹

5.2.2: Business Progressivism in Launceston

5.2.2.1: Open for Business

A culture of 'boosterism' appeared in Launceston about 1920.⁸² The LCC provided a prominent example of self-promotion during the interwar period. For instance, the LCC co-operated with the Marine Board, the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufacturers to produce a pamphlet promoting the city's benefits to potential investors and immigrants.⁸³ The LCC recognised the increasing need for

⁷⁸ *Examiner*, 7 September 1938, n. p.

⁷⁹ *Examiner*, 4 June 1921, p. 10.

⁸⁰ LLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer and Surveyor's Office*, 1933, p. 47.

⁸¹ *Examiner*, 11 November 1938, n. p.

⁸² 'Boosterism' is a term that refers to the existence of 'boosters' within an economy. These can be individuals or organisations aimed at increasing business activity. See: Simon Harris, 'Selling Tasmania Boosterism and the Creation of the Tourist State 1912-1928', Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, UTAS (Hobart, 1993), pp. 182, 229, 322 & 334.

⁸³ The establishment of a mill by Kelsell and Kemp Pty Ltd was more an accident and predated the booster movement. Messrs. Kelsall and Kemp, Ltd., had for many years operated a successful Mill in Rochdale, Yorkshire, England. They were in fact one of the largest flannel manufacturing businesses in the United Kingdom. In the first decade of the twentieth century, like other similar operations, they had begun to expand across the breadth of the Commonwealth, where necessary raw materials could be obtained cheaply. See: QVM LCC3: 19/3.1 *H. H. Hirst and Co. (1921-1922), Drapery & Textile Trade Supplement to the Overseas Daily Mail*, 26 November 1921. However that addition probably inspired the LCC to engage in a promotion campaign. Their campaign was quite successful leading to the establishment of mill operated by Paton and Baldwin's Pty. Ltd. and later the Rapson Tyre Factory. Alderman Percy Hart in 1920 offered a

professional promotion with the appointment of Captain Thomas Arthur Newton as Publicity Officer in July 1923. For over twenty five years, he travelled widely across Europe, England and the United States at his own expense.⁸⁴ Mayor Barber testified to the success of this strategy in 1927: 'The advantages of our city have been brought before a great number of people by means of letters and articles in newspapers.'⁸⁵

The LCC's modest investment in Newton did provoke some resistance. Some aldermen felt that the position had been 'engineered' for him. Despite his capacity as an 'honorary' Publicity Officer, he did receive some payment for his work, although the amounts were quite modest.⁸⁶ The LCC's efforts contrasted strongly with both the agenda and the success of the leading local example of business Progressivism, the Launceston Fifty Thousand League.

5.2.2.2: The Concept of Business Progressivism

Robert H. Wiebe argued in *Businessmen and Reform*, that Progressivism was largely a businessmen's movement, emerging in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century. He argued it was motivated by the desire to use the apparatus of government to help regulate their own affairs. While very sceptical of

typical description of Launceston that highlighted the core benefits on offer: cheap water, power and land. See: QVM LCC3: 16/6.1 *INDUSTRIES – Patons and Baldwins (1920-1923)*, Letter from Alderman F. P. Hart to H. D. Flanagan Esq., Spencer Street, Melbourne, 16 September 1920. The business of Messrs. Patons and Baldwins, Ltd., of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, was an amalgamation of two established manufacturing companies. The company was registered on 16 April, 1920, legally combined the undertakings of Messrs. J. and J. Baldwin and Partners, Ltd., and Messrs. John Paton, Son and Co. Ltd., yarn manufacturers. See: QVM LCC3: 19/3.1 *H. H. Hirst and Co. (1921-1922)*, *Drapery & Textile Trade Supplement to the Overseas Daily Mail*, 26 November 1921.

⁸⁴ Captain Thomas Arthur Newton (1863-1954) was a bookbinder by trade, but had served twenty years in the British Army: commissioned in the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment in the 1890s Captain Newton served in World War I with the Legion of Frontiersmen Regiment – a regiment of old soldiers and held a permanent commission. He worked mainly as a war propagandist and was later in charge of the Wembly Exhibition. Newton was very well connected in British political, industrial and commercial circles and also worked as the Tasmanian representative on the Federation of British Industries. See his obituary: *Examiner*, 14 May 1954, n. p. His appointment seems reminiscent of the paid/authorised delegate to London technique utilised by lobbyists such as the Anti-transportation League during the 1840s.

⁸⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1927, p. 5.

⁸⁶ Simon Harris, 'Selling Tasmania Boosterism and the Creation of the Tourist State 1912-1928', p. 251. Between 1924 and 1929, Newton received payments totalling £195.

their motives, he agreed that there was a ‘humanitarian’ aura to their struggle. In American historiography, they largely appear as self-interested, anti-democratic and uncompromising businessmen.⁸⁷

However, in Launceston businessman reformists appear as equally preoccupied with improving society as with promoting commerce. The business Progressives of Launceston viewed it as their civic duty to serve the wider community by encouraging economic activity as well as urban improvement. Business Progressivism, as it emerged in Launceston during the interwar period, could be defined as a select segment of the business community mobilised towards pursuing Progressive reforms, which reflected an underlying desire to achieve a balance between preoccupations with improving the political economy, on one hand and with the alternate social economy, on the other.

5.2.2.3: More than Just a Booster Organisation

The LFTL was formally established in 1926 as a ‘non-political, non-sectarian booster organisation’, aimed at doubling the city’s population to 50,000 and promoting growth and development.⁸⁸ In the increasingly stringent economic environment, Launceston was competing directly with other Australian cities for new industrial developments. Named after their ambition to double the existing population, historian John Reynolds recounted that the LFTL ‘soon made its presence felt and public men were publicly prodded into action wherever new visiting industrialists were enquiring about the possibility of establishing operations in Tasmania’.⁸⁹ For example, Mayor Evans publicly applauded the LFTL’s formation:

⁸⁷ Wiebe’s thesis presents Business Progressives as part of a second wave of Progressives in America after 1920. See: Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge Massachusetts, 1962), pp. 1-10 & 211-8.

⁸⁸ Marian Walker, ‘The Launceston Fifty Thousand League’, in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart, 2005), p. 209.

⁸⁹ John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969), p. 159. The League in fact took its name from an organisation formed in Napier, Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand, which had been titled the Thirty Thousand League after its aspiration to stimulate the economy and increase the population to that level. See: *Examiner*, 29 May 1931, n. p.

I am also greatly indebted to the Executive Committee of the 50,000 League for the valuable assistance they have always tendered to me; in fact, I consider that the formation of this League is the most important function that has occurred during my term of office.⁹⁰

He remained a member of the League, and the primary liaison with the organisation long after his term as Mayor had expired. While the organisation received the LCC's moral backing, its initiatives were not always greeted with enthusiasm. In response to an invitation to appoint a formal representative on the Executive Committee, the LCC refused.⁹¹ Part of this 'distance' between the local government and what must have been considered to be the most important community organisation to emerge in Launceston over the interwar period, may have been related to the difference in the perceived need for intervention.

Both its reform agenda and its basic structural organisation reflected the LFTL's Progressivism. Martin J. Schiesl observed that in the United States as well, the business-class in smaller cities more easily influenced local government and effected structural reform.⁹² Based in 87 Brisbane Street, the League operated significantly with the motto 'Each His Allotted Task', reflecting in relation to its membership a collective devotion to the ideas of voluntarism and civic engagement.

The League both spoke the language of Progressivism and acted to conform to those principles in a practical manner. It held weekly luncheons where speakers addressed the membership on any issue related to furthering the interests of the city. It also adopted a very formal structure, with traditional positions such as Secretary

⁹⁰ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1926, p. 4. Alexander Arthur Evans (1881-1955), the son of a soap manufacturer, born in Launceston, educated at the Launceston Church Grammar School. He worked as a Clerk, Accountant, Solider and Politician. He served his King and Country in some capacity in the Boer, First and Second World Wars rising to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. In civilian life he was a founding partner of the Launceston accountancy firm Evans and Garrott, also serving as an Alderman between 1922 and 1931 as well as Mayor in 1925. He was a founding member of the LFTL, in fact member No. 1 according to the sequential membership numbering system instigated in 1926. He was a MLC between 1936 and 1942. He was well-known for his love of horse racing and trotting. At the time of his death he was married with two sons and two daughters. See: *Examiner*, 12 May 1926, p. 6; *Examiner*, 4-6 June 1955, n. p.

⁹¹ QVM LCC3: 3/1.4 Boards – General (1928-1929), Letter from the Organising Secretary of the LFTL to the Town Clerk, 16 June 1928 & Letter from Town Clerk to The Secretary, Launceston 50,000 League, 87 Brisbane Street, Launceston, 20 June, 1928. Alderman Evan's close connection with the organisation was considered sufficient!

⁹² Martin Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America 1800-1920* (London, 1977), p. 133.

and President, and an official policy established by an Executive Committee.⁹³ Lacking the financial resources needed to pursue its goals, it was still innovative, and over the next quarter century it helped to attract new developments and modernise older industries (such as brewing, matting, flour milling, coal/gas production etc.).⁹⁴ The LFTL exuded a strong impulse for self-improvement through utilising basic Progressive principles, and therefore enjoyed cycles of introspection and renewal, only to emerge the stronger for it.

One of the League's most creative initiatives taken in the pursuit of developing the local economy was the Ideal Home Exhibition of 1930. This project coincided with the worst effects of the depression, which it sought to counter them by stimulating interest in Tasmanian products.⁹⁵ A full-scale model of what the league saw as the ideal home was built on the grounds of the City Park. The home was constructed from Tasmanian products, particularly utilising oak and blackwood, and fully furnished and carpeted. Publication of the plans, a competition involving submissions of advice for home construction and management, and several peripheral events (including a formal luncheon with the Governor) all stimulated interest. Typically, all the food served was Tasmanian produced.⁹⁶ The exhibition

⁹³ QVM LCC3: 17/1/3.3 *Finance – Accounts, Water Rates (1927) July 1927*, Letter from A. Moore Robinson, Secretary of the LFTL to the Town Clerk, 10 December 1927. The League did not always take itself seriously though and occasionally the weekly talk centered on a trivial matter of interest such as riddles or the history of humour. See: *Examiner*, 5 May 1931, n. p. & 15 March 1932, n. p.

⁹⁴ *Examiner*, 26 & 27 June 1930, n. p. See also: John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969), p. 159. To qualify for the government subsidy paid since 1937 to partly reimburse their work in regards to promoting tourism, the League needed to submit a balance sheet report to the Tasmania Tourist Department for the financial year 1939-1940. This report demonstrates that the League were still only barely managing to balance their accounts. At the end of the year, the League only possessed £24/17/1 in their Commonwealth Bank Account and £30/4/40 as petty cash in hand. See: AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from the Director, Tasmanian Tourist Department, 'Launceston Fifty Thousand League, Statement of Receipts and Payments for Year Ended 30th April 1940'.

⁹⁵ *Examiner*, 2 June 1930, n. p. It was noted in this retrospective report that mainland and international visitors had noticed that the effects of the Depression appeared to be less apparent in Tasmania. The columnist reflected the following sentiment: 'The Albert Hall, for a fortnight, was a centre of cheerfulness, constructive thought, and money circulation. These are all good things, and, as we have said, the league instigated them at a time when their antitheses were becoming chronic'.

⁹⁶ The ground plan of the house was published in the *Examiner* 2 May 1930, p. 4. The advice competition prize money of £1 was won by a Miss Charlton of Launceston who written on cleaning methods. See: Ibid. The local firm of Ludbrooks supplied all the carpets, curtains and blinds. At the formal luncheon held at the Brisbane, the Governor Sir James O'Grady noted that while there was no lack of intelligence evident in the community there was a lack of imagination and hope. In addition to all that, students of the Launceston Technical College in the centre of the Albert Hall provided a mode of a hydro-electric system for a proposed system at the Great Lake

proved both the League's ability to promote civic engagement as well as the degree of from the general public.⁹⁷

The LFTL primarily lobbied the State Government to institute Progressive reforms for immigration and tourism programs. Generally, the League was keen for the State Government to adopt a more methodical approach to developing its publicity campaigns, improving the tourism experience in the state and making the immigration process far more efficient. Locally, the League practiced a form of micro-management in relation to answering queries from prospective migrants and aiding them on their arrival.⁹⁸ Its appeals for reform were taken seriously by this higher tier of government, at least during the interwar period.⁹⁹ In September 1938, Harold Sellers, Secretary of the League, wrote to the Chief Secretary, T. Dalton, challenging the quality of a pamphlet, *Tasmania the Wonderland*, which had been distributed in India. Sellers explained that the League had received criticism from India about the pamphlets' targeting of the tourist market, while ignoring information vital to prospective settlers. Concerned that the state might be missing out on quality Anglo-Indian migrants, Sellers emphasised that such practical information as the basic cost of living was included in pamphlets distributed by other nations.¹⁰⁰ Part of the criticism was unfounded however. The pamphlet had been produced by the Tourist Bureau for the Department of Transport, and most of its literature was orientated towards the tourist market. As a result of the League's lobbying, a new pamphlet (produced by the Premier's Department and entitled

and also a model of the Launceston Duck Reach Power Station. Furthermore, there was also an exhibition of a series of pictures by local artist, Mr. W. Evans showing the evolution of the home from the cave to an aerial view of New York! See: *Examiner*, 20 May 1930, p. 4-5.

⁹⁷ The following comment was published in *Examiner*, 2 June 1930, n. p.: 'It must be very satisfying to the league to find that the public stands behind its efforts to promote the civic spirit in the wider, as well as the more specific aspect'.

⁹⁸ AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from Mr. Harold Sellers, Hon. Secretary of the LFTL to E. T. Emmett, Esq. Director, The Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, Treasury Buildings, Hobart, 3 February 1940.

⁹⁹ As will be discussed in Chapter Six, after the war, the State Government became increasingly agitated about the League's activities in relation to promoting migration to the state. Ironically, as the Government Tourist and Immigration Department began to employ an increasingly coordinated strategy in this area (in part by incorporating many Progressive principles), the 'loose cannon' tactics of the League became unpopular and they were increasingly rebuked for undermining the Department's policies. See: AOT: AA59 Migrant Files, AA59/1/67, M81 Fifty Thousand League, Tasmania.

¹⁰⁰ AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from Mr. Harold Sellers, Hon. Secretary of the LFTL to Hon. T. Dalton, Chief Secretary, Hobart, 21 September 1938.

Tasmania for the Tourist and Settler) was revised, and included such figures as the current cost of living.¹⁰¹

The State Government recognised the potential of the LFTL in regards to local economic development. It was granted a role in developing the local tourism industry. The League was paid a varying subsidy of between £50 to £100 from 1937 to 1942 out of the vote to the Tasmanian Tourist Department. This was done in order to reimburse it for what was considered to be valuable work.¹⁰² The enthusiasm of the Tourist Department was less than constant as it appeared to interpret many of the League's efforts as direct criticisms of its own policies. By 1939, the Tourist Department began to question whether the money would be better utilised if spread across several associations. E. T. Emmett, Director of the Tourist Department, wrote to the Premier that no direct instruction to make an annual payment had occurred and, that there were other associations who deserved to be supported.¹⁰³ This cooling attitude towards the League on the behalf of the Director of the Tourist Department might have been the result of active criticism of the Melbourne and Sydney offices of the Tourist Bureau. The League had criticised them for promoting Hobart at the expense of Launceston. Typically, Progressives alienated those around them, in their pursuit of the best methodology to ensure the best outcomes.¹⁰⁴ Despite the attitude of the Director of Tourism, the cabinet voted the League £100 in August, 1939.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Memo from the Director of the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau to the Hon. Minister for Transport, 28 September 1938. Tourist literature tended not to include such information as it dated quickly and therefore necessitated constant reprinting of what virtually amounted to the same material.

¹⁰² AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Memo from the Director of the Government Tourist Department to the Hon. the Premier, 10 August 1939. The entry of Japan into the Second World War appeared to be the reason for cancelling the subsidy. Of the £100 allotted to the League for that year, £75 had already been sent as a voucher and the rest was to be sent in the form of copies of the pamphlet *Tasmania Today* but was withheld. Emmett explained his action to the Chief Secretary in the following way: 'In view of the fact that this subsidy was granted solely for publicity purposes, I am of opinion that, with the present condition existing throughout the world, adequate use cannot be made of the subsidy for that purpose'. See: AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from the Director of the Tourist Department to the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Hobart, 15 April 1942.

¹⁰³ AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Memo from the Director of the Government Tourist Department to the Hon. the Premier, 10 August 1939.

¹⁰⁴ AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from the Mr. Harold Sellers, Hon. Secretary, LFTL, to the Hon. The Premier, 19 March 1939. Sellers recounted a recent incident when two tourists claimed that they were misinformed about how much time should be devoted to Launceston on their trip by both the Melbourne and Sydney offices of the Tourist Bureau. He made the following additional comment: 'Information such as this had been

Despite being dominated by businessmen and professionals, the LFTL's focus was wider than simply pursuing pro-growth ideas. This was in contrast to several other booster organisations aimed at simply improving the political economy. The Commercial Travellers' Association (CTA) was typical of that model. Formed in Launceston in 1900, it was primarily intended to promote the interests of the 'knights of the road' (i. e. those doing business in the state).¹⁰⁶ In August 1905, similar associations across Australia and New Zealand were incorporated into the United Commercial Travellers' Association (UCTA).¹⁰⁷ In retrospect, the local association did accept that the wider movement since 1838 had experienced successive phases, including an increasing role as a benevolent society.¹⁰⁸ The CTA did become involved in charitable works (for instance helping to establish the Northern Home for Boys). However, this should be interpreted less as a reflection of a Progressive social agenda, than as an expression of the more widespread ethic of civic altruism.¹⁰⁹ The Launceston Association saw its primary role as providing a 'link in the commercial chain around the Commonwealth' akin to that of the Chambers of Manufacturers.¹¹⁰ By 1930, the UCTA enjoyed a deeper resource and membership base than the local and radically conservative LFTL could ever boast: its net assets consisted of £439,442 with a membership of 16,663. While unemployment became a concern during the depression, the CTA did little more than lobby for a bipartisan approach, while endorsing orthodox economic approaches.¹¹¹

brought before us on a many occasions, far too many for their not to be some truth in some of the statements and it does appear that some of the members of the staffs of the Tourist Bureau on the Mainland are ignorant of the facts or have never visited Launceston'. The Tourist Department then notified the League that the incident would be investigated and asked for the ladies details to be forwarded. There is no evidence to suggest that this request was complied with. See: AOT: AA494 General Correspondence, AA494/1/96, 79/1/38 LFTL, Letter from the Hon. Secretary, Tasmanian Government Tourist Department, 29 March 1939.

¹⁰⁵ *Mercury*, 15 August 1939, n. p.

¹⁰⁶ *Mercury*, 28 April 1900, p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ This was achieved through the simultaneous acceptance of the memorandum and articles of the United Association of Australasia. See: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 August 1905, p. 8. During the interwar period, the Launceston branch was based at 78 Charles Street. See also: *Mercury*, 17 December 1928 & *Mercury*, 7 December 1948, p. 10. Please refer to Appendix A: 'An Interwar Map of Launceston, 1938', point of interest 13.

¹⁰⁸ *Mercury*, 24 March 1951, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ *Mercury*, 12 December 1921, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ *Mercury*, 20 April 1917, p. 4.

¹¹¹ *Mercury*, 11 August 1930, p. 5.

While the LFTL was ostensibly a booster organisation, it became equally focused on embracing the emerging social economy. The League developed a reputation for supporting intervention, aimed at improving social outcomes in the city. As a consequence its ability to pressure the LCC into altering policy was increasingly appreciated by the wider community. In 1927, the LFTL lobbied the LCC to alter its policy on water rates. It had become receptive to the ‘often-times heard’ view that the limit on free water should be raised before the special water tax was applied. The incumbent Secretary of the LFTL, A. Moore Robinson, explained how the rate was perceived by the poor: ‘There appears to be a general felling that the supply of free water should not be based on the assessed value of the home. This principle operates harshly in regard to small houses which are frequently occupied by people with large families and necessary of limited means’. The League’s emphasis on the practical benefits of securing at least a modicum of social justice clearly irritated the aldermen, who generally felt that economic concerns outweighed any moral considerations.¹¹²

The *Examiner* was to also play a key role in encouraging the growing sense of civic altruism within the city. In 1919, Dryden in an editorial asked local citizens the following question:

Is it that there is a lack of public spiritedness and a general casualness and laxity about such matters as are calculated to push the city to the fore? If that is so, can we as a community afford to allow it to continue?¹¹³

Any act of civic generosity was widely reported and held up as an example to all.¹¹⁴

The *Examiner* instigated much of the momentum of popular interest in creating a

¹¹² QVM LCC3: 17/1/3.3 *Finance – Accounts, Water Rates (1927) July 1927*, Letter from A. Moore Robinson, Secretary of the LFTL to the Town Clerk, 10 December 1927 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Secretary of the LFTL, 14 December 1927. The League, in a typically congenial fashion, invited a representative of the Council to speak at one of its weekly luncheons on the subject of water tax. The reply coolly noted that their concerns were being passed on to the Water Committee to be discussed at the first meeting in the New Year.

¹¹³ *Examiner*, 28 November 1918, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ A good example of this is the reporting of the donation of the official records of the Palaeontographical Society by Government Geologist, W. H. Twelvetrees (1848-1919), in February 1919, shortly before his death. The society had been founded in 1847 and provided much data on fossil and flora research of Britain. Prichard noted that Launceston was in need of a solid scientific library and therefore ‘claims of such to a generous treatment upon the part of the public should be kept in the foreground’. See: *Examiner*, 10 February 1919, p. 4. Twelvetrees had been

premier booster organisation.¹¹⁵ When the subsequent LFTL expanded its scope to embrace wider Progressive reforms, it continued to enjoy the full support of Dryden and his staff.¹¹⁶ The paper documented the history of the League and a great interest was taken in its causes, activities, and the evolving mechanics of it as an organisation.¹¹⁷

The League appreciated how effective community based initiatives could be in relieving the distress of the poor. While unemployment levels had begun to increase long before the onset of the Great Depression, the upsurge after November 1929, had been alarming. The LFTL immediately began to respond. One LFTL program was a 'Clean-up Month', 'aimed at encouraging the community to offer as much work as possible to prevent the spirit of depression'. The LCC reply was muted: the Whole Council Committee considered the idea, and, while it was decided to co-operate as far as possible, it ruled out any painting work due to the season.¹¹⁸ However, programs of this nature alienated the LCC as they both contradicted its reasserted individualist ideology (at least in the wider economic sense of personal responsibility) and also served to remind the public how little it actually did in that

born in Bedfordshire, England. Early in his career as a Geologist he worked in mines in Russia. He first came to Tasmania in later life as Secretary of the International Exhibition at the Albert Hall in 1891-2. Afterwards he remained in Tasmania, working in Insurance until 1899 when he was made Government Geologist and Inspector of Mines. He was involved with a number of intellectual/academic organisations including the Royal Society. See: *Examiner*, 8 November 1919, p. 7.

¹¹⁵ Please see the editorials entitled 'A Fifty Thousand League – Why Not?', in *Examiner*, 14 May 1920, p. 4 & 'Running Launceston', in *Examiner*, 16 September 1920, p. 4. In fact this fundamental difference in approach between the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Examiner*, the former a conservative observer and the latter a motivator for radical conservatism, may account for the variation in their fates. The *Examiner*, although by no means objective, as a commercial entity, was far more engaged in the civic life of the city.

¹¹⁶ See section 5.2.2. As documented the annual reports, special projects and weekly luncheons were always reported in full detail by the *Examiner*, giving them an added sense of authority which arguably they did not enjoy from local government. Dryden commented in 1930 after the Ideal Home Exhibition: 'It must be very satisfying to the league to find that the public stands behind its efforts to promote the civic spirit in the wider, as well as the more specific aspect'. This was recognition that there was a dual purpose to the League: practical boosterism aimed at developing the economy and increasing the population and also promoting a civic spirit of engagement in order to raise the quality of life on several levels in the city through both private initiatives and lobbying all levels of government. See: *Examiner*, 2 June 1930, p. 6.

¹¹⁷ Please see these articles as examples of the long-term coverage of the League by the *Examiner*: 'Fifty Thousand League a Distinctive Movement', *Examiner*, 12 March 1932, n. p. & '50,000 League Adopts Long Term Policy, Council to Advise How City's Interests Best Served', *Examiner*, 29 May 1938, n. p.

¹¹⁸ QVM LCC3: 16/17.1 *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931)*, Letter from the Secretary of the LFTL to the Mayor and Aldermen, 5 August 1930 & Letter from Town Clerk to The Secretary of the Launceston 50,000 League, 12 August 1930.

period to combat poverty. Interventionist ideas, particularly those involving connecting the unemployed with potential sources of work, were commonly rejected outright by the LCC, which collectively appeared to assume that such activities were far outside the parameters of its normal responsibilities.¹¹⁹

5.2.2.4: An Unwanted Social Conscience

The LFTL did not enjoy unanimous support in its dual mission to both economically develop the city and raise its civic spirit. The LCC's lack of enthusiasm for the more humanitarian orientated reforms of the LFTL reflected the increasing ideological gulf between the two bodies. The League did enjoy the support of the local media, and particularly strong support from the Progressive orientated daily, the *Examiner*.¹²⁰ The Executive Council of the LFTL, demonstrated a genuine concern for the welfare of the working-class. Their actions emanated from a deep concern about maintaining the ongoing health of the Anglo-Saxon race: in late 1937 the League contacted the Minister for Education to suggest that military staff be deployed to schools to drill children in order to better cater for their physical development.¹²¹ While the idea was officially dismissed as being economically impractical, it was described in an internal memorandum by the Director of Education as a desirable concept – indicating the mainstream popularity of such ideas at the time.¹²²

In contrast to the agenda of the LFTL, throughout the interwar period, the LCC consistently placed economic concerns ahead of calls for intervention on social

¹¹⁹ When in 1931, unemployed citizen, Alfred Tyson, wrote to the LCC to ask if his name could be placed on the proposed 'Odd Jobs Bureau' being operated through Town Hall, he was promptly informed that the idea was not being considered. See: QVM LCC3: 16/17.1 *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931)*, Letter from Alfred Tyson, 95 Arthur Street to the Mayor, 18 November 1931 & Letter from Town Clerk to Alfred Tyson, 18 November 1931.

¹²⁰ The *Examiner* enthusiastically reported on the full range of activities engaged in by the LFTL. The publication of the 1932 Annual Report featured detail of both the booster programs such as the 'Buy Locally and Locally Made Campaign' and the 'Manufacturers' Show Exhibit', as well as the social welfare programs such as the '100,000 Penny Drive' and 'Firewood Supply Effort'. See: *Examiner*, 8 June 1932, n. p.

¹²¹ AOT: ED10 Correspondence, ED10/1/1678, 0554/1937 Physical Training Suggestion of Fifty Thousand League, 1 January 1937.

¹²² AOT: ED10 Correspondence, ED10/1/1678, 0554/1937 Physical Training Suggestion of Fifty Thousand League, 1 January 1937. Handwritten note at bottom of the page from the Director of Education to the Minister for Education, 5/10/1937.

issues. In June 1937, the aldermen were criticised for failing to allow a free public screening for parents of a health education film on the disease diphtheria. This was because in order to ensure universal access, the film would have necessitated a Sunday screening.¹²³ Meanwhile, Launceston's diphtheria rate in the late 1930s increased dramatically.¹²⁴ Pressure from the State Government and the British Medical Association resulted in the establishment of a clinic, devoted to providing immunisations for the preventable disease.¹²⁵

While LCC Aldermen regarded the LFTL as an unwanted social conscience, they greatly appreciated the input of the various suburban improvement associations into the development of public policy. Such associations were concerned mostly with infrastructure improvements (mainly that pertaining to recreation). These practical associations were rarely critical of the LCC, and partly sponsored their own initiatives. In 1922, when the East Launceston State School Parents Association helped to secure a large paddock as a public playground, the LCC happily supplied trees, installing drainage and laying on water. That same year, the Trevallyn Suburbs Improvement Association (TSIA) erected a bandstand and the LCC assumed control, afterwards connecting electric lighting to the facility.¹²⁶ In 1925, the South Launceston Improvement Association (SLIA) laid out the lawns and erected shelter sheds and swings at the Punchbowl Reserve.¹²⁷

¹²³ *Examiner*, 4 June 1937, n. p. The main focus of the criticism was J. F Ockerby. He felt that the aldermen had 'considered it the thin edge of the wedge for Sunday pictures'. He was clearly not alone in his opposition to the Sunday screening: while claiming some empathy with critics, he admitted supporting it, although he insisted that he did not move the motion to defeat the idea or even second it. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1937, n. p.

¹²⁴ There were 108 notified cases of Diphtheria in 1937 and 157 in 1938. In his 1938 report the Health Officer remarked: 'A scheme for immunisation against this disease is now being considered by the Local Authority under which children with the consent of their parents will be immunised. I hope it will receive favourable consideration'. The Mayor was able to report in 1939 that the clinic has been established the previous May and children aged between 2 and 16 years were immunised subject to the approval of their parents. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1937*, p. 5; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1938*, p. 4; LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of Officer of Health, 1938*, p. 65 & LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1939*, p. 4.

¹²⁵ *Examiner*, 22 July 1938, n. p.

¹²⁶ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1922*, p. 2.

¹²⁷ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1925*, p. 2.

Some of the arrangements with these improvement associations were quite ambitious, but the LCC was very willing to allow local residents to help themselves if the result were to be the construction of much needed facilities for a minimum cost. In 1927, the LCC entered into an arrangement with the TSIA to have it lease a cottage and land on Creek Road at minimal rates, so that it could establish a bowling green and croquet lawn.¹²⁸ Progress associations rarely became directly political and when they did so it was usually in relation to a single, short-term issue. The SLIA lobbied vigorously for reform when certain areas of its district were left out of an enabling act allowing its streets to be taken over by the LCC. The St. Leonards' Council had failed to recognise parts of the district as its responsibility for sixty years. The LCC sympathised but was unresponsive due to the prospective cost of the reform. The SLIA were instead able to lobby local members of Parliament to rectify the injustice.¹²⁹ The IIPA kept a very close eye on public policy throughout the interwar period. While its interests naturally focused on the Inveresk/Invermay area, it deliberated on a wide array of local issues aside from the flood protection scheme, for which it was most notorious for being vocal.¹³⁰ Revealingly, the LCC proved very receptive to the input of the various improvement associations into public policy in a way that contrasted with its attitude to other lobby groups. Part of this may have been that the concerns it raised were in most cases well informed or at least representative of the local population and often very modest in nature.

¹²⁸ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1927, p. 5.

¹²⁹ *Examiner*, 2 March 1938, n. p.

¹³⁰ *Examiner*, 21 January 1938, n. p. In a single monthly meeting the Invermay Progress Association endorsed the decision to have the Post Office removed to a position further up Invermay Road, resolved to write a letter to the Superintendent of Police to have foot patrols extended up to Lamont Street and also decided to write a letter of complaint to the LCC concerning the nuisance created by a skin shop situated on the Esplanade. The then President was Mr. E. J. Atkinson.

5.3: Conclusions

Theme 3: The existence of political, professional, community and/or business coalitions at the local level that champion pro-growth, but particularly Progressive ideas.

Launceston's Progressive movement consisted of several reform coalitions. The professional dynamic was integral in transmitting the core ideas underlying this shared value system. The *Examiner* furthered debate on Progressive issues through its extensive coverage of their concerns. The modus operandi of local Progressives was interventionism informed by expert opinion. To some degree, all these Progressive coalitions embraced the 'alternative social economy', but there were subtle generational differences apparent in their emphasis and approach.

A general 'moral indignation' over the suffering caused by the 1890s depression had inspired the city's first wave of Progressivism. It was further energized by the successes of municipalisation. These initial coalitions were largely made up of professional men strongly influenced by the concept of applying scientific approaches to the suburban evils becoming apparent on the international stage. The second wave of Progressivism, in contrast, was characterised by a new generation of organisational reformists made up of administrative and business professionals. They were intent on utilising the new bureaucratic orientation that had been the subject of experimentation overseas, to reform society at the administrative level. The emphasis was on efficient and economical outcomes over positive social outcomes. The horrors of the Great Depression drew attention to the need to implement an 'alternative social economy'. A final phase of Progressivism marked a return to the social politics of the first, championed by an amalgam of the first and second waves. The goals of efficiency and economy were effectively humanised, their true value being determined by the social stability and humanitarian progress they could deliver.

The CWA (later the BHA) best defines the motivations, concerns, values, methods and goals of Launceston's first wave of Progressives in Launceston. An enduring, almost blind faith in the emerging scientific methodology of the age characterised

Progressivism. The CWA's support of the doctrines of scientific motherhood was a pure expression of this faith. The 'scientific' approach employed by the CWA/BHA was also very 'top-down', and it often provoked accusations of arrogance and tactlessness. Inadvertently, it also tended to alienate both those it sought to help, and others from whom they required ongoing support.

Robert H. Wiebe characterised Progressivism's participants as strongly motivated by self-interest and influenced in their actions by a strong sense of individualism.¹³¹ However, Simon Harris's analysis of the LFTL more generously thought there was an element of self-interest in its efforts. He argued that due to the fact that many members of the business community did not involve themselves and the element of 'civic duty' was so prominently demonstrated, that those involved did deserve to be acknowledged as being genuinely altruistic.¹³² The child health campaign in Launceston was as much about helping to prevent a physical and moral decline of the Anglo-Saxon race as it was about saving individual lives. These organisations, like many Progressive movements, were motivated by both altruism and self-interest.

The LFTL emerged just after the height of the second phase of Progressivism in the city. Originally a mere booster organisation, the LFTL initially championed both the political and the social economy. Its very constitution and operation reflected many of the ideas incorporated in the new bureaucratic orientation. However, the League was to become the purest expression of the ethic of civic altruism, evident among the business-class of the city. The subsequent onset of depression saw the reinvigoration of social politics. The specific history of the LFTL clearly illustrates the Progressive shift back towards a more determined social agenda in the second half of the interwar period. Its ultimate goal became the creation of an equally efficient and equitable society.

¹³¹ Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform*, pp. 217-8. Wiebe comments on the apparent lack of a Progressive 'grand vision'. He also cynically notes: 'The close correlation between the roll of the business cycle and the rise and fall of their reform impulse illustrated how much they still longed for stability'.

¹³² Simon Harris, 'Selling Tasmania', p. 322.

Progressive coalitions formed in Launceston then pursued often diverse immediate causes, but demonstrated a coherent value system. Both the CWA and the Fifty Thousand League of Launceston were the most high profile of such coalitions to become active during the first and third Progressive phases. They properly represented the heart of the 'alternative social economy'. Together, they helped to define what was best about the humanitarian nature of Progressivism in Launceston.

Chapter 6: Calls For a Fair Go, 1919-1939

6.1: Introduction to the Fourth Thematic Analysis

Theme 4: The general incidence of redistributive economic programs operating at the local level with the aim of securing social justice.

Abolition of private property would impose upon present day society a discipline altogether too rigorous to be borne. The wiser plan is to palliate the worst effects of the system in such a way as will gradually educate men to a more social view of ownership.

- Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order*.¹

6.1.1: A Divided Social Elite

Traditionally, the history of charity between the last decade of the nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century has been characterized by claims of a mechanical shift from laissez-faire/non-interventionism to a system characterised by highly complex, bureaucratic interventionism. Colin Jones noted that frameworks of analysis applied to the history of charity have been ‘strangely bipolarized’ in order to facilitate the ‘over-arching modernization theory’. Gradually though, there has been an increasing emphasis of scholarship on the dynamics of supply in equal proportion to the aspect of demand, giving greater attention to the ideological divisions within the ranks of the social elite.² Daniel T. Rodgers has argued that while mainstream Progressives were interventionists, they believed strongly in ‘subsidising the voluntary institutions of society’. They

¹ Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order*, p. 28.

² Colin Jones, ‘Some recent trends in the History of Charity’, in Martin Daunt, ed., *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare in the English Past* (Abington, Oxfordshire, 1996), pp. 51-60.

accepted that local government had a central role to play in the provision of welfare, as opposed to the state or nation.³

The shift from a belief in individualism to a reliance on universal welfare was, of course, very evident throughout the first half of the twentieth century in Australian history. This very gradual change was reflected in the increase in welfare legislation,⁴ This trend culminated in the establishment of the welfare state in a period of sustained political stability and prosperity at the end of the Second World War.⁵ There has arguably been an equally gradual dismantling of the national welfare state in Australia over the last two decades. This has been driven by an increasing political emphasis on the benefits of individualism and the problems associated with welfare dependence.⁶

More recent scholarship has centred on the ongoing debate over supply, revealing what M. J. Daunton has described as a constantly 'shifting boundary between public and private provision of welfare'.⁷ The pendulum of this debate swung much faster than the 'over-arching' one concerning the tension between individualism and universal rights.⁸ An analysis of the history of Progressivism in Launceston can

³ Quite succinctly, Rodgers notes: 'None of these players held the "welfare state" as an end goal.' Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (London, 1998), p. 28.

⁴ By the Interwar period in Australia, some level of limited welfare intervention had gained widespread acceptance as a social necessity. The Commonwealth funded aged pension for instance was increasingly recognised as a normal and justified arrangement. See: Brian Dickey, *No Charity There, A Short History of Welfare in Australia* (North Sydney, 1987), pp. 120-1. There was by that time Dickey argues a 'mild depauperization' of assistance in regards to assisting some cases, particularly the aged.

⁵ While retaining some emphasis on individualism, the Menzies administration during the early post-war period, were to further expand and cement the initial Labor commitment to a comprehensive welfare system. See: Brian Dickey, *No Charity There*, pp. 1-20, 147, 151.

⁶ Julian Disney has observed that in relation to welfare policy at the Federal level, the Howard years were characterised by a long-term reform strategy which involved 'placing greater emphasis on individual responsibility through self-help... rather than passive reliance on government welfare'. See: Julian Disney, 'Social Policy', in Robert Manne, Ed., *The Howard Years* (Melbourne, 2004), p. 191.

⁷ M. J. Daunton, *Progress and Poverty: An Economic and Social History of Britain 1700 – 1850* (Melbourne, 1995), pp. 447-50.

⁸ During the Howard years, while there was recognition that there was an ongoing requirement for publicly funded welfare to continue (determined by the contemporary view on the balance between individualism and universalism), the mechanics of supply were radically altered (the debate within that wider view on the acceptable level of individualism versus universalism on the nature of supply). Disney explained how this change was effected during the first two terms of the Howard Federal administration: 'The government firmly believed that competition, choice and the private sector should play a larger role in the delivery of social services, including employment and health services... Another key belief was that charitable contributions should be expanded in order to supplement or replace government assistance'. See: Julian Disney, 'Social Policy', p. 191.

better facilitate a discussion of this specific historical debate. In Launceston, the wider debate over provision was reflected in the conflict between the State Government and the LCC that resulted from the realisation that private charity would be insufficient to deal with the worst effects of the Great Depression. There was a sustained argument over ‘who would pick up the tab’ for the costs associated with the implementation of a limited degree of welfare intervention deemed essential. This was a stand-off which stifled the larger humanitarian response to the crisis in the city before August 1933.

The social elite in Launceston were indeed divided over the mechanics of the supply of welfare. It was almost universally acknowledged that a reliance on individualism in the functioning of the economy was preferable to universal welfare. The only reformists advocating anything approximating the introduction of the welfare state in Launceston were marginalised organisations, such as the Communist Party and the associated United Worker’s Movement. However, as pragmatic conservatives, Progressives recognised the sudden, desperate need for informed intervention from 1929 onwards. Their basic motivation was to maintain social stability by preserving the economic and political status quo, but at the same time preserve the health and general well-being of the lower orders. Therefore, they largely supported the push from successive state governments to encourage the LCC to intervene to a greater extent. Furthermore, they supported the reliance of all levels of government on the established charity networks to distribute welfare.

6.1.2: Reliance on Established Charity Networks

Throughout the interwar period, the relief of distress resulting from poverty was seen by the majority of the social and political elite of Launceston, as a problem best resolved solely through the various church and private charity networks. In terms of their mechanics, these networks followed the practices of the traditional poor law system of England.⁹ The tradition of ‘settlement rights’ was often

⁹ Please refer back to section 2.2.4.4.

applied to charity applications.¹⁰ Local charities also tended to dispense charity on a case by case basis.¹¹ There was certainly no sense of universal entitlement in regards to any form of welfare.

As early as the initial recession following the First World War, one high level dissenting voice became vocal on the issue of acceptable provision of charity in the city. Rising unemployment had exacerbated levels of poverty, but much of it remained hidden from the charity agencies. In late May 1919, the Mayoress (Miss May Shields, daughter of the Mayor) called an extraordinary meeting of representatives of the various charities and interested persons at the Town Hall. The meeting was intended to facilitate a discussion on the 'ways and means for supplementing and assisting the efforts of the various charity organizations'. The motivation of the Mayoress was explained in the invitational memorandum: 'Being impressed with the distressful conditions under which many of our citizens are living, and in view of these conditions being accentuated during the coming winter, she is calling a meeting'.¹² She claimed that forty-five families required clothes for children during the coming winter. They had been rejected by the local charities on the basis that there was a lack of funds. Mayoress Shields was supported in her claims of neglect by the testimony of the local policewoman, Miss Cross. While the various representatives favoured intervention, they all claimed ignorance of the cited forty-five cases in desperate need of relief. A motion was carried to form a Committee which would discuss 'devising ways and means for the rendering of assistance to the poor'. The funds raised would be distributed through the existing charities. All present reiterated their desire to help the specified cases.¹³

¹⁰ QVM LCC3: *16/17.3 Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)*, Letter from Town Clerk to Mr. Beeton, 15 Earl Street, 24 January 1936. Mr. Beeton was a recent arrival from Flinders Island and having been rejected by local charities, write to the LCC for assistance in finding work. He was promptly asked to return to Flinders Island by the Town Clerk.

¹¹ A Mrs. N. Grace of Ravenswood in June 1935, wrote to the Mayor about being refused assistance from the City Mission on the basis that her family was a 'country case'. Yet she added, her neighbour had received assistance in the form of new clothes, shoes and her husband had received a ticket of 14/- for food, with a balance of 30/- for dole work and had spent it all on drink! To his credit, Mayor von Bibra personally intervened in the case of the Grace family, but the incident reflects the arbitrary nature of welfare assistance in the city at that time. See: QVM LCC3: *20/ 6.6 Mayors Fund (1935)*, Letter from Mrs. N. Grace, Ravenswood to the Mayor, 27 June 1935 & Letter from the Mayor to Mrs. N. Grace, 4 July 1935.

¹² QVM LCC2: *Unemployment – Distress Through*, Memo from Town Clerk to the City Missionary and the various Honorary Secretaries of the specified charities, 22 May 1919.

¹³ *Examiner*, 28 May 1919, n. p. The most supportive representative at the May 1919 meeting was City Missionary, William Weir (1878-1941). Weir was born in Melbourne and grew up in

However, sharp difference emerged at the meeting on the extent of the crisis and the obligation to intervene. The City Missionary, Mr. Weir, acknowledged that the meagre funds hampered efforts to help the poor, but other representatives disagreed. Sufficient funds to cope existed but representatives were just unaware of the cases.¹⁴ Many distressed families were too proud to approach the charities for assistance, which had been a difficulty experienced during the depression of the 1890s. W. H. Ferrall of the Benevolent Society attributed the increasing demand to the rising numbers of deserting husbands. This view typified the enduring conservative belief that poverty was generally self-inflicted by virtue of inherent moral failings, as opposed to being a result of environmental factors. In a non-supportive manner, the Mayor himself denied the need for new charities, claiming that there were already too many! Still, he appeared adamant that there was a funding problem, and that something needed to be done to rectify it. The entire discussion only considered the private provision of charity.¹⁵ There was no suggestion that either any local or state government had an onus of responsibility to provide more redistributive programs. No sustained and direct interventionist programs, similar to those settlement schemes in the United States to improve the

Castlemaine. He first engaged in Missionary work for the Methodist Church in Victoria. He served as City Missionary in Launceston between 1919 and 1933. His support of the initiative may be a result of him coming from outside what appears to have been an apathetic charity culture in the city. During his tenure he was to demonstrate a tendency to initiate creative responses to the entrenched poverty of the city. He took a particular interest in the plight of wayward boys, representing their interests in police court and finding farms to assign them to for their rehabilitation in Tasmania or Victoria. He enjoyed some success: the Men's Home was established in 1920; the City Mission assumed responsibility for the distribution of blankets from the Blanket Loan Society in 1927; an Antique and Art Exhibition in May 1931 to raise funds for the Mission's Winter Relief program. The Depression appears to have presented an insurmountable challenge for Weir and the City Mission in general. Weir went on sick leave in September 1933 and resigned a month later. He later worked as an assistant at the QVM. See: Barbara Valentine, 'Launceston City Mission', *LHSP*, 14 (2002), p. 32. & Barbara Valentine, *Launceston City Mission 1854-2004: Caring and Sharing in Jesus' Name* (Launceston, 2004), pp. 29-34. His individual 'vitalism' certainly appears to contrast the measured efforts of many of his contemporaries.

¹⁴ QVM LCC2: *Unemployment – Distress Through*, handwritten notes from the meeting between the Mayor, Mayoress and Representatives of the various charitable institutions of the city of Launceston, 27 May 1919.

¹⁵ J. V. Sullivan, President of the St. Vincent de Paul branch noted that his agency expended £300 annually and that he was sure that those 45 specified cases would have been dealt with if they had approached them. See: QVM LCC2: *Unemployment – Distress Through*, handwritten notes from the meeting between the Mayor, Mayoress and Representatives of the various charitable institutions of the city of Launceston, 27 May 1919. It could be suggested that by 1919 - in comparison to William Weir - J. V. Sullivan as President of the conference between 1899 and 1937, was an established member of the charitable establishment in Launceston!

urban environment and expand opportunities for self-improvement, were put forward either.¹⁶

The City Mission most consistently engaged with the poor. Alex Menzies succeeded Weir as City Missionary, who was subsequently praised for his energy and empathy with the poor. He also acted as an unpaid probationary officer, helping young offenders to rehabilitate. In 1937, the City Mission's income was £1103/08/05 and expenditure £1006/05/10, leaving only a credit of £97/02/10. The City Mission operated soup kitchens in the city and Inveresk and made over five hundred direct visits to the homes of the poor that year. Its soup kitchen provided breakfasts to 160 children each morning and 180 children with soup at lunch-times on a daily basis. Menzies noted the enormity of the operation in the following way: 'The breakfast scheme was put into operation at Wellington-street and Inveresk, and 1800 gallons of porridge and milk, 140 cases of fruit and 1600 gallons of soup were dispensed to the children during the winter'. Private donations provided most of the goods distributed, such as clothing, shoes and food. Country residents donated several additional tonnes of food. The Ogilvie State Government also funded the purchase of a quantity of boots and clothing.¹⁷ This was a state

¹⁶ Allen F. Davis in his seminal work, *Spearheads for Reform*, observed a key shift in response to poverty during the Progressive era in the United States. He argued that the settlement house schemes in operation in several cities, were in part a reflection of a underlying shift from focusing on individual causes of poverty to attempting to deal with the social and economic conditions that made people poor. This transition of emphasis appears to have never taken place in Launceston, even amongst the most ardent Progressive reformers. Davis indicates that the settlement workers he studied in the United States were careful to distinguish themselves from general charities. General charity workers and organisations were more concerned with simply responding to immediate need than focusing on reforming the urban environment. See: Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New York, 1967), pp. 18-9.

¹⁷ *Examiner*, 5 May 1937, n. p. Alexander Menzies (????-????), born Scotland, he immigrated to Australia in 1926. He was first employed by the Sydney City Mission. He arrived in Hobart via the S. S. *Zealandia* from Sydney with his wife and family on 5 January 1934 with T. H. Cooper, then Secretary of the Launceston City Mission. He served as Launceston City Missionary between 1934 and 1941 as well as Pastor of the Memorial Baptist Church and Cimiterie Street Tabernacle. He enjoyed some success during his tenure, regarded widely as a 'dynamic Scotsman': he oversaw the opening of a soup kitchen at the Holy Trinity's Russell Street Hall at Inveresk in June 1934; in 1935, the Missionary instigated a scheme to supply malnourished children with food during the winter months; the Dunning Street Soup Kitchen was opened in June 1936 and continued operating for some years. Menzies faced many challenges in the position: In 1934 the effects of the Depression were so bad that the Missionary's salary had to be reduced. In 1939 by virtue of a press appeal, Menzies succeeded in purchasing a second hand car to help him execute his duties. He then left to take a position at the Home Mission of the Baptist Union at Smithton in 1940. He also served at the Bracknell Baptist Church between 1942 and 1947. He then returned to pursue his career in New South Wales. See: *Mercury*, 6 January 1934, p. 8; *Mercury*, 9 November 1940, p. 5; Barbara Valentine, *Launceston City Mission 1854-2004*, pp. 34-8. For an account of the Dunning

endorsement by the most Progressive government that the state had yet seen, of the necessary role that Progressives widely believed voluntary agencies should play in providing ongoing relief to the very poor.

However, the city's charity network with considerable duplication of services, rivalry and occasionally indifference towards genuine suffering was far from being a model of efficiency. An insular, 'closed-shop' mentality among the established churches which operated welfare agencies existed throughout the interwar period. In 1937, in response to a perceived need for intervention, a social coalition, calling itself the Inasmuch Committee, was formed. Coincidentally the City Mission scheduled its own annual Potato Appeal on 7 May, the very same day that the new Committee had planned to hold one. The *Examiner's* Editor supported the Inasmuch Committee's Secretary to cancel its event, noting that it was only natural that 'In such circumstances the claims of the senior mission, with its excellent record of work, prevailed, and it had its long-established potato day to itself'. This event was followed up with an editorial claiming there were an over-abundance of welfare agencies in the city, and a lack of co-ordination between them which lent itself to waste and encouraging 'mendicancy'. There were consistent indications that the multitude of established charities active in the city, were inadequately servicing the needs of the very poor.¹⁸

6.1.3: The New Deal and the Antipodean Roosevelt

General Progressive support for engaging in the First World War inadvertently discredited the larger movement in Great Britain and the United States.¹⁹ Progressives in the Britain and the United States shared an initial enthusiasm for the war effort. The preparation process demanded increased interventionism and they viewed it as an ideal opportunity to implement a Progressive agenda. The Wilson

Street Soup Kitchen in operation please refer to: *Mercury*, 'Woman's Realm Supplement', 18 May 1938, p. 5.

¹⁸ For instance, disgruntled resident mused publicly on widespread prevalence and acceptance of poverty at the highest levels of society in the city, despite the establishment of another soup kitchen by the City Mission in 1937. *Examiner*, 31 May 1937, n. p.

¹⁹ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960* (St. Lucia, 1984), pp. 315-6. Roe argues that this was evident across the European world.

administration closely followed the advice of the Progressive lobby. However, the larger Progressive movement became intimately implicated in the increased examples of political repression on both sides of the Atlantic. This repression manifested itself in the form of expanded powers to enforce censorship and incarcerate dissidents. The Wilson administration also began to repeal legislative reforms which had ensured stable industrial relations after 1919.²⁰ Subsequently, the First World War proved to be very divisive among the various factions of the movement, particularly on liberal and labor organizational lines.²¹

The United States Government's response to the Great Depression by the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt was dynamic and represented a revival of Progressive ideas. The development and institution of a Progressive array of policies was the result of a sitting of Congress in 1933. Arthur M. Schlesinger described the New Deal as a 'middle-way', increasing state intervention into and regulation of the economic system, while helping to preserve the essentials of the traditional system. There was a focus within the New Deal on relief, recovery and reform. The program provided immediate relief for the worst effected, combined with a stimulus package devoted to restoring the health of the economy, and, most significantly, legislative reform which expanded the powers of federal government to intervene in areas of government previously unthinkable through commission, boards and agencies.²² The essential result of the New Deal was the abolition of the passive state.²³ Carl N. Degler commented on the astounding nature of the change: 'To have the government concerned about the security of the individual was a new thing'.²⁴

²⁰ Marc Stears, *Progressives, Pluralists, and the Problems of the State: Ideologies of Reform in the United States and Britain, 1909-1926* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 131-8.

²¹ David Blaazer, *The Popular Front and the Popular Tradition: Socialists, Liberals, and the Quest for Unity, 1884-1939* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 96.

²² Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The New Deal in Action 1933-1938* (New York, 1939), pp. 1-4.

²³ Louis M. Hacker, *American Problems of Today: A History of the United States Since the World War* (New York, 1938), pp. 198-206, 276-87. Ironically, while many of the initiatives of the New Deal were to influence responses to the Great Depression on a global scale, many of its primary ideas originated in the social laboratory of Australasia. Peter Coleman argues: 'The Antipodes, more so New Zealand than Australia, helped propel the United States toward the modern welfare state.' See: Peter Coleman, *Progressivism and the World of Reform: New Zealand and the Origins of the American Welfare State* (Kansas, 1987), pp. 158-9.

²⁴ Carl N. Degler, *Out of the Past: The Forces that Shaped Modern America*, 3rd ed. (Sydney, 1984), p. 421.

The failure of the incumbent administration to deal effectively with the challenges of the Great Depression brought about a change of government in Tasmania. This mirrored events that led to a change of administrations in both Australia and the United States.²⁵ The State Labor Party, led by A. G. Ogilvie, provided a distinctively alternative approach to the incumbent Nationalist government in June 1934.²⁶ The Labor Party election platform openly challenged the orthodox, deflationist economics of the successive McPhee and Lee Nationalist governments.²⁷ Regardless of the accuracy of their assessments, the Labor Party proved keen to present its agenda as compassionate and responsive, while at the same time depict the Nationalist response as callous and detached.²⁸ It is logical then that A. G. Ogilvie became known in the popular imagination as, the 'Antipodean F. D. Roosevelt'.²⁹ Perhaps this was an inevitable parallel with an

²⁵ President Herbert Hoover in responding to the crisis was seen by many contemporaries as a 'callous, dogmatic and incompetent President'. While this has later been interpreted by American historians of the New Left as the policies of a 'humane technocrat' who was determined to resist the expansion of state and bureaucratic power, his apparent detachment and devotion to the private model of welfare relief and limited interventionism arguably cost him government. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, pp. 41-2, 46. In relation to the defeat of the Labor Scullin government in 1931, Manning Clark observed: 'The Labor Government had no firm answer to the crisis'. The approach of the resulting Federal Lyons government was characterized by orthodox economics and gentle interventionism that emphasized balanced budgets. See: Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Sydney, 1980), pp. 224 & 229. Volatile electorates then did not appear to be endorsing any one universal approach, but rather reflecting a deep-seated frustration with any perceived lack of ability to respond effectively.

²⁶ Michael Roe, *Albert Ogilvie and Stymie Gaha: World-wise Tasmanian* (Hobart, 2008), p. 11. Roe in fact describes the McPhee government's response to the crisis as 'negative'.

²⁷ Labor Denison candidate in the 1934 state election, W. A. Woods outlined the main ideological differences between the government and the opposition on the issue of dealing with the general economic downturn: 'The Labor policy as outline by Mr. Ogilvie was designed and shaped to get over the unemployment problem in the shortest space of time by the provision of vigorous and comprehensive public initiatives'. In contrast he described the orthodox approach of the state government in the following way: 'the absolute negation of public works... the cutting of salaries and general expenditure... which had led to the stagnation of business and had practically ruined Australia'. See: *Mercury*, 22 May 1934, p. 9.

²⁸ There had been a discernable Nationalist policy to downplay the extent of the crisis, perhaps to avoid widespread panic and a loss of confidence in the state economy. In September 1933, as Leader of the Opposition, A. G. Ogilvie criticised the Governor's speech noting that conditions were deteriorating not improving as stated, and that there was no clear plan to deal with the situation. See: *Mercury*, 29 September 1933, p. 9. In his Premier's policy speech of 1934, Ogilvie claimed: 'In any event Labor will no longer force many hundreds of innocent children to live in their present state of semi-starvation'. In relation to dole workers he described their benefits as being 'a disgraceful and starvation scale'. See: AOT: NS603 Personal, Ministerial and Political Papers of Neil L. C. Batt, NS 603/1/8, Typescript – A. G. Ogilvie's Policy Speech, pp. 46-52.

²⁹ Albert George Ogilvie (1890-1939), the son of a publican, born and educated in Hobart. He first trained and worked as a Lawyer. He entered the House of Assembly in 1919 and in the subsequent Lyons Government he held the portfolios of Attorney-General, Education, Lands and Mines. He clashed regularly with the more moderate and consensual Premier Joseph Lyons. A business scandal failed to undermine his political career and although the Labor Party lost the 1928 election,

American President who governed during the same crisis, and is largely remembered by virtue of his compassionate and innovative approach.³⁰

Throughout the 1920s, both Roosevelt and Ogilvie exhibited interest in Progressive issues. Roosevelt demonstrated a belief in the need for greater efficiency in government, conservation and selected welfare initiatives such as farm relief.³¹ Ogilvie's party openly embraced what Michael Roe argued was the basic trinity of welfarism in the period: 'health, education and housing'. During the Ogilvie era, they all received their due to varying degrees, and once in government their implementation as policy initiatives became tempered only by the perennially conservative Legislative Council. Ogilvie's own Progressivism clearly reinforced this policy foundation.³² They also shared a strong belief in the immediate and long-term economic benefits of the development of electric power.³³ Inherent to

he retained his seat. With the departure of Lyons to Federal Parliament in 1929 he was elected leader much to the annoyance of Lyons. He led the party to a loss in the 1931 election but led the party to victory in 1934 and a landslide subsequent win in 1937. He led a reformist but pragmatic government despite the socialist rhetoric of his early political career. His government was characterized by large state building schemes. His administration faced the natural conservative obstructionism of the Legislative Council but did enjoy the benefits of a recovering economy. He died in office in 1939. See: Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', *Bulletin of the Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies*, 1, 2 (1986), pp. 39-59 & Michael Roe, *World-wise Tasmanians*, pp. 5-14. In the former, Roe provides a revealing quote from Ogilvie during his time in office that properly expresses his philosophy of good government: 'The test of a good government was not the condition of the Treasury finances, but the happiness and prosperity of the people'. Roe cites: *Mercury*, 27 September 1934, n. p. The later source appears less enthusiastic about Ogilvie's accomplishments, but still provides a fully-rounded portrait of a public figure with empathy, energy, a state building interventionist vision and an appreciation for 'internationalism'. Roe reminds us that foremost, Ogilvie was not a radical politician and 'Like most people, the Premier shaped his words according to their audience.' Ogilvie also appears to have used the legislative process and an antagonistic Legislative Council to defeat radical ideas championed among his colleagues. See: *World-wise Tasmanians*, pp. 22-3, 59

³⁰ It is arguable though that the while the New Deal was a larger scale response to the depression it was also far more complex and innovative than anything attempted by the state government of Tasmania. There were considerable social advances that occurred as a result of the New Deal in the United States: unions gained the right to collectively bargain on behalf of their members; unemployment insurance schemes and old age annuity funds were established; minimum wage and maximum hour codes were adopted; publicly funded housing schemes were initiated. There were also structural reforms to the economy that were more characteristic of a federal government including the revival and expansion of credit, the systematic raising of prices and wide scale re-engagement with foreign trade. See: Louis M. Hacker, *American Problems of Today*, pp. 198-206, 276-87.

³¹ Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940* (Chicago, 1989), p. 61.

³² Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', p. 51.

³³ Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, p. 61 & Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', p. 50. Indeed during the 1934 election, Ogilvie argued that the expansion of the role and the infrastructure of the Hydro-Electric Department as the 'most important proposal in relation to development of the state and unemployment'. In the short term he made a direct link between hydro-schemes and full employment. In the long term he equated more available energy with more business for the state. See: AOT: NS603 Personal, Ministerial and

both their administrations was a reliance on expert advice in the formulation of policy.³⁴ Michael Roe observed a distinct level of ‘internationalism’ in Ogilvie’s politics. During his trip abroad in 1935, Ogilvie met with diverse dignitaries. He was very open to exposure to international ideas and views on a wide range of issues. This explained why he planned to meet with FDR.³⁵

The New Deal had a direct influence on the policy agenda of the Ogilvie State Government. When debating the Unemployment Relief Program in the House of Assembly as Leader of the Opposition, Ogilvie had made the following statement: ‘President Roosevelt has adopted a policy directly opposite to the Premier’s Plan and the experiment would be watched with interest’.³⁶ This clearly did occur as Labor candidate for Denison, W. A. Woods, declared during the election campaign in May 1934:

In America the President Mr. Roosevelt was given almost unlimited and dictatorial powers to bring about reconstruction, and the principles of the Act, under which he received his powers might well have been lifted cleanly from the Labor platform, while the same principles were being adopted by England.³⁷

Political Papers of Neil L. C. Batt, NS 603/1/8, Typescript – A. G. Ogilvie’s Policy Speech, pp. 46-52.

³⁴ The New Deal was essentially the product of F.D.R.’s ‘Think-tank’ which consisted of political scientist Raymond Moley and economists Rexford Tugwell and Adolf Berle Jr. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, pp. 62-3. Ogilvie demonstrated similar tendencies with his reliance on the advice of federal treasurer E. G. Theodore in the failed 1931 election campaign, who advocated a ‘mildly inflationary response’ to the depression. He was also influenced by contemporary social credit theorists. See: Michael Roe, ‘A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen’s Land with Tasmania’, pp. 46-7.

³⁵ Establishing a direct genealogy of ideas has proved to be an impossible task but Ogilvie and his ministers appear to have demonstrated more than just a passing interest in the effectiveness of the New Deal programs in the United States. Reinforcing his orientation towards applying international solutions to domestic problems, Ogilvie sought advice on flood protection systems in Holland (Roe argues this may have been in relation to the needs of Launceston specifically after the flood of 1929), discussed the necessity of the dole with Mussolini and the theory of social credit with Major C. H. Douglas. On his return Ogilvie was keen to replicate the Italian ban on car horns and institute restrictions on the needless destruction of trees practised by several continental governments, both with no result. Michael Roe, *World-wise Tasmanians*, pp. 31, 52, 71, 106, 200-201

³⁶ *Mercury*, 29 September 1933, p. 9.

³⁷ *Mercury*, 22 May 1934, p. 9. Emphasis added.

The stated policy of the Labor Party then was two-fold: to raise rates of assistance and generate work through large infrastructure schemes as roads and dam construction.³⁸

Despite their respective high level of interventionism both Roosevelt and Ogilvie remained fiscally conservative by nature. Attempts to stimulate their respective economies in order to counter the effects of the depression were coldly calculated to deliver direct reproductive benefits.³⁹ Roosevelt's interventionism was measured and pragmatic rather than overtly generous.⁴⁰ Michael Roe has challenged the romanticised view of the generosity of the Ogilvie State Government: it was helped firstly by a recovering economy and the federal spending initiatives of the Federal Lyons Government. The Federal Loan Council and Grants Commission also greatly assisted the Ogilvie Government in the task of responding to the Great Depression. In general, Michael Roe characterises Ogilvie as no 'bleeding heart' in relation to work relief.⁴¹ Like Roosevelt, his solution to the crisis was a 'middle-way', largely designed to preserve the system and avoid unrest.⁴²

While the initiatives of the both Roosevelt's New Deal program and the Ogilvie State Government response were varied, they shared a commitment to large-scale work relief programs. The Roosevelt Administration created the Civil Works

³⁸ AOT: NS603 Personal, Ministerial and Political Papers of Neil L. C. Batt, NS 603/1/8, Typescript – A. G. Ogilvie's Policy Speech, p. 33.

³⁹ As a State Governor, Roosevelt had been reluctant to 'drain' Treasury for any purpose. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, p. 61.

⁴⁰ Richard Kirkendall, 'Historiography of the New Deal', in Richard Kirkendall, ed., *The New Deal: The Historical Debate* (Sydney, 1973), pp. 2-6. The New Deal was seen by both contemporary critics and liberals as a 'massive break from the past'. Later, historians of the New Left school tended to see it as a minimalist exercise which served to 'sustain the hegemony of corporate capitalism'. Later interpretations from the 1970s in contrast argued that it was too radical and set unhealthy precedents for government interference in the free market. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, p. 3.

⁴¹ Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', pp. 49-50. His conversation with Mussolini on the issue of the dole appears to suggest that he saw it as 'undesirable' but necessary. See specifically: Michael Roe, *World-wise Tasmanians*, p. 106.

⁴² Ogilvie was aware of the unrest that the Depression threatened to cause. A report of a violent clash between picketing miners and police on the Northern Coal Fields in Sydney for instance included in his personal collection of press cuttings. See: AOT: NS190 Correspondence, Papers and Scrapbooks of E. J. Ogilvie, NS 190/1/9, Press Cuttings Book on Matters of Interest to A. G. Ogilvie, p. 31, *Mercury*, 16 January 1930, n. p. The private papers of Ogilvie's brother, E. J. Ogilvie (Minister in the Ogilvie, Earl-Gray and Cosgrove cabinets), contain a wry aphorism that appears to explain the measured interventionism of period: 'The dole – insurance against revolution'. See: AOT: NS190 Correspondence, Papers and Scrapbooks of E. J. Ogilvie, NS190/1/12, Correspondence, Press Cuttings, Copies of Articles and Associated Papers of E. J. Ogilvie c. 1938-1962. 'Original and Unoriginal Thoughts', p. 3.

Administration, reflecting a belief in the need to create work to counter the depression. The scheme represented not only an enormous cost, but an unprecedented administrative challenge: projects had to be devised, workers hired, equipment provided and then paid. When FDR realised that the initiative had created a potentially ongoing drain on the federal Treasury, the Works Progress Administration was initiated, charged with directing the responsibility of work relief back to the states.⁴³

These same challenges were to be experienced in the Tasmanian relief schemes, and Ogilvie was to rely heavily on municipal authorities to deliver a work relief program. The interventionist policy approach of the Ogilvie State Government from 1934 was to have a direct effect on the policy agenda of local government in Launceston. In short, the State Government expected more of it. Specifically, in relation to responding to the widespread unemployment problem, the new, highly interventionist Ogilvie State Government would insist that it accept a fair percentage of the financial and administrative burden.

6.1.4: The Changing Role of Local Government

The orthodox policies that dominated the management of LCC finances effectively lowered its capacity to intervene. With the exception of the short-term influence of City Manager Nicholl (1921-22), the economic management was conservative and certainly, unimaginative. Once Nicholl was removed, the practice of reducing rates during times of economic growth was reinstituted. The LCC failed to capitalise on the expanded revenue base provided through reforms to the assessment system and the surplus funds from Nicholl's loan. It arguably lost its chance to secure more by setting a responsible municipal tax rate which could have properly funded the various infrastructure and other services projects which were, in some circumstances critically needed.⁴⁴ The London Loans further compromised the

⁴³ Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, pp. 197-201.

⁴⁴ A reduction of 10d in each £1 was made in the year 1923-24 and 5d during 1924-25. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1924, p. 1. In 1927 it was openly admitted that while the Municipal Council has power to levy a rate up to 7s 7d in each £1 on the average annual value, plus any deficiency on Tramway undertaking. The present rate levied (including Tramway rate of 3d.) that year was 4s 6d in each £1. See: QVM

LCC's finances.⁴⁵ As a result of both its increasing fiscal conservatism and poor economic management, the LCC was poorly positioned to intervene on behalf of the poor during the height of the depression.

Early in the depression, the LCC did respond in a very limited capacity to the economic crisis. Typically, these tended to be short-term programs aimed at providing immediate relief rather than long-term, sustained interventionist programs. In May 1930, the City Missionary, William Weir, contacted Mayor Robert Osborne to ask him to establish an appeal in order to facilitate the continuance of their boot and clothing services for the very poorest. In response, the Mayor set up an official fund which accepted both donations and goods from the public. The appeal though was very short – Osborne appeared to be wary of taxing the generosity of the public with a sustained appeal – and subsequently only £42/18/06 was raised.⁴⁶ He opened a specific appeal for the unemployed soon after. The Mayor refused a request from his counterpart in Newcastle to open a fund for victims of a series of floods that had occurred there. This was done on the grounds that two appeals had recently been run, and, as the depression diminished the ability of locals to respond, it would be inappropriate to open a third.⁴⁷ There appears to have been no consideration to donate money from LCC funds or to petition the State Government to respond to the Newcastle appeal.⁴⁸ This betrays a stark

LCC2: 1928 100,000 Loan 17/ 6.15, from a document entitled: 'Copy of prospectus in connection with your London loan by our London office' which had been attached to a letter from the Manager of the Local Branch of the Commonwealth Bank to the Town Clerk, 1927.

⁴⁵ For a more detailed discussion please refer to sections 2.2.1.4 & 3.1.

⁴⁶ In a public statement at the outset of the 1930 Appeal the Mayor stated: 'During recent years there have been many claims on the generosity of the public'. See: QVM LCC3: *Funds – General (1930-1932)* 20/1.5, copy of public statement issued by Mayor Robert Osborne in regards to a Mayoral Appeal, probably May 1930. See also: Letter from W. Weir, City Missionary, City Mission to the Mayor, 14 May 1930; Letter from the Mayor to the Sub-Editor of the *Examiner* and the Manager of the *Mercury*, 9 June 1930, n. p.; Letter from the Mayor to Mr. J. Tuffin, Treasurer, Launceston City Mission, Cameron Street, 18 June 1930.

⁴⁷ QVM LCC3: *Funds – General (1930-1932)* 20/1.5, Letter from the Mayor to the Mayor of Newcastle, 1 July 1930. The refusal occurred despite the generous response across the Commonwealth to the floods in Launceston the previous winter. The refusal was regretted and in 1932 the LCC did respond to the earthquake disaster in New Zealand, indicating that there was a genuine sense by late 1930 that the public were experiencing a form of generosity fatigue. See also: Letter from the Mayor to the Premier, Wellington, New Zealand, 6 May 1931. In 1935, when Launceston was enjoying the beginning of a long-term recovery, the LCC also responded to the Victorian flood relief appeal: £793/15/4- being raised by the Mayor's Appeal and the Examiner's Appeal. See: QVM LCC3: *Funds General (1934-1937)* 20/1.8, Letter from the Mayor to the Mayor of Melbourne, 22 February 1935.

⁴⁸ This did happen in 1940, when £6, 204 /15/ 8 was raised for the victims of the air raids in Britain including £1000 contributed by the LCC itself. The reasons for poverty appear to have

ideological position: the LCC was a municipal authority, and while it could facilitate relief programs, this was not its true purpose. To the aldermen, charity was best collected from private sources and distributed through recognised charities. According to them, their role in the provision of welfare was peripheral and intermittent, only to occur in the face of the most dire economic circumstances. The wider Progressive movement did not share this view.

From August 1933 the LCC accepted that it had a long-term role to play in the provision of a variety of welfare programs to its residents. In the same year, the Nationalist State Government formalised the work relief program, negotiating with the LCC a compromise position of boundaries of responsibility.⁴⁹ This was also the year that the ongoing Mayoral winter relief appeal was first established. This was in recognition of both the entrenched poverty problem in the city, and the fact that lives of the poorest residents were often at risk during that season. The Mayor's fund began as the SOS (spend one shilling) appeal, and it was aimed at raising goods and funds to help provide the most needy with only the absolute necessities of life. Although not insincere, the response was certainly paternalistic and judgemental. The first appeal was a success, raising a substantial amount of funds and goods. Subsequent SOS appeals were less effective. The SOS appeals reflected a two-part agenda: to encourage the entire community that were capable to spend 2s. more per week so as to inject that money into the local economy and if possible give 1s. to the Unemployed Relief Fund.⁵⁰ The LCC utilised the local network of charities to distribute the relief. Several local charities were authorised to spend £25 or less on goods to distribute to the poor over the following months. The LCC

been significant, the suffering experienced as a result of the air-raids could not in anyway have been self-inflicted or due to some inherent moral failing. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1940*, p. 7.

⁴⁹ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934)* 16/18.1, Letter from the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Claude James, Chief Secretary's Department to Town Clerk, 12 August 1933.

⁵⁰ QVM LCC3: *Funds – Mayor's Fund (1933)* 20 / 6.4, public statement by Mayor, 27 May 1933. In his public announcement of the SOS appeal, Mayor Hollingsworth stated: 'Whilst this would not necessarily provide relief for the whole of the unemployed, it would enable a great number to procure the absolute necessities of life. Now that Winter is approaching blankets, boots and clothing are particularly required, so I appeal for funds to purchase them for the deserving cases in our midst'. The Mayor had been refining the announcement since January, indicating that the initiative was a carefully planned one probably motivated by the suffering endured during the previous winter.

discovered it could efficiently distribute these resources by relying on the expertise of local charities.⁵¹

The appeal was repeated again in 1934 in recognition of the sustained poverty. There was a decided emphasis on the concept of charity being directed only to the deserving poor, and, while not totally judgemental, it could be argued that the effort was certainly a begrudging effort to relieve poverty.⁵² The suffering of children appeared to be a major concern. This may have indicated that the local aldermen were beginning to share the Progressive view on the importance of the long-term maintenance of the health of children for the ongoing benefit of society and the Anglo-Saxon race. The 1934 appeal did not raise the same response as the previous one, suggesting that there may have been some credence to Mayor Osborne's argument concerning charity fatigue in 1930.⁵³ Therefore, the relief provided was not as generous during winter 1934, highlighting a core weakness of a type of program entirely dependent on the local community's generosity.⁵⁴ The Appeal operated at least until winter 1936. With declining donations, it increasingly became the unpleasant role of local charities to determine who was the most

⁵¹ Several Launceston charities were authorised to each purchase goods to the value of £25 for the purpose of relieving the poor. See: QVM LCC3: *Funds – Mayor's Fund (1933)* 20 / 6.4, Letter from the Mayor to The Adjutant, Salvation Army, 97c Elizabeth Street; Mr. J. V. Sullivan, President, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Hillside Crescent; Mr. W. Weir, City Missionary, Hillside Crescent; Letter from the Mayor to Sister Kelly, St. John's Misison, 103 Canning Street; The Secretary, R. S. & S. I. L. of Australia, Paterson Street; Mr. H. Weedon, Chairman, District Nursing Association, High Street; Miss C. Fysh, Secretary, Evangelical Nursing Association, 3 Canning Street; Rev. E. G. Muschapp, Lawrence Street (Church of Holy Family), all sent 14 June 1933. The Benevolent Society were sent a different letter allowing them in addition, to purchase £10 worth of blankets to be used by the Nurses of the charitable institutions. See: Letter from the Mayor to the Secretary, Benevolent Society, Kingsway, Launceston, 14 June 1933. There were several more rounds of authorisations for varying amounts over the following months. This was to be the ongoing method for distributing the funds raised by the appeal.

⁵² QVM LCC3: *Mayor's Fund 1934 – Correspondence* 20/ 6.5, undated newspaper clipping, probably May 1934. Mayor Boatwright stated at the outset of the 1934 Mayor's Winter Appeal: 'While the state as a whole is feeling the pinch of financial stringency, hundreds in our midst are suffering tremendously. Some cases may be reaping the harvest of their own improvidence or inefficiency or moral bankruptcy, but thus to criticise does not help the man who is down... Now that winter is here, blankets, boots and clothing are particularly required, so I appeal for funds to purchase them for the deserving cases in our midst'.

⁵³ In 1935 more money was raised (£805/16/06) for the victims of the Victorian floods than for the local poor by virtue of the Mayor's Fund (£643/06/06). This reinforces the idea that it was somehow easier for the public to empathise with victims of natural catastrophes rather than local victims of the economic cycle. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1935*, p.7.

⁵⁴ LCC3: *Mayor's Fund 1934 – Correspondence* 20/ 6.5, Letter from the Mayor to Mr. J. Wilks, 5 High Street, Launceston, 22 June 1934. Mayor Boatwright states: 'Permit me to bring under your notice the appeal which I have launched for funds for the purpose of alleviating the suffering of the poor, especially the children in our midst during the winter months'.

deserving.⁵⁵ The welfare response in Launceston from 1933 reflected the mainstream Progressive view that local government had a role in subsidising programs, but that the established charity networks had a very central part to play in that effort.⁵⁶

6.1.5: The Emergence of the Welfare State

The fact that in Tasmania successive state governments increasingly accepted the burden for the provision of public housing in the early decades of the twentieth century reflects the wider, gradual movement towards the establishment of a welfare state. The poorest sections of the community benefited most from this initiative. There had been an inexpensive housing shortage since the infamous clear out in the first decades of the century directed by Progressive CMO, L. Grey Thompson.⁵⁷ The Launceston branch of the State Labor Party, called for the party to introduce parliamentary legislation establishing a public housing scheme. A *Fair Rents Act* was passed in 1933, but reductions in rent could be avoided as long as the owner could prove that their net return under the lease did not exceed seven per cent per annum of the capital of the leased property (five per cent in rural areas).⁵⁸ The cause to create public housing in Launceston had shifted from a concerted, conservative Progressive cause, to one that enjoyed a certain degree of bipartisan support by the second decade of the interwar period.

Daniel T. Rodgers has argued that while the problem of adequate provision of working class housing was never solved, from 1919 it became a permanent fixture

⁵⁵ Only £313 was raised by the fund in 1936. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1935*, p.7. A letter concerning an appeal to the Mayor of a decision made by the Benevolent Society to refuse aid was sent to the council in July 1936. The Secretary and Treasurer, F. D. Barclay stated: 'I am not giving assistance to this case as I have many others that are more deserving'. See: QVM LCC3: *Mayor's Fund 1936* 20/6.7, Letter from the Secretary and Treasurer, Launceston Benevolent Society to The Mayor, 11 July 1936.

⁵⁶ QVM LCC3: *Mayors Fund (1935)* 20/ 6.6, Letter from the Town Clerk to Mrs. G. Phillips, 22 Cleveland Street, Launceston, 1 June 1935. This was written in response to an individual request for blankets. The Mayor informed Mrs. Phillips that the Mayor places the funds from the appeal to several local charities and advises her to approach them.

⁵⁷ Please refer to section 2.2.2.3 for details.

⁵⁸ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 1975, pp. 71-2. Cites: *Mercury*, 28 October 1933, p. 6.

of international social politics. In both Britain and Sweden up to the 1930s, there was intense public investment in low-cost housing. These initiatives were not simply focused on solving the problem of homelessness, but also on improving the environment for the lower orders. In Vienna, their public housing projects stressed collective space and public amenities. Germany's 'garden city designers' influenced several projects in the United States. Before the onset of depression, the main ingredients of the New Deal housing policy had already been formulated, influenced by German design as well as its system of providing subsidies to encourage private investment. These ideas were articulated in the *National Housing Act*, 1934. The United States was also influenced by the achievements of the British Labour government before it was defeated in 1933, particularly in regards to effective sum clearance. The *Housing Act*, 1937, was modelled on legislative initiatives in England and throughout Europe.⁵⁹

Once in office, the State Labor Party gradually began responding to calls for reform and echoing the interventionist policies of the Roosevelt Administration. Michael Roe observed that of the basic welfare trio, the Ogilvie State Government ranked housing the lowest in importance overall.⁶⁰ By 1942, successive Labor state governments had constructed twelve cottages for casually employed and unemployed people, six houses for old age pensioners and 156 group settlement homes. The emphasis was on helping the working-class rather than the abject poor. The *New Homes Act* of 1941 reflected this by providing a subsidy of twenty five per cent for workers in regular employment earning less than the basic wage. The Second World War impeded the progress of the scheme. The Federal Curtin Labor Government, in conjunction with the State Ogilvie Labor Government, established the Commonwealth Housing Commission in 1944; this became an enduring pillar of the emerging welfare state.⁶¹

The response to the poliomyelitis epidemic in Launceston in 1937-38 reveals the emerging complex degree of shared responsibility between the various levels of government and voluntary networks. The cost of expenses was shared overall

⁵⁹ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, pp. 384-92, 463-75.

⁶⁰ Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', p. 52.

⁶¹ Stefan Petrow, 'Hovels in Hobart: The Quality and Supply of Working-Class Housing, 1880-1942', *THRAPP*, 39, 4 (1992), pp. 175-7.

between the local and state governments.⁶² Cases were treated at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Howick Street which had been established as a result of a joint funding program in 1920.⁶³ The Department of Public Health enjoyed a complimentary role, with several private and voluntary organisations during the crisis, including the Tasmanian Society for the Care of Crippled Children and the local Kenny Clinic. The Public Health Department paid Kenny sisters to care for patients located by the TSCCC. Furthermore, a joint Commonwealth-State grant paid for the local after-care centre. A group of unemployed workers, donating their skills for free, built it in thirty five days. Volunteers helped with the ongoing of child patients, in relation to reading, transport and routine tasks.⁶⁴

Critics attacked both the local and state governments' joint-response to the epidemic. John Hogan, Convenor and Chief Speaker at a public meeting of the Citizens Health Protection Council held in the public library in early September, argued that it was the responsibility of the Ogilvie State Government to abolish the causes of the epidemic, poverty and ill-health.⁶⁵ Ogilvie dismissed Hogan as a 'newcomer' and for being unqualified to challenge medical authority.⁶⁶ The

⁶² Anne Killalea, *The Great Scourge: The Tasmanian Infantile Paralysis Epidemic 1937-1938* (Hobart, 1995), p. 123. The Tasmanian epidemic was the world's second largest to date with 1006 cases and 81 deaths. The LCC were liable for the first 28 days care expenses for patients amounting to 11s 6d per day. They consequently raised the health rate for that year as the budget had already been exhausted in preparations for a possible epidemic. The State Government then assumed financial responsibility.

⁶³ The facility was located in close proximity to the location of the original General Hospital. Please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938', point of interest 58. Despite the fact that the State Government paid for the construction of the hospital following the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1919, the local aldermen complained that they were expected to provide a laundry, disinfecting plant and staff quarters. While they received a rebuke from Premier Sir Walter Lee personally reminding them of their legislative obligations, they defended their actions by claiming they had a responsibility to the local ratepayers to minimise costs. See: QVM LCC2: *Infectious Diseases – Treatment of 1921*, Letter from the Mayor to Hon. The Chief Secretary, 15/03/1921; QVM LCC2: *Infectious Diseases – Treatment of 1921*, Letter from the Premier to Mayor, 18/03/1921; QVM LCC2: *Infectious Diseases – Treatment of 1921*, Letter from the Acting Town Clerk to Hon. The Chief Secretary, 6/04/1921.

⁶⁴ Anne Killalea, *The Great Scourge* (Hobart, 1995), pp. 24, 58-9.

⁶⁵ *Mercury*, 2 September 1937. Hogan was very critical of what he saw as the bungled handling of the epidemic by the state government – which in truth despite Ogilvie's angry protestations, was not above criticism. Although sometimes characterised as a Progressive, Hogan in truth was too radical for that label and might best be described as a social utopian. He was also Director of the impressively titled 'Electoral Campaign to Abolish Poverty' and an early advocate of the institution of a more complete welfare state. He received only tentative endorsement from more mainstream local Progressives such as Master Warden, William Robinson (a founding member of the LFTL).

⁶⁶ It is likely that poverty was not a causal factor, although the majority of the victims of the Launceston epidemic were poor. Improving standards of hygiene have traditionally been seen as

Progressive response to the crisis demonstrates a preference for measured intervention: a temporary rise in the level of welfare engagement which utilised the expertise and skills of local voluntary and charity networks. Typically, the emphasis was on achieving social justice, not Hogan's utopian vision. Again, local government's responsibilities were enshrined in legislation, and the Ogilvie State Government insisted that the LCC shoulder a sizeable portion of the economic burden of the official response.⁶⁷

Increasingly all levels of government accepted the greater professionalisation of, and co-ordination between, welfare agencies would be necessary in the future. The traditional, capricious nature of assignment of church benefits was increasingly identified as inadequate. To address rising unemployment, the *Examiner* typically supported qualified interventionism. There was an early exhibition of support for the conservative approach to dealing with the unemployment problem: relocation to the country.⁶⁸ The Progressive emphasis, however, favoured a central role for local government and the utilisation of established charity networks.⁶⁹ The *Examiner* openly supported the Nationalist shift towards more radical intervention, facilitated by legislation passed in 1932. Although the provision of work relief was seen as a temporary but necessary evil best delivered by local government, there was some begrudging acknowledgement that it was necessary for the state to subsidise the

the cause for lowered immunity levels. A similar but milder epidemic emerged in Melbourne soon after in a middle-class residential suburb. Killalea argues that despite being largely impoverished, the health of Tasmanian society was rapidly improving during the period, and none of the previous epidemics in 1909, 1929-30 and 1934, had simply not been sufficient to 'confer general immunity'. See: Anne Killalea, *The Great Scourge* (Hobart, 1995), pp. 12-13, 49.

⁶⁷ The Council's obligations for the treatment of infectious disease were defined under the Public Health Act of 1903 and the Hospitals Act of 1918. See: QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1918, p. 4.

⁶⁸ *Examiner*, 25 May 1927, p. 4. Dryden argued that the public seldom got value for money in terms of relief work. He argued: 'Better still, if some of these men could be drafted into the country, and put under supervision at the growing of food, as a preparatory stage to enabling them to qualify for rural life'. Therefore there was unbridled support for this concept when it became the centrepiece of the Nationalist response to the crisis from 1930. See: Editorial entitled 'Unemployment', *Examiner*, 9 April 1931, n. p. Dryden endorsed the qualified Nationalist approach: 'Only by careful husbanding of resources had the Government been able to get so far in providing work for the unemployed without involving the state in serious financial difficulties'.

⁶⁹ Editorial entitled 'Unemployment', *Examiner*, 26 June 1930, p. 6.

process.⁷⁰ Editorial comment in the *Examiner* expressed the opinion that the aim of relief should be political and social stability, not equality.⁷¹

In May 1937, the *Examiner* proposed that there was a case for increased government intervention and regulation, if not outright public provision, of welfare in order to ensure that no resources were wasted:

Already the state authorities have imposed restriction on street appeals, of which there were far too many, and, in the absence of greater co-ordination of charity work, they may decide to take a hand there. It would be unfortunate if that were so, for the more the Government comes into these things the less the public feels a clad to do in the fine old spirit of voluntarism. Nevertheless there is clearly a need for 'orderly' methods of dealing with the large sum which every year the generous citizens of Launceston and equally kind country friends provide for the relief of distress in this city.⁷²

Brian Dickey observes that increasingly professionalised intervention in relation to poverty increasingly characterised charity in Australia during the interwar period. He draws attention to the 'increasingly bureaucratic air in the interwar years', explained by the fact that essentially 'the first generation of upper-middle-class reformers were hurried into retirement by the administrators and the experts... of the government bodies they helped to create'.⁷³

While Progressives were increasingly uncomfortable with the expanding role of the state in the provision of welfare, they naturally appreciated the improved efficiency that the new bureaucratic orientation could offer in supplying charity. The establishment of the new state housing system best demonstrated this trend in the post-war period. The 1937-38 poliomyelitis epidemic demonstrated the Progressive preference for relying on short-term intervention during a crisis. This brand of response also placed much of the financial burden on local government, and utilised

⁷⁰ The passage of the Unemployment Reform Bill through state parliament in 1932 allowing for £150,000 of spending on agricultural and municipal projects received cautious support from the *Examiner*.

⁷¹ Work relief was originally referred to by Prichard simply as a 'palliative' for wider problems associated unemployment. See: *Examiner*, 25 May 1927, p. 4. Discontent amongst the unemployed was consistently covered in detail by the *Examiner*. For example refer to: *Examiner*, 7 June 1933, n. p.

⁷² *Examiner*, 15 May 1937, n. p.

⁷³ Brian Dickey, *No Charity There*, p. 119. This view compliments the one argued in section 4.1.

voluntary charity networks for implementation. The blurred boundaries between areas of responsibility for health and welfare intervention though, resulted in chaotic responses. Stanley Dryden, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, lamented the necessity for widening the role of the state, which he though discouraged voluntarism. By the end of the interwar period, distribution of welfare remained almost exclusively the preserve of the established voluntary charity network. After the war, a properly defined welfare state operated by the Federal and State levels of government, would gradually emerge, replacing chaotic voluntarism with efficiently operated bureaucracies.

6.2: Case Study: Responses to Unemployment, 1919-1939

6.2.1: The End of Laissez Faire Government

Increased levels of intervention characterised the response to unemployment and widening poverty in the depression. In terms of design, this intervention was increasingly state subsidised, council organised and delivered by pre-existing voluntary charity networks. The LCC was reluctant to adopt an expanded interventionist role in the local economy. Its mismanagement of finances had lowered its capacity for discretionary spending, but its main objection was ideological. Successive Nationalist and Labor governments had to resort to ‘strong-arm tactics’ to ensure that the LCC would accept its pivotal role. The state also had to accept the primary responsibility for cost to achieve this level of intervention. This division lowered the effectiveness of the early response to the crisis. Provision of welfare mainly involved church organisations distributing privately funded relief to whoever was considered to be the most deserving.

6.2.2: State Responses to Unemployment

The Lee Nationalist State Government instituted a subsidised farm employment program at the onset of the Great Depression to deal with the massive jump in levels of unemployment across the state. This strategy was quickly corrupted and had little effect on the overall problem in the cities.⁷⁴ The Nationalist State Government was then to play the key role in formalising intervention schemes

⁷⁴ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania, Volume II*, pp. 391-2. The approach was deeply flawed, as the depression had created a situation wherein many established farmers could not sell their produce and there was in fact a glut of crops on the market. Such ideas as converting 30,000 acres of land on Cape Barron into new farming settlements for the unemployed were openly criticised by professional agricultural producers. See as an example a letter to the Editor entitled ‘Land Settlement to Solve Unemployment’ by A. L. Armstrong of Lindisfarne in *Examiner*, 9 March 1932, n. p. Farmers in the United States also faced the problem of losing both international and local markets to sell their produce. This combined with debt and drought often created insurmountable problems. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, p. 15.

aimed at providing relief work for the unemployed beyond its term in office and throughout the period of depression.

Initially, the Nationalist State Government adopted a decidedly orthodox deflationist approach to dealing with the depression.⁷⁵ The first reaction of the McPhee State Government was to cut spending in order to balance the budget, restore confidence and revive industry.⁷⁶ When this failed to have any effect, the State Government did intervene, but in a manner that betrayed many of its ideological dispositions. The need for intervention was great: it was estimated that around 500 men in Launceston were registering at the local labour bureau.⁷⁷ In the early 1930s, Premier McPhee insisted that 'the old policy of finding work for men on roads and other unproductive undertakings was not getting to the heart of the problem'. The logical answer appeared to be to engage the unemployment with the land.⁷⁸ This initiative was directly influenced by settlement schemes instigated by the New Zealand Liberal Party to deal with unemployment when it came to office in 1891.⁷⁹ Such schemes betrayed an almost 'Jeffersonian' ideological conviction of the restorative qualities of encouraging large pockets of the unemployed to 'return' to the land.⁸⁰ By April 1931, the scheme had been fully implemented.⁸¹

⁷⁵ This term is used by Michael Roe to contrast the Ogilvie State Government's 'mildly inflationary response to the depression'. See: Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', pp. 46-7.

⁷⁶ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', p. 45. Cites: *Voice*, February 14, 1931, p. 1

⁷⁷ *Examiner*, 26 June 1930, p. 6.

⁷⁸ *Examiner*, 9 April 1931, n. p.

⁷⁹ The Liberals once in office broke up large and unused estates, through compulsory purchase and leased lots to the unemployed, who also were encouraged to supplement their incomes through season labour. This was seen as an effective solution to utilising wasted land resources, solving unemployment by promoting self-reliance, and providing much needed seasonal labour in rural areas. This scheme also influenced Californian legislators in the United States. See: Peter Coleman, *Progressivism and the World of Reform*, pp. 86-7.

⁸⁰ Like the failed Southport Scheme initiated in the 1890s by the Dobsons, a return to the land was almost seen to have redemptive qualities. For a summary and analysis of the Southport Scheme please see: P. F. Bolger, 'The Southport Settlement', *THRAPP*, 12, 4 (1965), pp. 98-113. American President Thomas Jefferson has often been characterised as an agrarian philosopher, having possessed a vision of the 'idealised yeoman'. The independent subsistence farmer developed qualities that distinguished him from the typical English peasant and encouraged a strong democracy. It is probably not a coincidence that Jeffersonian politics were also *laissez-faire* in orientation, inferring that government 'should be rarely heard and even more rarely seen'. See: Carl N. Degler, *Out of the Past*, pp. 91, 97, 99, 353 & 356.

⁸¹ By this time, over 1209 men had been employed and it was estimated that as a result of this work 7900 acres of land would be cleared and scrubbed, 50 miles of fencing would be erected, 15 miles of draining completed, in addition to other works, such as digging of dams, provision of water, construction of water races etc. A further £30,000 was being made available for these purposes and applications were being received for it. See: *Examiner*, 9 April 1931, n. p.

The Scullin Federal Labor Government instituted a scheme in early 1931 that allowed state governments to encourage municipal authorities to engage in work relief projects.⁸² The Unemployment Grants Scheme for local authorities, was announced in 1930, based on a British scheme and was designed to facilitate large-scale works aimed at creating important infrastructure assets, such as new docks and harbours, electricity or gas plants, land reclamation, etc. Funding would take the form of a loan that could be repaid under favourable terms. The LCC subsequently implemented the scheme in a qualified way from December 1930. Chief Engineer Potts organised roughly 100 men to start work on a variety of projects approved by the Whole Council Committee.⁸³ This federally initiated scheme gave the Nationalist State Government an opportunity to officially abdicate its responsibility for providing employment relief. The Nationalists were able to utilise the federal funding so as to be seen to be acting in a minimal way, and placed the remainder of the burden on local authorities. This effectively relieved the state treasury of the burden of annual costs amounting to £30,000.⁸⁴

The *Unemployment Relief Act* facilitated a more refined approach to solving the exacerbating unemployment problem in 1932. This allowed for the borrowing of £150,000 to fund the settlement scheme and municipal relief programs. Although local authorities were required to meet half the cost of projects, this was hardly an incentive.⁸⁵ The *Wages Board Act* and Arbitration awards did not regulate rates of pay for employment in the agricultural, horticultural and pastoral sectors. The members who made up the Nationalist Government had close and often direct links with these industries, and therefore decided on a policy to integrate poor relief and at the same time provide stimulus to the agricultural sector. The Agricultural Bank

⁸² QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Letter from the Director of Public Works to the Town Clerk, 14 January 1931. This letter informs the LCC that a further £726 has been made available to the federal grant for expenditure on works (making a total of £2726 allocated). The main concerns for Labor were nepotism and threats to normalised wages, which might encourage ‘sweating’. They also felt it acted against the break up of the larger estates.

⁸³ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Details of Revised Unemployment Grants announced by the Minister of Health on June 25 1930. See also: Memo from the Town Clerk to the CE, 20 December 1930 & Memo from the City Engineer to the Town Clerk, 22 December 1930.

⁸⁴ Matthew Cloudsdale, ‘Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933’, p. 57. Cites: *Mercury*, 31 July 1931, p. 7.

⁸⁵ *Examiner*, 4 June 1932, n. p.

of Tasmania managed the scheme between 1930 and 1934 and provided work for 4,600 men. Labor, then in opposition, co-operated but did voice concerns of potential nepotism. The scheme's reputation was tarnished by the end of 1932 when it was revealed that members of Parliament had themselves benefited from the scheme. The Ogilvie Labor State Government eventually cancelled the scheme because of the numerous scandals in 1934.⁸⁶ By that time, Labor had the 600 men still involved in the scheme absorbed into various programs of its own design.⁸⁷

The Ogilvie State Government's main contribution to the work relief program was to simply fine-tune the pre-existing arrangement, ensuring that it was both sustained and made slightly 'kindlier'.⁸⁸ By the time the state Labor Party assumed office, the system for providing work relief was already essentially established. Conveniently for Ogilvie, the state economic environment had also started to improve. The demand on the system immediately began to recede.⁸⁹ While exhibiting a 'kindlier' approach to responding to unemployment, it was still restrained.⁹⁰ Once in power, the Ogilvie State Government raised dole levels by ten per cent in the city and by thirty per cent in the country. In terms of work projects, it was also more inclined to provide projects at 'real rates'. Nevertheless, the new State Labor Government displayed a high level of political cunning in relation to expenditure of public monies: on taking office, Ogilvie had the Governor in Council authorize the expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue of £40,000 for the purpose of the relief of unemployed. Subsequently legislation was passed, inflating the deficit for the last year of the previous government, while at the same time allowing money to be spent across the first full financial year of their term.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', pp. 71-2. He cites: *Mercury*, 28 October 1933, pp. 45-54. The scheme was facilitated by the *Unemployment Relief (Assistance to Primary Producers) Act* and by virtue of it £138,850 was expended. The scheme was described in detail in *Mercury* August 5, 1930, p. 10. Labor outlined its main objections in *Mercury*, July 30, p. 3. Both references are cited in Cloudsdale's thesis.

⁸⁷ Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', *THRAPP*, 25, 3 (September, 1978), p. 48.

⁸⁸ Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', p. 47.

⁸⁹ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', p. 1. National unemployment rates were almost normal again in 1938, eight per cent, just a quarter of what they had been at the peak of the Depression in 1932. The national rate was still twelve per cent in the United States. See: *Examiner*, 22 January 1938, n. p.

⁹⁰ Its campaign platform for the 1931 election had also included policies to ensure that there was no reduction of old age, invalid and soldiers' pensions and an Insurance Bill against unemployment. See policy list published in *Examiner*, 7 May 1931, n. p.

⁹¹ Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', pp. 48-50.

The Ogilvie State Government relied on assistance from successive federal governments to fund its intervention program. In 1934, the Lyons Federal Government had made a commitment to provide more funding for employment intervention schemes. In August, Prime Minister Lyons made good on his promise to do more for the unemployed, and obtained £50,000 for public works, £25,750 for mining and £25,000 for forestry.⁹² Despite the fact that the Ogilvie administration arguably relied more on federal funding for his initiatives than the Nationalists, it continued to criticise the Lyons Federal Government for leaving the states to largely deal with the problem of unemployment alone.⁹³

The Ogilvie State Government was often creative in tackling the problem of unemployment. A youth employment scheme was developed specifically to deal with the problem of entrenched unemployment. Some of these schemes directly influenced the opportunities afforded the younger unemployed in Launceston. Delegates from the LCC attended a local conference held at the local YMCA to consider a proposed State Government funded program aimed at providing occupational training for unemployed youths in the forestry and agricultural sectors, in June 1933. The scheme was to be based at a nearby site that would provide accommodation and training for approximately fifty youths, who would then be helped to establish private farming enterprises.⁹⁴ In 1937, the Ogilvie State Government succeeded in having Parliament vote £18,000 towards another youth employment scheme. This was done in view that the Lyons Federal Government had promised to vote money to such state schemes.⁹⁵ James McDonald, Member of the Legislative Council (MLC), was the Minister in charge of the youth employment scheme in Tasmania. Over 200 youths from Launceston immediately

⁹² The forestry funding was allocated on the condition that the State Government itself provide £5000, with at least twenty per cent of the amount to be spent on youth unemployment. See: Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', pp. 50-1.

⁹³ *Examiner*, 23 February 1938, n. p. During a 'dole strike' in Launceston in February 1938, Mr. H. C. Barnard, MHR noted that he had heard a good deal of criticism of the State Government, but nothing about the Federal Government, which was leaving the employment problem to the states to deal with!

⁹⁴ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933) 16/17.2*, Report of Launceston Committee into Occupational training for unemployed youths in connection with Agriculture and Forestry, Launceston, June 1933. A covering letter was provided: Chairman and Secretary of the Unemployed Youths Farm Scheme (Agricultural Bureau of Tasmania) to the Town Clerk, 16 June 1933. However the report does not appear to have found the Mayor's tray until 23 September, 1933.

⁹⁵ *Examiner*, 13 January 1938, n. p.

applied for a place in the scheme. Youth Employment Officer, H. G. Harcourt, granted interviews to those who expressed interest in careers as motor mechanics, electricians, carpenters, and industrial mechanics.⁹⁶ Reflecting the underlying trend towards professionalised bureaucracy in regards to welfare, all applicants were closely screened before being accepted and then matched to employers, for whom they would work for subsidised wages while they continued to train. The scheme began to run from August in both Hobart and Launceston.⁹⁷

The Ogilvie Government directed its intervention programs towards developing the state economy. The *Unemployment Primary Relief Act* was utilised to develop the forestry and mining industries, while the *Homes Act* was amended to provide more employment in the building trade.⁹⁸ The Labor Ogilvie State Government also viewed large scale Hydro-electric schemes as one way in which to both stimulate the state economy and absorb a sizeable chunk of the unemployed population.⁹⁹ In March 1939, at a conference in Launceston between the Chief Secretary (Mr. T. A. D'Alton) and representatives of both the Public Works and Social Services Departments, it was announced that relief work labour would be utilised on a grand scale to develop the state's assets wherever possible through the development of tourist resorts and general beautification work in cities and towns.¹⁰⁰ Many of the ideas tabled though, were not realised due to the outbreak of the Second World War.

6.2.3: Local Government Responses to Unemployment

The LCC had not always opposed the principle of local government embracing the central role in the funding and provision of welfare. At the end of the First World War, the LCC exhibited a strong interventionist spirit in relation to tackling high

⁹⁶ *Examiner*, 3 November 1937, n. p.

⁹⁷ *Examiner*, 19 August 1938, n. p. & 13 October 1938, n. p.

⁹⁸ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', pp. 67-70. Cites: *Mercury*, 28 September 1931, p. 8; *Voice*, 26 September 1931, p. 8 & *Mercury*, 28 June 1933, p. 7.

⁹⁹ *Examiner*, 4 June 1937, n. p. A report entitled 'Reproductive Works, Future of Northern Unemployed' indicated that a meeting had taken place between the Minister for Works Mr. T. H. Davies, Mayor F. Warland Browne and the President of the Chamber of Commerce Mr. Gordon B. Rolph concerning how to provide work for the unemployed after the completion of the Tarraleah hydro-electric scheme works. The Inveresk Protection Scheme was identified as a primary candidate.

¹⁰⁰ *Examiner*, 25 March 1939, n. p.

rates of unemployment in the city. Due to the maritime strike in mid-1919, unemployment became a great concern. An employment bureau was established at the Town Hall in July. The local media published daily updates on positions gained by the unemployed. The LCC voluntarily petitioned the State Government to allow it to institute the very first reciprocal 'pound for pound' municipal employment scheme. As the strike was national, the aldermen and the business community viewed local workers as victims of a wider folly, deserving of intervention.¹⁰¹

Long-term unemployment became an increasing problem. By 1926, the LCC was regularly subsidising work for the dole schemes in conjunction with the State Government.¹⁰² City Engineer Balsille reported that construction and maintenance work had been conducted on various roads for the benefit of the unemployed. The State Government matched the LCC on a reciprocal pound for pound basis.¹⁰³ The Lyons Labour State Government had come to power in 1923. While it was not a radical socialist government, the Lyons administration proved to be much more interventionist than its immediate predecessors. As the state was struggling economically, Lyons' cabinet had decided on a policy to lobby the Bruce Federal Government for sustained aid, arguing that Tasmanian was disadvantaged in many ways. Another major policy shift change was official recognition of the sustained unemployment problem and an acceptance of some responsibility for relieving its worst effects.¹⁰⁴ It is significant though, that the emphasis on the scheme was on the

¹⁰¹ See: Editorial entitled 'Distress in Launceston', *Examiner*, 7 July 1919, p. 4; 'Relief of the Unemployed', *Examiner*, 11 July 1919, p. 4 & 'Launceston Unemployment, 115 men Found Work', *Examiner*, 12 July 1919, p. 7. It was reported that Mayor Shields personally interviewed the heads of the various departments to discuss what could be done to provide relief work projects, See: *Examiner*, 7 July 1919, p. 4. He was effectively applauded by the *Examiner* for his energetic response to the crisis. In contrast again in 1931, when unemployed citizen Alfred Tyson wrote to the LCC to ask if his name could be placed on the proposed 'Odd Jobs Bureau' being operated through Town Hall, he was promptly informed that the idea was not being considered. See: QVM LCC3: 16/17.1 *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931)*, Letter from Alfred Tyson, 95 Arthur Street to the Mayor, 18 November 1931 & Letter from Town Clerk to Alfred Tyson, 18 November 1931.

¹⁰² QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards (1928-1929) 1/ 2.5*, Letter from the Secretary for Public Works to the Town Clerk, 16 September 1927. This scheme had been facilitated by the passage of '18 Geo. No. 10, Relief of Unemployed, £ for £'.

¹⁰³ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer, 1926*, p.1.

¹⁰⁴ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania, Volume II*, p. 395. Premier Lee's approach to the states's financial problems had been reminiscent of the unimaginative and orthodox economics approach of Henry Dobson's conservative government between 1892-4. Lee had attempted to reign in spending, cutting back positions in the public service, reducing the number of parliamentarians, and in a very non-Progressive manner, abolishing many services including

provision of reproductive work. The scheme then was as equally pragmatic as it was compassionate. The Lyons State Government insisted that taxpayers should reap some practical value from its investment of public monies.

The LCC continued to operate this early, limited version of a work for the dole scheme up to the official onset of depression in 1929. The City Engineer's Department and the Parks and Reserves Department had the joint role of operating the scheme. Under the program, the grounds of Royal Park were laid out in 1927, part of the funding coming from the John Hart Bequest.¹⁰⁵ This open utilisation of private funding implies that the scheme was seen as an exercise in charity for the deserving poor, one which had to be both earned and be of reproductive value for the community. The scheme as a model was to form the basis of the approaches of the successive Nationalist and Labor state governments to providing work for the unemployed until the outbreak of the Second World War. In fact, unemployment had become so entrenched in the city before 1929 that even after the effects of the global economic crash began to be felt, the Mayor simply described unemployment as being 'again prevalent'.¹⁰⁶ Both levels of government found constructional relief works to be the most effective long-term solution, occasionally implementing training programs and work camp projects.¹⁰⁷

There were ongoing tensions between the successive state governments and the LCC during the depression over responsibility for the funding of work relief

medical inspections and dental clinics for school-children. See again: *A History of Tasmania, Volume II*, pp. 391-2.

¹⁰⁵ UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer, 1927*, p.3. As previously mentioned, the John Hart Bequest was a sum of £10,000, the interest from which was used to redevelop Royal Park and establish a conservatory in City Park. See specifically: UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1927*, p. 5 and LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Report of the City Engineer and Building Surveyor's Office, 1937*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁶ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1929*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ The early employment relief schemes continued to be very intermittent in the first years of the depression. The Nationalist government made some funding available but did little to pressure the Council into maximising the potential of the scheme. The overall funding arrangement appears to have not yet settled into a routine as it was to do after the Ogilvie government came to power. That December, the Director of Public works had to write to the Council to state that they expected that the works chosen should not be spent on ordinary maintenance and that the basic municipal award rate should apply. See QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Letter from Town Clerk to Premier, 23 December 1930 & Letter from Director of Public Works to Town Clerk, 31 December 1930.

programs. A mutually satisfying formal agreement was not reached until August 1933.¹⁰⁸ Neil Batt has argued that the LCC's resistance towards the work for the dole scheme in particular was due to the 'extremely conservative nature of the Council and the preponderance of Nationalist Party members of Parliament on that body'.¹⁰⁹ In truth, the LCC was reluctant to cooperate with the initiatives of both major parties, refusing for instance to agree with the Nationalist State Government to strike an additional rate to contribute towards the cost of providing relief works in 1933.¹¹⁰ The main objections to helping to develop an effective response to the high levels of unemployment in the city were ideological, fiscal and practical.

The traditional poor laws of England and Wales provided an underlying influence on the LCC response to unemployment and poverty. Therefore, the traditional cultural distinctions between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor were regularly reinforced. Settlement rights were enforced and it was necessary for those engaged in work relief programs to have been resident in Launceston for three months.¹¹¹ The LCC was to also adopt a policy of preference for employing returned soldiers on the basis that they were more deserving of aid than those who had not served their country overseas. An early example of that was the use of ex-serviceman labour to extend the tramway along the side of Lindsay Street on the Wharf route in 1919. In that instance and others, the Repatriation Department contributed to the cost in order to subsidise the cost of the labour.¹¹² The LCC adhered to this policy throughout the interwar period, regardless of inducements from the Repatriation Department.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Letter from the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Claude James, Chief Secretary's Department to Town Clerk, 12 August 1933. James mediated a deal between the LCC and the State government. The LCC were steadfastly against the program and only accepted it when it was clear that there would be no need to strike a separate rate to fund an ongoing scheme. Details are provided later in the chapter.

¹⁰⁹ Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', pp. 48-50.

¹¹⁰ QVM LCC3: *16/17.2 Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)*, Letter from Town Clerk to J. F. Ockerby, MHA, 7 July 1933.

¹¹¹ QVM LCC3: *Employment - Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Engineer, 28 May 1933.

¹¹² UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1919*, p. 1.

¹¹³ For instance in 1928, preference was given to an out of work draftsman contracted to provide plans for the new abattoir and saleyards at Killafaddy, on the basis that he was a returned service man. See: QVM LCC3: *Abattoirs – Killafaddy Abattoirs and Saleyards (1928-1929) 1/2.5*, Memo from the City Building Surveyor to the Mayor, 24 August 1928.

The local aldermen's inherent culture of fiscal conservatism had a direct bearing on both their willingness and capacity to intervene in regards to unemployment.¹¹⁴ The aldermen were generally very reluctant to suffer any additional financial burden as a result of the depression. They resolved to provide a minimum amount of schemes in order to appease the Nationalist State Government.¹¹⁵ In response to criticism over inaction on the issue in April 1932, Mayor Hollingsworth stated bluntly that work relief was an issue for the State Government. The LCC's first responsibility was to the ratepayers of the city, to minimise rates and spend what money it had on crucial infrastructure development and maintenance. Hollingsworth reflected the general aldermanic view that it should not make trivial concessions in an attempt to help alleviate the problem in the city.¹¹⁶

The fundamental cost of intervention was the core reason that the LCC at first rejected a wholesale expansion of the existing work relief scheme as a response to the upsurge in unemployment levels. The LCC needed to outlay the capital for such schemes and then wait on approval before it could be certain of and eventually receive reimbursement of roughly half the cost of each project.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, the Whole Council Committee did not think it sufficient to simply be refunded half the cost of wages, when the hidden costs of labour inefficiency, planning, equipment,

¹¹⁴ Again, for a more detailed discussion, please refer to sections 2.2.1.4, 3.1 & 6.1.2.

¹¹⁵ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address*, 1930, p. 6. On the topic of unemployment, Mayor Osborne reported the following: 'In common with other parts of the Commonwealth, the City has felt the effects of the financial depression. Unemployment has been more serious than for a great number of years. In order to cope with the position and afford relief to a number of men, I opened a public fund, which, considering the times, was in my opinion responded to most freely. The sum of £1,866/04/00 was received and it enable a number of me to be employed extending over a period of four months'. From the outset of the depression then, the LCC firmly believed that they should not be liable for the cost of providing relief.

¹¹⁶ The LCC had approximately £88,000 in its reserve fund and it was being suggested by the United Workers Movement that it should be spent on work relief projects centred around the early flood protection scheme and demolishing Queens Wharf. See: *Examiner*, 15 April 1932, n. p. Illustrating the fact that the LCC refused to make trivial concessions, after the establishment of an Unemployed Youths Occupational School in Launceston in 1933, by the Young Men's Christian Association, the Secretary passed on a request from the Board of Directors for the Town Clerk, Mr. Staubi to be given permission to tutor at the school on the subject of commercial correspondence. The position would have involved one morning a week. The Council refused. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933) 16/17.2*, Letter from the Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association of Launceston to the Mayor, 4 May 1933 & Town Clerk to The Secretary, Young Men's Christian Association, 16 May 1933.

¹¹⁷ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Letter from Director of Public Works to Town Clerk, 14 January 1931. The Director states: 'A refund will be payable to your Council upon certificate of the Inspector that good value has been given for the expenditure'.

materials and supervision drastically increased the total cost of running the program.¹¹⁸ A report produced by City Engineer Potts, drew attention to the likelihood that the LCC would need to strike a new rate to cover expenses.¹¹⁹ Instead, the aldermen appeared tied to the idea of aiding in the generation of work on a project by project basis and on certain conditions: the State Government engaged and paid all workers involved and that the LCC as a legal entity, accepted no liability resulting from injury. A project to level Arbor Park in West Launceston in August was the first to be approved on that basis.¹²⁰

There were additional practical concerns anticipated by the departmental heads of the LCC which increased reluctance to enter into an expanded scheme. The policies of the State Government made the administration of the works program unnecessarily complex. The LCC was told to deduct the cost of rations from the weekly wages of workers. In March 1931, after seeking advice from the Hobart City Council (HCC), a sub-committee reported that this was an inefficient process, and advised that the process be streamlined so that the LCC could simply pay the wages and the State Government could recoup the losses in the form of rations.¹²¹ Work programs also made the LCC potentially liable for any accidents that occurred. In preliminary discussions concerning the subsidy scheme, the aldermen informed the Chief Secretary that they were unwilling to engage in any water-front projects due to occupational health and safety concerns.¹²²

The aldermen asked City Engineer Potts to critique the practicality of the refined system of work relief proposed by the Nationalist State Government in mid-1933. He raised a number of concerns: the system would necessitate increased spending

¹¹⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Public Statement by Mayor Hollingsworth on the issue of the work relief program titled, 'Work for Dole Recipients', undated.

¹¹⁹ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 12 June 1933.

¹²⁰ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Report resolution from Whole Council Committee, 7 August 1933, adopted 14 August 1933.

¹²¹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, LCC TC to HCC TC, 23 January 1931; HCC TC to LCC TC, 26 January 1931 & A paper from the Accounts sub-Committee dated 18 March 1931.

¹²² QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Hon. The Chief Secretary, 10 June 1930. There was some interest in the possibility of cleaning up and beautifying the river front at the time. Local business man A. E. Evershed wrote several letters to the Council in 1930/31 suggesting that dole labour be used in that way. See various correspondence contained in aforementioned file, between June 1930 and October 1931.

which would need to be accounted for, the LCC would indeed be liable in the case of accidents under the current *Worker's Compensation Act*, and the LCC would need to provide ongoing employment every work day for about 135 men. Potts was concerned about the inefficiency involved in using dole labour: it tended to be less efficient (relative to skill base and the work being performed) and, therefore in reality the LCC would need to provide more than just half the proportion of the total cost.¹²³ By 1936, the additional drain on revenue was interfering with regular maintenance programs.¹²⁴

The LCC ultimately won the political stand-off. Chief Secretary James, who as a former Launceston Alderman and Mayor himself, possessed an intimate understanding of the fiscal conservatism of the local aldermen. He provided a compromise in mid-August 1933. The State Government would pay the wages in full and indemnify the LCC against any compensation claim, while at the same time the aldermen would undertake to maximise employment opportunities, and have its departmental officers select works. These needed to be types of projects that were not ordinarily performed by the LCC's own departments. It would also provide training, supervision, materials and transport. The LCC would also need to provide each man with sufficient hours to cover each individual grant from the State Government, issuing certificates which the Department of Social Services would then use to calculate payment at the basic rate.¹²⁵ This agreement appeared to finally set the boundaries between the State Government and the LCC, specifically over who was responsible for providing which service to the unemployed in relation to work relief. The majority of the financial burden had been met by the State Government, while the responsibility for administration of the system had been passed on to the LCC. The LCC had to bear some minimal costs, but was able to absorb them, not having to resort to striking a new rate for the purpose of funding

¹²³ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Whole Council Committee, 12 June 1933. In April 1932 Mayor Hollingsworth in responding to criticism that the LCC were not doing enough to relieve unemployment, (although they had reserves amounting to £88,000), noted that those funds were specifically allocated to future infrastructure projects and maintenance and could not be used for that purpose. He acknowledged that a separate rate would have to be struck and they had an obligation to the ratepayers of the city to be responsible financial managers. See: *Examiner*, 15 April 1932, n. p.

¹²⁴ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937) 16/18.2*, Memo from the CE to the Mayor, 9 June 1936.

¹²⁵ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Letter from the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Claude James, Chief Secretary's Department to Town Clerk, 12 August 1933.

the scheme. The Ogilvie Labor State Government's main contribution was to maintain the system, and make minor amendments to its operation that made it effectively 'kindlier'.¹²⁶

6.2.4: The Threat of Radicalism

The reluctance of the local alderman to intervene on behalf of the unemployed was a catalyst for increasing the amount of radicalism in Launceston.¹²⁷ The radicalism was of a major concern to both church and state. Much of the resentment of the working-class for its situation was funnelled into supporting the militant but relatively ineffectual United Workers Movement. The UWM was not a communist organisation, but it was affiliated with several communist organisations and many of its members were members of the Communist Party. The suffering of its membership was often exacerbated by simple association: those with any open communist leanings were regularly refused church aid. This merely served to intensify their frustrations with the overall economic system and the various levels of government.¹²⁸

The depressed local economy served to polarize already entrenched attitudes relating to capital-labour relations. A decision by the State Government to reduce the wages offered from 12s. to 10s. per day, for workers engaged in a sustenance scheme at the Beaconsfield Forestry Reserve, prompted a strike in August 1930. The United Worker's Movement printed handbills and pamphlets in order to garner popular support for its cause. In a move guaranteed to enrage authorities, a lorry load of men were sent to Beaconsfield to induce the scabs to leave. UWM Secretary W. Daft defended the action, claiming that they were helping to starve the families of other unemployed men. While ensuring that the exercise was peaceful in nature, Daft assured the press that there were 500 men available in Launceston to see that

¹²⁶ QVM LCC3: *Employment - Unemployment Relief (1938-1941)*, Memo from Officer in Charge, Social Services Department to the Town Clerk, 3 October 1938. In this instance, the Chief Secretary authorised an allowance of fifteen minutes walking time, one way to men who are required to walk a mile or over to their sustenance work.

¹²⁷ QVM LCC3: *Employment - Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Notes from a Deputation of 25 Unemployed men to Town Hall, 5 December 1930.

¹²⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment - Unemployment Relief (1932-1933) 16/17.2*, Handwritten notes concerning the level of poverty in the city on the back of a typed invitation, dated 2 March 1932.

they did leave the work site. The State Government's reaction was to simply wipe anyone who refused to work off the unemployment register, except those with larger families who were placed at the bottom. Deputy Mayor and Nationalist MHA H. C. L. Barber had little sympathy for the protestors, commenting that he thought their struggles paled in comparison to their forefathers. The effort failed, and the UWM blamed it on a lack of solidarity among the unemployed.¹²⁹

When open conflict failed, the UWM attempted to negotiate with the LCC. On 5 December, 1930, a delegation of unemployed men met with the Mayor of Launceston, R. M. Osborne, to discuss their grievances. The men (which included members of the Launceston Unemployed Workers' Movement) made several arguments: the LCC had done very little to alleviate the unemployment problem in the city; men were being discharged from projects instead of being put on and while the poor starved on inadequate rations, the aldermen lived in comfortable surroundings. Remaining diplomatic, the Mayor assured them that the LCC was doing all it could, but informed them that it had already overspent on its budget for works that financial year. Hinting perhaps that he felt that wide-scale intervention was the role of the State Government, Osborne promised to pass on their complaints concerning the inadequate nature of the ration vouchers they provided.¹³⁰ The unemployed were to continue to complain that the LCC could do more to provide work if it wanted. A transfer of £57,000 towards retiring the Commonwealth Loan was given as an example. Mayor Osborne insisted that such decisions were made by the Sinking Fund Commissioners, and they had no part in it.¹³¹ There is much evidence, however, to support the argument that the LCC developed a minimalist policy during the crisis. Cynically, the LCC tended to increase the number of projects and additional services every year, just before

¹²⁹ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', pp. 58, 108-9. Cites: *Mercury*, 9 & 11 August 1930, n. p. Barber's comments are attributed to *Mercury*, July 23, 1930, p. 9.

¹³⁰ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Notes from a Deputation of 25 Unemployed men to Town Hall, 5 December 1930. Among the deputation were W. Daft and D. Drinkwater, leaders of the UWM. See: Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', p. 108.

¹³¹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Notes from a Deputation of 25 Unemployed men to Town Hall, 5 December 1930.

Christmas, in order to minimise complaints and probably generate positive publicity.¹³²

The Nationalist State Government, increasingly concerned with the perceived threat of radicalism on the streets of both Launceston and Hobart, formulated a new intervention strategy in 1931. Chief Secretary Claude James primarily oversaw the development of a proposal to establish camps across the state for single unemployed men. A HCC program encouraging the unemployed to help themselves by engaging in activities such as cutting firewood and growing vegetables, had inspired the plan. The participants would be paid 5s. a week pocket money, and be given free shelter and food. Most of them would be expected to work for roughly twenty five-hours per week to the camp. The idea was subject to there being sufficient interest (forty men) and then the first would be a trial to help assess the benefits of the program. Both Labor and the unemployed objected to the arrangements and the scheme failed to eventuate. Work camps were established in 1933, such as the one at Beaconsfield, but they would operate on a rota system.¹³³

An attempt by Chief Secretary Claude James to refine the original work for the dole scheme instigated in May 1933 incited a further protest. In relation to Launceston, the State Government had agreed to pay a sustained amount of £300 per week to the LCC, provided work was given to approximately 372 men. The wages were paid for in the form of ration tickets. It was recognised that the system of payment was contestable, and that the Wages Board might insist on payment in cash.¹³⁴ The

¹³² QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, in November 1932, the City Engineer and the Superintendent of Reserves received this request from the council: ‘Consideration has been given to the question of providing work for the purpose of relieving the unemployed at Christmas, and it is desired that you submit a joint report enumerating any such works, together with the estimated cost of each and the number of men who could be employed’. Five projects were eventually approved by the Whole Council Committee. The timing of the effort though appears to have been very cynical. See: Memo from the Town Clerk to the City Engineer and the Superintendent of Reserves, 12 November 1932 & Report of the Whole Council on Works for Relief of Unemployed at Christmas, 14 November 1932. A dinner held on Christmas day 1930 for the unemployed single men of the town also smacked of tokenism. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931)* 16/17.1, Letter from the Town Clerk to Mrs. Pearson, 13 Thompson Street, Launceston, 6 January 1931.

¹³³ Matthew Cloudsdale, ‘Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933’, p. 65-6. Cites: *Mercury*, 20 August 1930, p. 6; *Mercury*, 23 December 1930, p. 10 & *Mercury*, 5 February 1931, p. 5.

¹³⁴ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934)* 16/18.1, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Hon the Chief Secretary, 3 May 1933. This appears to have been an attempt to further expand and refine the system on a state wide basis: in addition to the 372 men in Launceston, 550 were to be employed in Hobart, 150 men at Glenorchy and 110 men over the remainder of the state.

UWM took the opportunity to protest the refined system, their primary objection being that it introduced ‘a new economic-competitive element into society which must, by its very nature, make the position of the unemployed still more hopeless under capitalism, and degrade an ever increasing number of those now employed to the semi-starvation dole standard of existence’. The UWM labelled the scheme ‘chattel slavery’, although it was a genuine effort to formalise the previous ad-hoc approach to grudgingly channel federal money into employment programs by the McPhee State Government.¹³⁵ However, the protest failed. After the post-August agreement, both the State Government and the LCC collectively felt that they had achieved a balanced interventionist approach. Reforms to improve access to relief work and levels of pay implemented from 1934 diminished the amount of protests.¹³⁶

6.2.5: Advocating for the Unemployed

There were a small number of advocate groups that emerged during the 1930s aimed at drawing attention to the plight of the most disadvantaged. The membership of these groups was diverse coming from the ranks of the unemployed, professional charity workers and the business-class.

When open protest failed, the United Worker’s Movement adapted, and took on an active advocacy role. A deputation met the Mayor Monds in August 1932 to alert him to the plight of the unemployed. With characteristic sympathy, the Mayor contacted the Chief Secretary informing him of their concerns.¹³⁷ However, a request for a follow-up meeting so that a case for the creation of more work could

¹³⁵ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, List of Resolutions from a Mass Meeting of the UWM, in early June 1933. Their fundamental demand was a full weeks’ work with a basic rate of pay. There was perhaps a justified concern that dole workers would be used, underpaid and placed in a position where they were even more vulnerable to eviction and starvation. The meeting was reported in *Examiner*, 7 June 1933, n. p. James was specifically identified as a culprit for the neglect and exploitation they described. The Mayor refused to allow the meeting to descend into personal abuse! The Hobart branch of the UWM actually burnt an effigy of James after a protest march that ended in Franklin Square, underneath a communist flag. See: *Examiner*, 1 June 1933, n. p.

¹³⁶ Please refer back to section 6.2.2 above for details.

¹³⁷ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933) 16/17.2*, Letter from Town Clerk to the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Chief Secretary’s Department, 16 August 1932.

be made, was refused.¹³⁸ The Mayor did agree to meet the UWM again in February 1933. This time the Mayor accepted a list of what R. S. Jones, Secretary of the UWM, considered as the most desperate cases in the city, particularly those out of work for an extended period and facing eviction. Unfortunately, City Engineer Potts considered it impractical to engage more relief work at that time and there was no resulting intervention.¹³⁹

In October 1935, the UWM received permission for a deputation to meet the Mayor to discuss the work relief scheme.¹⁴⁰ The main issue discussed at the meeting was specific cases of repossessions and evictions described as 'brutal'.¹⁴¹ To his credit, Mayor von Bibra investigated personally, contacting the Attorney-General, who in turn investigated the incidents and found them to be justified.¹⁴² The UWM continued to lobby the LCC on the issue of evictions and housing availability. In June 1936, a deputation drew attention to the shortage of housing available to the unemployed. Some had to resort to using false names in order to obtain it. Its suggestion was that the work relief scheme be altered to enable a rental allowance to be paid. The LCC insisted that the terms of pay did not come under its jurisdiction.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, Letter from L. J. Norris, Unemployed Workers Movement – Launceston Branch, to Mayor, 8 November 1932 & Letter from the Town Clerk to The Secretary, Unemployed Workers' Movement, Launceston Branch, 18 Maitland Street, West Launceston, 12 November 1932.

¹³⁹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, Letter from R. S. Jones, Secretary of the Unemployed Workers Movement to the Mayor, 18 March 1933 & Letter from Town Clerk to R. S. Jones, Secretary, Unemployed Worker's Movement, 173 York Street, 22 March 1933. The two page list detailed twenty six individuals and their circumstances.

¹⁴⁰ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)* 16/17.3, Letter from the Acting Secretary of the UWM to the Mayor, 04 October 1935 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Acting Secretary, Launceston District Council, Unemployed Workers Movement, 251 Brisbane Street, 7 October 1935.

¹⁴¹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)* 16/17.3, Pencilled notes from meeting between Mayor von Bibra and the United Workers Movement, 14 December 1935. A very liberal conservative, von Bibra demonstrated empathy and respect for the vulnerable lacking among his immediate predecessors.

¹⁴² QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)* 16/17.3, Letter from the Attorney-General to the Mayor, 24 December 1935. The tone of the letter suggests that the Attorney-General was not pleased to receive the query and it is quite defensive in its nature.

¹⁴³ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1936-1937)* 16/18.2, Pencilled notes of a meeting between the Mayor and the United Workers Movement, 1 June 1936. The potential problem involved in monopolising the time of the unemployed but not ensuring they be paid enough to cover their rents was anticipated by the UWM in 1933. See again: QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934)* 16/18.1, List of Resolutions from a Mass Meeting of the UWM, date unknown but probably early June 1933. Point 3 of the resolution was: 'No provision is made for

The Launceston District Council of the Unemployed and Relief Workers assumed similar advocacy role for the unemployed. In early January, J. Shelley, Secretary of the organisation, reported to Mayor von Bibra that around thirty people had been evicted in the past week. Reportedly, a level of secrecy surrounded the evictions, none being mentioned in the local paper. Shelley condemned the evictions as unchristian and contrary to the interests of the community. He informed the Mayor that on 16 January there would be an evening public meeting on the issue at the local public library.¹⁴⁴ Again, Mayor von Bibra investigated, contacting the Attorney-General, Premier Ogilvie, who in turn asked the Chief Secretary to enquire into the matter.¹⁴⁵ The District Council of the Unemployed continued to lobby for the amount of work relief schemes to be increased, so as to widen the possibility to employ more men.¹⁴⁶

In June 1932, the Launceston Minister's Association petitioned the aldermen to do more to create work and relieve poverty. It suggested that the LCC levy a new rate in order to better provide for the needs of the community. The aldermen rejected the proposal insisting that the LCC was 'doing all it can to provide as much labour as

rent, therefore the dole worker has no legal right of shelter for himself and family: and the fact that he is at work and yet unable to pay rent, puts him in greater danger of being evicted'.

¹⁴⁴ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)* 16/17.3, Letter from J. Shelley, Acting Secretary of the Launceston District Council of Unemployed, 3 Home Street, Inveresk, Launceston, to the Mayor, 9 January 1936. The letter draws attention to the amoral nature of the evictions: 'The fact that this number of people have been turned out of their dwellings—and the majority of them little children should shock the Christian principles of every decent citizen; it should arouse their moral conscience and bring from them some protest. Such wholesale homebreaking as outline (sic.) above is a challenge, not only to ordinary standards of social justice, but also to the very foundations of civilised society, it is a challenge which no humane and sincere person can ignore'.

¹⁴⁵ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1934-1937)* 16/17.3, Telegram from Attorney-General to Mayor, January 1936. There is no record suggesting if any action was, or even could, have been taken.

¹⁴⁶ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937)* 16/18.2, Letter from the Secretariat of the Launceston District Council of Unemployed and Relief Workers, 3 Home Street, to the Town Clerk, 22 June 1936. The works suggested in this letter alone were: (1) Reclaim the Mowbray swamp. (2) The National Park Scheme. (3) Improve Zig Zag track to Power station. (4) More recreation grounds. (5) Provision of better public baths.

possible'.¹⁴⁷ By 1933, emotions were running high on the issue of welfare provision in the city.¹⁴⁸

Launceston was not devoid of economic initiatives though in relation to combating the problem of widespread unemployment. Characteristically, the LFTL approached the problem with enthusiasm. It organised a clean up day in August 1930, and asked if the LCC's Unemployment Relief Committee would co-operate. Secretary W. R. Peel-Salisbury suggested that the LCC embark on a renovation program of the Town Hall in order to generate work for both skilled and unskilled unemployed labour. The LCC was careful to appear to co-operate, but did not approach the problem with the same kind of imagination and enthusiasm. The Town Clerk simply passed on the word that the aldermen felt it was too early in the year to indulge in painting work.¹⁴⁹ While it was traditional for desperate people in Launceston to make individual approaches to the Mayor and aldermen, increasingly the League came to be seen as more empathetic. Revealingly, in 1932 elderly local resident Lorna Donald submitted an application for aid to the LFTL, which was forwarded to the Mayor and then back to the LFTL.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, Letter from George Rowe, Secretary of the Launceston Minsters' Association, 13/6/1932 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Hon. Secretary of the Ministers' Fraternal Association, Frankland Street. Launceston, 29 June 1932.

¹⁴⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, Among the records of the LCC compiled during this period is a handwritten, disturbing description of a family living in abject poverty pleading with local citizens to donate to the Benevolent Society. While the note states that the Benevolent Society could vouch for the account, it seems unlikely that an actual member would be responsible for it, rather a disgruntled resident somehow connected with charity work in the city. This is an extract: 'Tuesday morning 6 am in a three roomed house, a frost on the ground. The inmates of the house, a man, his wife and a little girl. They slept on the floor during the night because there was no bed, no bedding and no bed clothes. There was nothing to make a fire with, so they shivered. To state that there were no clothes would hardly be strictly accurate, but it is literally correct. The furniture of the dwelling consists of 1 chair, 1 small table, 1 cot and a blanket for the little one. This is being written on Tuesday evening and they will sleep on the floor again with two blankets that a kind friend has supplied. The father at hand (?) has been out of work for months, although willing to do anything, The wife and mother must go into Hospital almost immediately. There is no money for rent, and there is nothing for anything. Citizens of Launceston, can you picture that and appreciate the need? Respectable people, up against it'.

¹⁴⁹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931)* 16/17.1, Letter from the Secretary of the LFTL to the Mayor and Aldermen, 5 August 1930 & Letter from Town Clerk to The Secretary of the LFTL, 12 August 1930.

¹⁵⁰ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1932-1933)* 16/17.2, application for assistance, Lorna Donald, 2 Bernard Street, to the LFTL, undated but probably March 1932. Generally the League did not provide direct assistance; rather it appeared to advise on a course of action. Their mission was one of energizing the local community and as revealed in the previous chapter, they would not have had the resources to provide direct relief. What is revealing in this

6.2.6: The Work Relief Scheme in Launceston From 1933

From 1933, the Work Relief Scheme operating in Launceston was a highly regulated system. If an unemployed person sought financial assistance, he first had to register at the local public works department and after seven days, if he had not been successful, then he could make an application for the dole. The assistance provided was means tested, and the subsequent payment was made proportionate to the amount of dependents. This contrasted to the treatment of the unemployed in rural areas: a man registered at the local government chambers and a police report was obtained concerning his asset situation, after which an appropriate level of support was allocated. Men were allowed to earn the value of their rent and a little more. Those working on government public works projects had boots provided for them. The concept of settlement rights was upheld by the system in that any person moving there from a rural municipality had to be resident for three months before he could apply for assistance. There was no financial assistance for women out of work, married or single.¹⁵¹

Even at its most generous, the unemployment relief system remained discerning and harsh. Before October 1932, single men received no financial assistance from the State Government. From that time the rate only applied to singles in the city, and then only during the winter months. No responsibility was taken for public housing or clothing the poor. These areas remained the concern of private charities. The scarcity of assistance was related to concern over the effects of intervention on both the Labor and Nationalist side of politics. Labor politicians were insistent that real wage levels be maintained and therefore resisted calls to have the level of the dole raised higher to compensate for the fact that those hours of work were often

example and others is that the LFTL are seen to be more sympathetic and useful than the council itself.

¹⁵¹ Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', p. 47. The plight of single men was specifically noted by a Mr. Drinkwater of 7 Russell Street during the deputation to the Council Chambers on 5 December 1930. He used an example of a household containing a mother and four adult sons. The mother aged 59, worked and her sons were forced to depend on her because they did not qualify for rations. They were no longer on the Council's books and there had not been any kind of pick up of labour for 7 months! See: QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Notes from a Deputation of 25 Unemployed men to Town Hall, 5 December 1930.

provided on the basis of the number of dependents. Nationalist MHA and Chief Secretary Claude James reflected the views of his party, when he commented publicly that it was necessary to make dole work as unattractive as possible in order to encourage individuals to seek real employment beyond subsidised programs.¹⁵²

There was no real increase in the generosity of the scheme following the transfer of political power to the Ogilvie State Government. Most of the regulations governing qualification and allowable income enshrined in the scheme developed by the National Government were maintained.¹⁵³ In January 1938, the Launceston Trades and Labour Council (LTLC) did indeed petition the LCC to support its proposal submitted to the State Government to increase the level of support to the unemployed. The Minister for Youth Employment, Mr. J. J. MacDonald, MHA, dismissed the idea as being a 'very nice ideal' but not practical.¹⁵⁴ The LTLC attempted to negotiate a settlement between the State Government and disgruntled relief workers after a 'dole strike' erupted in February 1938. The core complaint was that the work relief system was degrading, forcing the most vulnerable to a lower standard of living. Those engaged on the system could not earn up to the basic wage without being removed from the work lists. The LTLC proposed in a deputation of its executive to the Premier, that men employed in the scheme be allowed in addition to their relief work, to earn 30s to bring them up to the level of the basic wage.¹⁵⁵

The LCC experienced several administrative problems with the scheme after it was reorganised in 1933. Dole workers occasionally proved to be troublesome,

¹⁵² Neil Batt, 'Unemployment in Tasmania 1928-33', pp. 47-51. Reflecting their commitment to maintaining real wage levels, when the Ogilvie government took office they lowered the wage rate for those on the farm employment scheme to normal levels. An editorial in the *Examiner* in June 1930, entitled 'The Problem of Relief, Work or Joy-Riding?', attested to conservative fears of encouraging both dependency and lethargy. See: *Examiner* 27 June 1930, p. 10.

¹⁵³ *Examiner*, 21 May 1936, n. p. In May 1936, the Launceston Trades Hall resolved at a public meeting to approach the Ogilvie state government on the issue of several regulations relating to inadequate pay rates for single men and the permissible income rules that in some cases forced married men to leave home.

¹⁵⁴ The LTLC of Launceston was proposing that the rate for relief work be raised to 25s a week for single men, 40s a week for married couples, with 5s extra for each child and that the earnings of children be excluded and unemployed men be allowed to earn extra money up to the basic wage. See: *Examiner*, 26 January 1938, n. p.

¹⁵⁵ *Examiner*, 23 February 1938, n. p.

behaving irresponsibly in ways that threatened to bring the scheme to an end.¹⁵⁶ One of the core stipulations of the scheme was that the LCC could only undertake works with dole labour which were not ordinarily carried out by its own departments. This may have been decided on in order to prevent any loss of regular employment with local authorities. It was in relation to road works that the line of demarcation between the two work forces was blurred.¹⁵⁷ The LCC had each project afterwards, approved individually by the State Government – although it was not required to by law.¹⁵⁸ The Sustenance Branch of the Department of Social Services, responsible for processing the certificates of work issued by the LCC and effecting payment, continued to closely monitor its industrial practices on the relief projects.¹⁵⁹ In mid-1939, the Social Services Department investigated an irregularity in the posting of relief workers to a project at the First Basin.¹⁶⁰ The incident indicated the pervasive nature of the problem of drawing a boundary between related work projects.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Workers clearing gorse bushes along Peel Street, failed to put out their fire after leaving the area in December 1933, and a result fire spread threatening several properties. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Letter from Mr. H. Jowett to the Town Clerk, 23/12/1933.

¹⁵⁷ QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Letter from the Director of Social Services to the Town Clerk, 25 September 1934. In response to this example, the City Engineer stated: 'It might be difficult however, to define what is "work that would not ordinarily be carried out"'. See: Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee, 1 October 1934. The LCC defended their position in the following manner: 'In reply I have to advise that these streets would not have been constructed had not it been necessary to provide work for sustenance, and was in addition to the work ordinarily executed by the Council. The policy of the Council in this matter is to protect the permanent employees and the annual amount made available for street improvements had not been reduced'.

¹⁵⁸ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937) 16/18.2*, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Hon. the Minister for Lands and Works, Lands and Works Department, 22 July 1936.

¹⁵⁹ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937) 16/18.2*, Memo from the Officer in Charge Sustenance Branch of the Department of Social Services to the Town Clerk, 20 January 1937. They were concerned with the practice of allowing men to appoint substitutes to perform their work and the occasional practice of crediting men with more hours than they had actually worked. In this case the claims were refuted by the Assistant Engineer. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937) 16/18.2*, Memo from the Assistant Engineer to the Town Clerk, 26 January 1937.

¹⁶⁰ QVM LCC3: *Employment Relief (1938-1941)*, Letter from the Officer in Charge, B. W. Mitchell, Social Services Department, Launceston Branch, 58 Williams Street to the Town Clerk, 26 July 1939

QVM LCC3: *Employment Relief (1938-1941)*, Letter from Town Clerk to The Officer in Charge, Social Services Department, Launceston Branch, 58 Williams Street. Launceston, 22 August 1939. Relief workers that had been officially posted to a project on Neika Avenue to collect fill for another project at the First Basin. Once the fill had been transferred the workers were then engaged (due to a shortage of workers) to help place it at the site of the Basin project which was not an approved work relief project. It is not clear if the state government subsequently agreed to pay the additional £376 in wages to those men involved or if the LCC was required to do so. The problem emerged again in November 1939, when the Chief Secretary, Edward Brooker, contacted the council in response to a complaint from the UWM about the acceptability of a particular project

The safety of relief workers was another ongoing source of concern for the LCC. Complaints concerning the absence of first aid kits resulted in the LCC placing the onus for their provision back on the State Government.¹⁶² On 7 September 1936, a relief worker – Mr. J. McCullagh – was actually killed as the result of a fall of earth in connection with the levelling of the Glen Dhu Park.¹⁶³ While the coroner found that the death was genuinely accidental, he apportioned some of the blame to the method of working the face.¹⁶⁴ The LCC was justified in its original concerns that the project would represent an administrative headache.

Formulating adequate schemes was another challenge for the LCC and its department heads. When the ongoing scheme operated between 1933 and 1941, the Chief Engineer and the Superintendent of Reserves found it increasingly difficult to identify viable projects for relief workers. Their labour was normally channelled into limited amount of preparatory work for street construction and general maintenance work, such as trimming and clearing, particularly of the now better developed recreational areas. The overall potential for engagement was limited, due to the regulations of the scheme and the restrictions in skills and pay.¹⁶⁵ It is possible that the flood protection scheme was to absorb a significant percentage of relief labour in the early 1940s, had war not broken out. Following the early phase of the war, when the original scheme was still being considered, it was intended to give preference to unemployed returned servicemen.¹⁶⁶ This was a further reminder that if the LCC found itself in a situation where it had to expend resources in order

stating: 'I realise the difficulty is drawing a line of demarcation between essential and non-essential work, but I would ask that your Council should make every endeavour not to use sustenance men on work for which men permanently employed should be engaged'. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment Relief (1938-1941)*, Letter from the Chief Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department, Hobart, to the Town Clerk, 28 November 1939.

¹⁶² QVM LCC3: *Employment- Dole Recipients (1933-1934)* 16/18.1, Letter from the Director of Social Services to the Town Clerk, 18 September 1934; Memo from the City Engineer to the Works Committee, 2 October 1934 & Letter from the Town Clerk to the Director of the Social Services Department, 30 Macquarie Street, Hobart, 9 October 1934.

¹⁶³ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937)* 16/18.2, Letter from the Town Clerk to Tasman Shields Esq., 16 September 1936.

¹⁶⁴ QVM LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937)* 16/18.2, Letter from Tasman Shields, City Counsel to Town Clerk, 22 September 1936.

¹⁶⁵ QVM LCC3: *Employment Relief (1938-1941)*, Memo from the City Engineer to the Town Clerk, 22 September 1939.

¹⁶⁶ QVM LCC3: *20/1.11 Floods – Prevention (1938-1939)*, 'Launceston flood protection scheme, Report of consulting engineer re: Progress' prepared by H. H. Dare, 29 September 1942.

meet a social obligation, preferred at least to deal with what they considered to be, the deserving poor.

Despite these challenges, the work relief scheme continued to operate up to the outbreak of the Second World War. During 1934 the LCC employed only approximately fifty men at all times throughout the year on dole relief projects. Much work relief activity had been concentrated on road maintenance: streets were widened in West Launceston and several streets constructed. However, Mayor Hollingsworth also noted that the relief work program had been curtailed.¹⁶⁷ This may have been related to a perception of an improvement in the economy or perhaps that the incumbent Ogilvie State Government would be introducing its own fully funded and administered schemes. By the end of 1935, Mayor von Bibra reported that about forty men had been employed on a regular basis on the roads in connection to maintenance and scrubbing.¹⁶⁸ The program was operated in concert with State Works Department projects, which at times provided employment for men who would otherwise be seeking hours of work to be provided by the LCC.¹⁶⁹ The return of Labor to office in February 1937 convinced the LCC aldermen that they would have to accept their role as an employment alternative for a percentage of the unemployed in the city. The rapid decline in expenditure on the scheme following the outbreak of war represents the degree to which the unemployed were absorbed into the war effort. The scheme appears to have no longer operated in Launceston after 1941.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1934*, p. 3. At the annual conference between the HCC and the LCC, held for the first time since 1929, it was decided to petition the government for more spending on a range of issues including having them bear all the costs relating to the construction and maintenance of traffic signs and that a portion of the motor tax would be directed to the councils to be spent on the maintenance of roads in both Hobart and Launceston. While perhaps not calling for or expecting a spending bonanza, it appears clear that the perception of the Ogilvie government by the LCC at least was that of a highly interventionist and freely spending administration. See same source, p. 7.

¹⁶⁸ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1935*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁹ LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1936*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ While £5, 829/00/07 was expended by the council in 1939-1940, only £755/17/08 was expended in 1940-1941. See: QVM LCC3: *Employment Relief (1938-1941)*, Memo from the City Treasurer to the Town Clerk, 1 July 1940 & Memo from the City Treasurer to the Town Clerk, 1 August 1941. There are no more files relating to the scheme in the QVM collection and there is no mention of the scheme in the subsequent annual Mayoral addresses.

The wider community warmly welcomed the work relief scheme as an appropriate response to the employment crisis in the city. After the reorganisation of the scheme from August 1933, the LCC was inundated with ideas for schemes from across a wide spectrum of the community. The local progress associations could particularly see the potential benefits of the scheme to help realise projects that were effectively beyond its means. The Trevallyn Park and Improvement Association almost immediately lodged a request for the extension of the tram section to the centre of Trevallyn.¹⁷¹ One of the first projects begun under the formal and ongoing scheme in September 1933 was to improve the road system in the Punch bowl reserve.¹⁷² Individual businesses saw an opportunity to aesthetically benefit from the scheme, particularly those situated near the river front.¹⁷³ As the projects selected had to be outside the normal departmental demands of the LCC workforce, the scheme helped to reinvigorate Launceston's investment in recreational infrastructure.

6.2.7: Community Responses to Unemployment

Local churches developed alternative roles to their normal distribution function, working closely with the poor on the streets in order to encourage ethics of self-improvement and self-reliance. For instance, St. Andrews Church developed a program to help young unemployed men and boys through making toy aeroplanes, wheelbarrows, hobby horses and folding chairs. The community had helped through the donation of raw materials, and 114 people were engaged in the scheme in 1931.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ QVM LCC3: *Employment - Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Letter from the Hon. Secretary of the Trevallyn Park and Improvement Association to the Town Clerk, 28 November 1933.

¹⁷² QVM LCC3: *Employment - Dole Recipients (1933-1934) 16/18.1*, Memo for the Whole Council Committee from the City Engineer and the Superintendent of Reserves, 21 September 1933.

¹⁷³ For two separate examples see: QVM LCC3 *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1930-1931) 16/17.1*, Letter from A. E. Evershed to the Chairman of the Meeting for Relief of Unemployment, Town Hall, 19 June 1930 & LCC3: *Employment – Unemployment Relief (1936-1937) 16/18.2*, Letter from the Town Clerk to the Local Manager, City Motors (1933), Pty. Ltd., Brisbane Street, 17 July 1937.

¹⁷⁴ Matthew Cloudsdale, 'Tasmania and Unemployment, 1930-1933', p. 102. Cites: *Mercury*, 13 May 1931, p. 6.

The business community in Launceston was often imaginative and energetic in meeting the challenge of the economic downturn. Its responses were diverse, but generally reflected a reliance on raising private collections and utilising established charity networks for supply. The Chamber of Commerce organised the Spend for Employment Campaign of 1933 was aimed at boosting the local economy. President of the Launceston Chamber of Commerce F. H. Stephens argued that it was private, not state interventionism, which was necessary.¹⁷⁵

The LFTL was unique though as a business organisation, as it more fully embraced the 'alternative social economy'. It even went so far as to act as a referral service for the unemployed, sometimes investigating circumstances and advocating on their behalf.¹⁷⁶ The LFTL consistently forwarded ideas for public work schemes to the LCC. In contrast to business organisations existing solely to promote the political economy as opposed to the social economy, the LFTL did advocate a greater role for local government in funding and implementing interventionist social programs.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ *Examiner*, 1 July 1933, n. p. The CTA was another business organization of this form which principally championed the advancement of the political economy, but acted part-time in the capacity of a benevolent society adhering to a reliance on private charity. Please refer to section 5.2.2.4 for more details.

¹⁷⁶ QVM LCC3 20/1.6: *Funds General (Citizens Relief Fund)*, Letter from W. R. Peel Salisbury, Hon. Sec. Of the LFTL to Mr. C. L. Willes, Charitable Sports, Charles Street, 6 November 1931.

¹⁷⁷ *Examiner*, 26 January 1938, n. p. The Chairman of TLFTL, Mr. A. T. Farmilo, noted following a joint meeting between the LCC, the Council of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce and TLFTL, that 'on various occasions the league had made suggestions for public works expenditure in the North'.

6.3: Conclusions

Theme 4: The general incidence of redistributive economic programs operating at the local level with the aim of securing social justice.

While the historical trend away from individualism towards universalism can be observed in Launceston during the interwar period, the history of the city better reflects the ongoing debate among the social elite over the mechanics of supply. Progressives believed in a strong role for local government and the utilisation of charity networks for the distribution of welfare. The economic mismanagement of the LCC had reduced its ability to respond to the crisis, but its reluctance was equally ideological. This division hampered early responses to the crisis of the depression until an agreement was reached between the McPhee State Government and the LCC in August 1933.

The initial response to the depression reflected the traditional reliance on traditional charity networks. Increasingly, this ad-hoc system proved to be inefficient. Progressives argued that an improved bureaucratic approach was required, but otherwise the system was sound. The community response to the horrors of the depression was often innovative but limited. Out of the business community, only the LFTL demonstrated a true commitment to a the 'alternative social economy', acting in a variety of ways to advocate for the poor in their attempts to access the various voluntary charity networks active in the city and also to help encourage the LCC to generate more work relief programs. However, it operated within the Progressive paradigm and subsequently was very cautious about expanding the role of the state in the process of directly providing welfare schemes. The ultimate goal for the Progressives was social, political and economic stability, not equality.

When orthodox deflationary economics failed to adequately deal with the economic challenges of the Great Depression, the McPhee government encouraged local government to accept responsibility for generating work relief programs. While there was some resistance from the LCC, the final model chosen involved the state adopting the role of principal funder and the local council accepting the role of organiser. In terms of general relief, local voluntary charity networks remained the

primary choice for dispersal of charity. The *Examiner* actively promoted this arrangement, which Progressives thought an appropriate compromise solution to the crisis.

The formulation of the New Deal by the Roosevelt administration in the United States represented the end of passive government in the United States. It also provided an impressive ideological template for other governments to adapt in order to solve the various problems the Great Depression presented. The Ogilvie State Government was definitely influenced by this new form of interventionist politics designed to preserve the economic system through applying a process to make it more humane. The institution of large scale public work programs had a dual benefit of stimulating the state economy and generating immediate work for the unemployed. While the Ogilvie government was not responsible for the basic design of the work relief program utilised in the city, it did act to make the initiative more accessible and generous.

The work relief scheme also reflected the over-arching 'modernizing' trend towards the establishment of the welfare state. A new unemployment relief system evident in Launceston between 1933 and 1938 also necessitated the expansion of a professional bureaucracy, designed to efficiently assess need and assign benefits where required. Areas of blurred responsibility for health and welfare between the state and local governments resulted in a poor response to the polio epidemic of 1937-38. The welfare state that was to emerge after the Second World War would provide a more co-ordinated response to several key social problems, including the local housing shortage.

Chapter 7: An Interpretation of Progressivism in Launceston during the Interwar Period

7.1: *The Demise of Radical Conservatism in Launceston*

Between 1919 and 1939, the population of the city of Launceston and its suburbs had increased by roughly a third, from 23, 242 to 33, 870.¹ Annual assessment revenue had also more than doubled in the period from £117, 783 in 1919 to £488,601. Still this was a slower rate of improvement than what had occurred in the two decades prior to 1920. During the 1889-1918 period revenue had actually trebled and so relative economic growth for the city had in fact slowed during the interwar era. This was in part attributable to the extended depression from 1929. The economy of the city had only just begun to recover from the London loans debacle by the outbreak of war. An emphasis on relieving debt in recent financial years had significantly lowered interest payments.² In fact, the city's economic health and outlook at the end of the financial year 1938-39 closely resembled the situation two decades before at the beginning of 1918-19: the city had recently weathered great social, political and economic challenges, but the future still appeared to be dangerously uncertain.

Three organisations played key roles in the history of Progressivism in the city of Launceston during the interwar years. The *Examiner*, the only local daily paper after March 1928, was unrivalled in an editorial sense as a champion of Progressive ideas in the city. However the retirement of Stanley Dryden in 1938 and his succession by the more moderate R. J. Williams, arguably marked the end of the paper's outright support for the Progressive agenda.³ Secondly, the LFTL was a unique expression of the business led Progressivism that came to dominate the

¹ LLLS Stack Serials, Office of the Government Statistician, *Statistics of Tasmania, 1939-1940* (Hobart, 1939), p. 8.

² *Examiner*, 1 January 1923, p. 6 & LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1939*, p. 1.

³ A detailed account of the role of the *Examiner* as an active participant in the Progressive movement of the city can be found in sections 2.1.7, 3.1.1, 4.2.1, 5.1.2 and 6.1.5.

period. However they were always more ambitious than resourced and they lacked effective authority to intervene. Their contribution was mostly to the enrichment of a Progressive culture in the city and more specifically a reinvigoration of the ‘alternative social agenda’ following the Great Depression. Collectively the organisation was to struggle to find the ear of any level of government, which in an age of increasing bureaucratic formalism, was to regard them as well-meaning nuisances and amateurs.⁴ In many ways the LCC determined the course of development of the movement. It acted initially as a facilitator and then increasingly a filter for Progressive reform in the city. Consideration of the LCC is indivisible from any analysis of Progressivism in Launceston, as it was the only local body with both the legal authority and the resources to effect real change.⁵

Gradually throughout the interwar period the LCC favoured fiscal conservatism over reform. While some reforms were designed to simply increase economic efficiency, most were avoided as they required a certain level of initial capital investment. Although rapid municipalisation before 1918 had raised the ambitions of the local Progressives, the increasing economic orthodoxy of local government became their greatest obstacle. There was a stark contrast between the interventionism evident at the time of the maritime strike of 1919 and that witnessed during the Great Depression. In response to the 1919 maritime strike, Mayor Shields personally interviewed heads of departments to assess possible relief programs.⁶ The overall response to the Great Depression, particularly during the worst period between 1930 and 1934, could only be described as begrudging.⁷

The consistent rejection of the emerging ‘alternative social economy’ was attributable to more than just adverse economic circumstances and poor fiscal management. Moderate investment by the LCC into infrastructure and service schemes by the end of the First World War, had provided the city with an

⁴ The influence of the Business Progressivism of the LFTL is discussed in detail in sections 5.2.2 and 6.2.7.

⁵ A detailed account of the central role of the LCC in relation to facilitating Progressivism in the city can specifically be found in sections: 2.1.5, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1.4 and 6.2.

⁶ *Examiner*, 7 July 1919, p. 4. Please refer back to section 6.2.3 for more details.

⁷ While the long awaited filtration plant was floated as a possible relief project (£2000 was to be spent on wages for the unemployed), Alderman Ockerby was one Alderman who publicly expressed his concern that increased spending would simply translate into increased interest charges. *Examiner*, 5 May 1931, n. p.

international reputation for modernity. However, from very early on in the new century, the aldermanic economic focus moved away from innovative investment in infrastructure towards minimising annual rate levels. The shift appears to have actually started after Alderman Sutton retired in 1905. There was never a consensus of opinion among the aldermen of the period on the wisdom of municipalisation.⁸ This fundamental orientation towards limiting all expenditure (even to the point of neglecting the existing infrastructure) contrasted strongly with the agendas of several Progressive coalitions active in the city during the interwar period, notably the BHA and the LFTL.⁹

At the end of the interwar period, an element of political instability in the city appeared to echo the tension evident on the international stage. Though mostly through misadventure, the city came under the leadership of three Mayors throughout 1939.¹⁰ The final appointment of J. F. Ockerby as Mayor of Launceston that year to the other Aldermen probably represented a safe return to traditional, conservative social values and orthodox economic and political management. His first appointment as Mayor had been in 1925 has also followed on the heels of economic and political turmoil.¹¹ Recent Mayors, von Bibra, Browne and Wyett, had been moderate conservatives, capable of embracing the expanded role of welfare provider that had been forced upon the LCC from 1933. They had followed an extended progression of conservative Mayors, which had culminated in the Hollingsworth administration. Like the conservative Nationalists in state

⁸ QVM LCC8: Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1901, p. 5. For more details see sections 2.2.1.4 & 3.1.1.

⁹ *Examiner*, 26 January 1938, n. p. Then Chairman of the LFTL, Mr. A. T. Farmilo, noted publicly that 'on various occasions the league had made suggestions for public works expenditure in the North'.

¹⁰ The resignation of Mayor Wyett resulted from legal advice and not improper conduct. As he was a Director of the Tasmanian Collection Service (Launceston) Pty. Ltd., it impeded its ability to collect money outstanding to the Council. The Launceston Corporation Act of the time (1936) specified that 'any person who by himself, or by his partner or otherwise, had any interest in any contract with the council, was incapable of being elected as or continuing to be either Mayor or an Alderman'. Wyett was a Director of the company prior to his election as an alderman. See: *Examiner*, 27 March 1939, p. 6. He resigned and then stood for re-election but was defeated on 18th of May by Mr. D. T. Oldham, son of former Alderman and Mayor, W. C. Oldham. As a result former Mayor F. Wardland Browne stepped in as Acting Mayor between 26 March and 6 April 1939. J. F. Ockerby was subsequently elected by the aldermen to begin his second and final term as Mayor. See: LLLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Other Reports, *Mayor's Valedictory Address, 1939*, p.1 & 5.

¹¹ John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969), pp. 191-2. Specifically his election by his fellow Aldermen to the position of Mayor in 1925 followed the failure of the city manager experiment and a sudden down-turn in the local economy.

parliament, they had struggled to deal with the challenges of the Depression within the confines of their own orthodox, conservative social, political and economic ideologies. Both Ockerby administrations were typically characterised by extreme social, political and economic conservatism. From 1939 a familiar conservative orthodoxy characterised the operation of local government in the city. It had emerged reinvigorated and heavily restricted the agenda of the often secular, pragmatic agenda of the radically conservative local Progressives. The subsequent succession of Alderman Boatwright, another reassuringly passive conservative figure, appears to reinforce this argument.¹² Resistance at the local level, and contrastingly the more radically interventionist agendas of various state and federal governments soon after, effectively marginalised Progressivism in Launceston.

¹² For a full list of Launceston Mayors between 1889 and 1939, please see Appendix C.

7.2: The Characteristics of Progressivism in Launceston

Often the First World War is seen as the beginning of the end for Progressivism.¹³ The writings of both Bean and Atkinson particularly appear to suggest though that Progressive expectations for Australia were unusually high at the end of the First World War.¹⁴ Clearly that Progressivism persisted throughout the interwar period on the international, national, state and local stages. Several definable aspects of Progressivism characterise the history of the movement in Launceston during this era. While often heavily adapted, they still reflect underlying traits of the wider international movement. Following the example of David W. Gutzke in his work on transnational Progressivism, transnational influences between aspects of Progressivism in Launceston and that evident on the international stage have been established through either comparison or more sparingly, through direct contact.¹⁵

7.2.1: The Focus on Improving the Urban Environment

In his book *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, The United States and France 1780-1914*, Anthony Sutcliffe argued that as the problems associated with industrialisation became more apparent in the late nineteenth century, the concept of intervening in municipal arrangements equally became increasingly common on the international stage. The development of municipal systems that relied on the principle of imposing social obligations on owners was an extension of that

¹³ Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought 1890-1960* (St. Lucia, 1984), p. 315. Roe argues that Progressive enthusiasm for the war discredited the wider movement in the long term.

¹⁴ Bean was convinced that scientific advancement could and should be used to improve the state of society. See: C. E. W. Bean, *In Your Hands Australians*, (Melbourne, 1918), p. 36. In a similar vein, Atkinson argued: 'We must realise that there is no end to benefits that science can confer upon humanity, both by general intellectual upliftment and providing increasing improvements in the material basis...'. See: Meredith Atkinson, *The New Social Order: A Study of Post-War Reconstruction*, (New Town, 1919), p. 136.

¹⁵ David W. Gutzke, 'Historians and Progressivism', in David W. Gutzke, ed., *Britain and Transnational Progressivism* (New York, 2008), pp. 24-5.

change.¹⁶ Daniel Rogers has argued for a distinct link between the development of more interventionist social politics and the municipalisation of the great cities of the nineteenth century.¹⁷ The shift towards the adoption of the social obligation paradigm in Tasmania was a slow and contested process.¹⁸ Of the first two cities to develop in Tasmania, Launceston was to demonstrate the most enthusiasm for municipalisation.¹⁹

Progressivism in Launceston was by its very nature, urban. A culture of self-reliance and a collective ethic of civic altruism both encouraged the municipalisation of the city. The LCC then engaged in a form of municipal socialism, expanding infrastructure and services to benefit all residents at minimum cost. Progressivism in Launceston was first motivated by the horrors of the 1890s depression, a disaster that highlighted the ongoing link between the urban environment and poverty. It was also observed by the middle-class to be encouraging radicalism and therefore threatened the stability of society. The rise of Progressivism in Launceston signified a significant change in the *perception* of urban problems on the part of the middling classes. The Progressives of Launceston, like their international cousins, were a small minority of the population, drawn mostly from the educated classes. They were inspired both by the distant precedents of the wider international movement and the more immediate achievements of a highly innovative local government. The focus on the urban as opposed to the rural environment was in part practical: not only were problems more apparent in the city, their municipal authorities there were simply better resourced and skilled.²⁰

¹⁶ Anthony Sutcliffe, *Towards the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780-1914* (New York, 1981), pp. 4-5, 49-50.

¹⁷ Rogers notes that a number of English municipal authorities took the lead during the 1850s in regards to water and sewage reforms. As discussed Birmingham and Glasgow were two notable examples. Also after 1900 Rogers argues that urban planning by municipal authorities was apparent in the US, although due to monetary and legal issues it was often considered on a project to project basis. See: Daniel T. Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (London, 1998), pp. 119, 120, 122, 166-89.

¹⁸ Michael Roe has documented how Governor William Denison faced stern opposition from colonists in attempting to impose local self-government. See: Michael Roe, 'The Establishment of Local, Self-Government in Hobart and Launceston 1845-1858', *THRAPP*, 14, 2 (January 1967), p. 27.

¹⁹ Stefan Petrow, *Sanatorium of the South: Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914* (Hobart, 1995), p. 26.

²⁰ For more detail please refer to section 2.1.5.

The Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1919 momentarily focused attention across the state on the potential for slums encouraging outbreaks of infectious disease.²¹ There were some slum clearances in Launceston instigated by CMO L. Grey Thompson with the begrudging support of the LCC in the first decade of the twentieth century.²² However, City Manager Nicholl's later efforts to better formalise and centralise planning control in the city indicated a general lack of will on the part of the aldermen may have been as much a mitigating factor as a lack of legislative authority.²³ The aldermen were reluctant to take any action that threatened large-scale property owners with a vested interest in the status quo.²⁴

Despite the existence of an LTPA in Launceston, the concept was a neglected part of its development during the interwar period.²⁵ Until the appointment of City Manager Frederick M. Nicholl, there was little formal town planning undertaken by the LCC. This was partly attributable to the fact that in regards to zoning powers, the LCC had minimal authority.²⁶ Legislative reform became the main concern of the reformed NTPA from 1937.²⁷ The passage of the *Town and Country Planning Act* in 1944 finally allowed local authorities to implement schemes for the planning and development of land for urban, suburban and rural purposes.²⁸ Fittingly, it was Mayor Hollingsworth after having overseen the reorganisation of the local planning association in 1933, who represented the LCC as an aldermanic delegate at a subsequent conference on the issue in May 1946. A resolution was taken between

²¹ *Examiner*, 3 March 1920, p. 4. In his editorial 'Municipal Housing', Senior Editor Stanley Dryden noted that the pandemic drew attention to the health risks of the slums in Hobart.

²² Please refer to section 2.2.2.3.

²³ Please refer to sections 4.1.3 & 4.2.4.

²⁴ The reluctance of the LCC to change the rating system to reward those who improved properties and penalise those who neglected them, was possibly also a symptom of this wider malaise. See the editorial 'The Anti-Progress Petition', *Examiner*, 2 September 1920, p. 4.

²⁵ *Examiner*, 15 August 1919, p. 4.

²⁶ Despite the lack of legislative authority, Nicholl's intention to institute a heightened level of urban planning was signalled in his first report published in *Examiner*, 9 November 1921, n. p.

²⁷ *Mercury*, 9 July 1937, p. 11. For more information on the LTPA and its reformation as the NTPA please refer to sections 2.2.1.7, 4.1.3, & 5.1.2.

²⁸ The legislation was recognition that there was no central planning authority in Tasmania, much ill-planning and a lack of ability previously for authorities to ensure that town planning could deliver improved environments. See: *Mercury*, 5 July 1944, p. 7. Stefan Petrow has argued that as a result of a wider recognition of the problems associated with suburban deterioration, increasing industry and population expansion, interest in town planning increased after the Second World War. The legislation was based on the English *Town and Country Planning Act* passed in 1932. See: Stefan Petrow, 'Democracy in action: public participation in planning in Hobart, 1940-65', in Robert Freestone, ed., *Cities, Citizens and Environmental Reform: Histories of Australian Town Planning Associations* (Sydney, 2009), p. 260-263.

the Launceston, Lilydale and Longford municipal authorities to co-ordinate the future outlying development of Launceston.²⁹

During the interwar period, several Progressive coalitions actively lobbied the LCC to intervene to improve the urban environment, primarily for the benefit of the lower orders. However, the LCC failed to embrace the emerging 'alternative social economy' of the Progressives. The city fathers were to make a general retreat from municipalisation, in favour of an economic minimalist approach to local government.³⁰ The Progressives active in Launceston during this period then, like their international counterparts, viewed the social problems of the new century through a decidedly urban lens. They focused largely on the prevention of urban problems through reforming the urban environment. Overall, there were few initiatives that drew the Progressive stare away from the city.³¹

At the same time, Progressives across the globe came to see outdoor recreation as an antidote for the ills of the modern industrial age.³² To the Progressives, leisure was best utilised in a manner that challenged the individual both physically and mentally.³³ Destinations such as the Waldheim Chalet in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clark National Park were well patronised by the professional and business classes of Launceston.³⁴ The middling classes of Launceston of course, enjoyed greater opportunities to engage in outdoor pursuits than the working classes.

²⁹ *Mercury*, 2 May 1946, p. 16.

³⁰ Please refer to section 2.2.1.4.

³¹ Arguably the most effective was the bush nursing initiative. For a full summary please see: Marita Bardenhagen, 'Bush Nursing: a progressive health initiative in northern Tasmania', in P. A. C. Richards, B. Valentine & T. P. Dunning, eds, *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston* (Launceston, 2006), pp. 223-7. As mentioned previously, the infant health clinic nurses also contributed a regular feature in the *Weekly Courier* for the benefit of rural mothers. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1921-1922, Vol. LXXXVII, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 46, Appendix iii. Child Welfare Association Baby Clinic Launceston (Hobart, 1922), p. 28. Otherwise Mothers were expected to travel to the city and in some cases they did, from even as far away as the Strait Islands. See: UTAS Ltn Serial, *Journals and Printed Papers of Parliament*, 1918-1919, Vol. LXXXI, Department of Health Annual Report by E. S. Morris, Paper No. 35, v. Child Welfare Clinic – Launceston (Hobart, 1919), p. 23.

³² David W. Gutzke, *Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England, 1896-1960* (DeKalb, Illin., 2006), p. 17. Gutzke uses the term 'environmentalism' to refer to a belief in the capacity of the environment to shape individual behaviour.

³³ Katrina Ross, 'Progressives in Nature: The Visitors of Waldheim Chalet', unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 2009, p. 30.

³⁴ Katrina Ross, 'Progressives in Nature: The Visitors of Waldheim Chalet', p. 2. The first and second visitor books repeatedly list names belonging to the middle classes of Launceston, many of them like Hogg who were connected with Progressive reform efforts.

Although leisure had greatly increased by the start of the interwar period, ready access to transport needed to access isolated destinations was often an obstructive factor for the working classes.³⁵ Therefore the LCC devoted considerable resources into improving both the aesthetic qualities and the recreational facilities of the city during the interwar period. While spending on large infrastructure projects was regularly delayed, smaller initiatives such as recreational grounds and parks were well supported by the aldermen. This may have been due to both their popularity and their reproductive potential.³⁶ The LCC was in fact incredibly protective of its recreational spaces.³⁷ Later the Fifty Thousand League proved to be particularly strong proponents of continuing to beautify the city for the dual purpose of tourism and maintaining the health of the population.³⁸ One of the most obvious legacies of the Progressive era in Launceston was the over-abundance of recreational space.³⁹

7.2.2: The 'New Bureaucratic Orientation'

An increasing adherence to the new bureaucratic orientation was evident throughout the interwar period in Launceston. United States historian, Robert H. Wiebe, argued that there were two aspects to this international trend which brought an adaptive, impersonal approach to social problems: adjusting intervention to better service

³⁵ Ken Buckley & Ted Wheelwright, *No Paradise for Workers: Capitalism and the Common People in Australia, 1788-1914* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. 166-9.

³⁶ This was well documented in the section 3.1.4.

³⁷ The LCC were hesitant about surrendering a part of York Park to facilitate the establishment of a Free Kindergarten. See: *Examiner*, 12 August 1920, p. 4. Alderman Heyward objected to the destruction of an old tree in City Park under the direction of acting Superintendent of Reserves, William McGowan Jnr. A Melbourne expert (J. Cronin the Curator of the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne) was sent sketches and a description and agreed with the decision noting that the safety of the public must be the prime consideration in such issues. If the splitting had not been so profound then it may have been possible for the tree to have been bolted. See: *Examiner*, 18 June 1920, p. 4.

³⁸ *Examiner*, 9 July 1937, n. p. It was their intention that Launceston should have the title 'Launceston, the Beautiful'.

³⁹ For an indication of the amount of recreational space available in Launceston by the end of the interwar period, please refer to Appendix A: 'A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938'. The following parks and reserves are listed on the map (point of interest numbers provided if applicable): Cataract Gorge and Cliff Grounds (52), City Park (40-41), Glen Dhu Reserve, Princes' Square (34), Punchbowl Reserve, Royal Park (30), Windmill Hill (43-44), York Park (59), Zig Zag Reserve (51). At present, Launceston still retains 16ha of open public space for every 1000 people, and the national guidelines are 2.4ha. With the rise of the gym/fitness centre, many of these spaces are now under-utilised by the general population. They also provide a maintenance bill for the modern Council. See: *Launceston Advertiser*, 15 August 2007, n. p.

need and ensuring the best outcomes in regards to time and effort.⁴⁰ In Launceston, there was to be a greater emphasis on the latter, encouraging economy and efficiency. The term ‘efficiency’ had become mainstream, despite its nebulous nature. A reliance on rationalism and expert advice were the key to this new approach.⁴¹

The new approach was also very much an orientation as opposed to a rigid set of principles. Frederick Winslow Taylor’s scientific management theory was therefore a general influence on the orientation rather than a manifesto. The Progressives were indeed influenced by John Dewey’s adaptive use of William James’ pragmatism. While regularity and predictability were valued, it was accepted that in terms of policy development, a degree of fluidity was required in a universe that was no longer regarded as being static.⁴²

From the first decade of the twentieth century, this new faith in the bureaucratic orientation became evident in Launceston. This trend towards adjusting the level and type of intervention to best effect manifested itself in the city best in relation to radical improvements in public health policy. The issue of water purity was at first a contentious one, leading to conflict between the CHO and the CMO. This problem was largely solved through increased testing and a programme of infrastructure improvement, culminating in the establishment of a water filtration plant. The implementation of a program of tuberculin testing of the milk supply was a joint effort between both the state and local levels of government. The application of stricter building standards and the demolition of inadequate dwellings was also an expression of this more bureaucratic approach to regulating the living conditions of all residents, particularly the poor.⁴³ In relation to

⁴⁰ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), pp. 154-5.

⁴¹ On the issue of the concept of efficiency and Progressives, Michael Roe has commented: ‘Efficiency was the social and personal and quality most valued. Of that there is little doubt, but a problem comes with defining the notion. In effect, it becomes synonymous with whatever was virtuous in progressive eyes, and so to define it is to define progressivism – a game of peering into face-to-face mirrors’. See: Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 11.

⁴² Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 145-7. For a more detailed discussion of the new bureaucratic orientation and its role in influencing Progressivism in Launceston, please refer to section 4.1.1.

⁴³ For detailed discussion of water supply and sewage disposal reforms between 1889 and 1918 please refer to section 2.2.1.6. For more information on sustained reform during the period 1919 to 1939 please refer to sections 3.1.5.2 & 3.2.1. To read a background discussion on the imposition

championing and initiating these initiatives, successive city medical officers, L. Grey Thompson and James Pardey, had to contend with an increasingly obstructive local government. This aversion was directly related to an emphasis on economic considerations as opposed to a full embrace of the emerging 'alternative social economy'.⁴⁴ The LCC also appear to have perceived pressure from successive state governments to instigate several Progressive schemes as an insult to their performance record and a threat to their independence.⁴⁵

The new faith in the value of the bureaucratic orientation by Progressives encouraged the cult of the expert. There was intense interest in the address by Truby King to the medical community of the city in 1919. The enthusiasm demonstrated by the middling and professional classes of the city reflected the degree to which local Progressives were influenced by these new, international ideas. It also demonstrated the central role of the expert in determining a 'scientific' array of solutions to a core social problem – in this case infant mortality. What had traditionally been left untrained women to determine was now fully the domain of the scientist. Theory and method were articulated by experts and disseminated throughout society in a stringently top-down manner.⁴⁶

Appointment of Frederick Nicholl as City Manager of Launceston represented a high-water mark for the application of the 'scientific' principles of the new orientation to the problem of improving local government in the city. There was an emphasis during the city manager phase on achieving efficiency largely through better time management. During his very short tenure, Nicholl instituted several administrative reforms, including the adoption of new technologies and proper

of housing standards in Launceston in the first decade of the twentieth century please refer to section 2.2.2.3.

⁴⁴ Please refer to sections 2.2.1.4 & 3.1.1.

⁴⁵ While Alderman J. F. Ockerby - then representing a new generation of city fathers - was very keen on the appointment of a veterinary surgeon to facilitate tuberculin testing, the older guard, led by Alderman David Storrer, appeared very resistant to the concept. Presumably this was due to the issue of cost and also resentment of the implication that they had been neglectful in the past. It was also increasingly clear that the LCC as a general rule, did not appreciate being pressured into specific policy stances by the state government, particularly when they were liable for the costs. See: *Examiner*, 15 May 1920, p. 7 & *Examiner*, 20 November 1920, p. 5.

⁴⁶ In relation to the Progressive coalition to counter infant mortality, enthusiasm for King and his ideas was equally shared by both the *Examiner* and the *Daily Telegraph*. See: the editorial entitled 'Our Children's Welfare, Safe in the Hands of Dr. King, An Eminent Visitor Welcomed', in *Daily Telegraph*, 10 December 1919, p. 3.

record-keeping. He also refined operational procedures in order to eliminate waste and therefore lower expenditure. Furthermore, and most controversially, he began to reorganise the LCC's. The aim of improving economy involved consolidating debt, controlling spending and lobbying for the setting of an appropriate annual rate level.⁴⁷

By the end of the interwar period, one of the fundamental assumptions of the Progressive movement was the inherent validity of this new bureaucratic orientation.⁴⁸ Progressives assumed that the orientation was a product of a rational decision making process, rather than simply a disguised method of addressing the underlying needs of the emerging middle classes. Taylorism had been criticised for merely representing the needs and desires of capital rather than any true scientific investigation of work practices 'on the floor'. Likewise, the scientific basis of the new bureaucratic orientation was also highly questionable.⁴⁹ Progressives often viewed the working classes and their problems from their own limited class perspective. They tended to formulate solutions according to their own needs rather than from any 'scientific' understanding of them or their situation.⁵⁰

7.2.3: The Tendency to Alienate

Across the globe, Progressives gradually discovered that their often zealous pursuit of reform was counter-productive. Robert H. Wiebe identified a key flaw:

⁴⁷ Most of these reforms are listed in the published version of his controversial first report. See: *Examiner*, 9 November 1921, n. p. Specific details are supplied in section 4.2.4.

⁴⁸ Indeed in relation to the issue of reform to the tram system in Launceston, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, Stanley Dryden wrote: 'It is therefore a matter of satisfaction to us that the taking of expert advice has been suggested. At a meeting of the council of the Fifty Thousand League it was resolved: 'That this Council urge upon the City Council the need for the appointment of an expert to report and advise on the best method of control and management of the tram and bus services with a view to obtaining more efficient services and a reduction of the losses.' See: editorial entitled 'Losses on Tram Services', *Examiner*, 10 July 1937, n. p.

⁴⁹ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1974), p. 16.

⁵⁰ Brennan's thesis questions the scientific validity of the approach of 'scientific motherhood' and her analysis suggests that many of its fundamental principles lacked any true scientific basis, was devoid of empathy and were instituted for self-serving reasons. She argues one major impetus behind the coalition was the failure of various levels of government to raise the national birth rate, therefore for the sake of Anglo-Saxon claims on the continent rather than the good of the general population, lowering infant mortality became a necessity. See: Sheryl Brennan, 'Nurses and Constructions of Motherhood: Scientific Motherhood and the Rise of Child Welfare Services in Tasmania, 1918-1930', unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 1995, pp. 8, 13, 20-2.

Progressive reformers often assumed that all those engaged in the reform process would ‘surrender to rationality’.⁵¹ Progressives also commonly failed to acknowledge the interdependence between experts and the lesser skilled in an organisation. Martin J. Schiesl has argued that Progressives tended to adopt an approach which assumed the operation of a ‘monocratic system’: policy was set by superiors and implemented by their inferiors in a linear nature. In reality no organisation can operate on this basis and remain fully functional. The skills and ability of workers at all levels arguably needed to be appreciated and utilised to achieve maximum efficiency.⁵²

Progressives often collectively felt that reform could take place above the plane of personal ambition and ego, and operate solely on the basis of rational merit. The approach of Frederick Nicholl during his short tenure in Launceston as City Manager reflected this naïve assumption.⁵³ The problems associated with Progressive assumptions relating to the invincibility of rational arguments were also often reflected in the terse relationship between the LCC and the LFTL. During the interwar period, the LFTL became increasingly critical of operation of the municipal tramway system in the city. The LFTL executive collectively viewed it as both inefficient and antiquated. In 1937, the LFTL began to lobby the LCC to commission an expert report on the state of the system with a view to ‘obtaining more efficient services’. Chief Electrical Engineer R. J. Strike particularly felt that he was the victim of criticism to which he could not personally respond. In reaction to a vitriolic attack from Mayor Browne, the executive issued the following public statement: ‘We would like to say that our criticism is designed to be helpful and constructive. We have no stones to throw or axes to grind’.⁵⁴ The LCC aldermen

⁵¹ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 161-2. In that sense, part of the backlash over Nicholl’s approach in attempting to reform local government in Launceston was probably a reaction to his insistence to move from the accepted ‘customary’ practices to the more responsive ones of the new orientation in the pursuit of economy and efficiency.

⁵² Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency* (London, 1977), pp. 189-90.

⁵³ The most obvious obstruction to his overall reform strategy was the resistance from the aldermen to raise rates to an appropriate level to ensure responsible economic management and adequate provision of services. To do so would have firstly endangered their electoral fortunes and as time progressed to comply would have in a sense eroded their collective authority in regards to setting economic policy in the city. Nicholl even clashed with the architect of the city manager scheme, Alderman Claude James, on this point. Despite being a Progressive, James was essentially a keen political survivor and could appreciate why the Council wanted to place a cap of 6s 3d on the annual rate increase. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

⁵⁴ *Examiner*, 12 July 1937, n. p.

and their department heads were consistently frustrated by the persistent suggestions and requests, interpreting them as veiled criticisms by a section of the community they considered to be unqualified and unaccountable. Lobbying of the LFTL on this issue, may have even delayed its implementation.⁵⁵

The confidence and paternalism of the Progressives was often interpreted as arrogance. The assumption that linear, 'monocratic' systems were the best designed to ensure efficient results enraged those who did not share their ideology and probably alienated those who may have otherwise have displayed an orientation for them. W. L. Neale had attempted to reshape the state educational system in the first decade of the century. This reform agenda was eventually partly realised by his less zealous, more tactful successor, W. T. McCoy.⁵⁶ To City Manager Nicholl, administering local government was an 'engineering concern' and not a human one.⁵⁷ It is clear that Nicholl was indifferent to the importance of maintaining respectful and productive relationships with his inferiors, particularly in regards to rationalising the LCC's workforce.⁵⁸ His lack of interpersonal skills also extended to his superiors, and it was his autocratic approach to negotiations with the aldermen which proved to be the key to his ultimate downfall.⁵⁹

Progressives continued to clash with elected and appointed authority after the interwar period. Following the Second World War, Australia was characterised by greater regulation and centralisation of services, at all levels of government. The assumption by the LFTL that it they knew what was best for the economic and social development of their region was to increasingly bring it into conflict with elected and officially delegated authority. A prime example of this trend was the

⁵⁵ A report of the nature suggested by the LFTL was eventually commissioned and conducted but this did not occur until 1952. See: Ian G. Cooper, *Launceston Municipal Transport 1911-1955* (Sydney, 2006), pp. 94-6. For the specifics of Goodman's recommendations again, see section 3.2.4.

⁵⁶ G. W. Rodwell, *With Zealous Efficiency: Progressivism and Tasmanian State Primary Education, 1900-1920* (Darwin, 1992), pp. 28-35. Please refer back to section 7.1.2.

⁵⁷ This was Nicholl's response to Alderman Claude James criticism of him being unable to set proper estimates, noting he was only a book-keeper! See again: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

⁵⁸ QVM LCC2: *City Manager 1921 and Town Clerk*, Report of the City Manager, 1 November 1921. A key factor in Nicholl devising an instant £12,000 annual saving before the delivering of his first report as City Manager, was the brutal dismissal of a significant portion of the Council permanent standing workforce.

⁵⁹ In relation to the obstructive nature of the Council to his fiscal policies he commented: 'My responsibility ends when I have told them what needs doing. If they do not agree they should the responsibility'. See: *Examiner*, 5 June 1922, p. 3.

clash between the State Government and the LFTL over the parameters of its potential role in facilitating immigration. Immediately following the war, the Chifley Federal Government embarked on a policy to bring 50,000 children to Australia. However, the costs inherent to such a program meant that at first it sought out help from voluntary organisations to assist. One such organisation was the LFTL, which had long had an interest in helping to encourage and facilitate immigration.⁶⁰ Indeed the LFTL continued to advertise for help amongst residents willing to secure work and accommodation for migrants.⁶¹ A decision by the Agent-General of Tasmania to advise prospective migrants to direct their queries to the LFTL though, angered state Minister for Immigration, E. R. Howroyd.⁶² The Minister was forced to make a public statement that while he did not want to discourage voluntary organisations from giving assistance to immigrants on their arrival in the colony, a process which was a complicated one, best left to the proper bureaucracy.⁶³

The nationalisation of industries and increased bureaucratic control over services by the Labor Federal Government during the War convinced many of the benefits of strong, central, interventionist government. Governments at several levels embraced the need for greater regulation and bureaucratic control over services ironically deprived many Progressive organisations of an ongoing practical role. In relation to such issues as health reform the role of organisations such as the LFTL or the BHA were becoming increasingly peripheral.⁶⁴ Progressives though, were often slow to recognise the implications of an increasingly centralised approach to government.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ See: AOT: AA59 Migrant Files, AA59/1/67, M81 Fifty Thousand League, Tasmania, Letter from Director of the Tourist Department to the Secretary of the LFTL, 2 July 1946.

⁶¹ *Mercury*, 15 August 1947, n. p.

⁶² See: AOT: AA59 Migrant Files, AA59/1/67, M81 Fifty Thousand League, Tasmania, Letter from Hon. E. R. Howroyd, Minister for Immigration to Mr. H. V. Sellers, Secretary, LFTL, 3 September 1947. The main objection was that such an arrangement was to cause confusion and possibly hardship in regards to the premature disposal of homes and personal effects before approval could be formally obtained under migration legislation.

⁶³ What Howroyd instead charged the LFTL with was the role of 'aftercare' for new migrants. See: *Mercury*, 4 September 1947, n. p.

⁶⁴ The war effort involved the extension of Federal power to unprecedented levels. The landslide victory of the Federal ALP in 1943 allowed the party to establish the first pillars of the welfare state. This new kind of social intervention involved the introduction or strengthening of child endowment, hospital benefits, invalid and aged pensions, maternity allowances, unemployment and sickness benefits, widow's pensions, university and technical college scholarships. Furthermore, a successful referendum facilitating an amendment to the constitution settled concerns over the power of the Commonwealth to legislate for social services in peace time. See: Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Sydney, 1980), p. 246. By the end of the

7.2.4: The Importance of the Professional Dynamic

Robert H. Wiebe broke the emerging middle-class of the era into two categories: professional and business classes. The Progressives active in Launceston during the interwar period, fit neatly into both groups.⁶⁶ Both the professional and business aspects of this class combined to effect significant reforms through several types and many specific Progressive coalitions. The formation of the Cremation Society of Tasmania in Launceston in 1912 first demonstrated the importance of the professional dynamic in transmitting and developing Progressive ideas and initiatives in the city.⁶⁷ The foundation of the CWA in 1917 was probably the most obvious example of this process. The medical community of Launceston were united by the cause to lower the IMR and they received staunch support from the middling classes of the city.⁶⁸ Professional dynamics were largely responsible for resurgence in Progressive coalitions in the second half of the interwar period. This helped to create the momentum that resulted in both the Launceston Cremation Society and the LTPA were reformed as the TCS and the NTPA in 1929 and 1933 respectively. It is not a coincidence that many committee members of both of those

war the Tasmanian economy, like those of the other states, was in the hands of Federal authority through the use of uniform tax legislation. See: Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania Volume II: Colony and State from 1856 to the 1980s* (Melbourne, 1987), pp. 498-9. John Reynolds observed that during the early phase of the war, Launceston's industrial potential was not fully realised. By the end of 1942, this had changed and every possible person was employed in the war effort. See: John Reynolds, *Launceston*, p. 191. In fact the 'total mobilization' that the war effort helped to set a trend for increased interventionism from both state and federal levels of government. The State ALP spoke openly about economic planning to avoid depression in the early post-war period. Also, state housing, health and education services expanded significantly. See: Lloyd Robson and Michael Roe, *A Short History of Tasmania* (Melbourne, 1985), pp. 137-45. Many pillars of the Progressive agenda had therefore been achieved, although in a far more openly interventionist and permanent manner than they probably would have wished for.

⁶⁵ When Secretary Sellars continued to seek information on the vital statistics of the state in order to answer enquires from prospective migrants, the League was formally rebuked by the Minister and the Tourist and Immigration Department were asked to have the League confirm the policy outlined by the Minister. See: AOT: AA59 Migrant Files, AA59/1/67, M81 Fifty Thousand League, Tasmania, Memo from the Assistant Manager of the Tasmania Government Tourist Department, Secretary, Immigration Department, 25 August 1947 & Memo from the Director of the Government Tourist and Immigration Department to the Government Tourist and Immigration Department, Launceston, 5 September 1947.

⁶⁶ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 112.

⁶⁷ For a detailed discussion please refer to sections 2.2.2.2 & 5.1.2

⁶⁸ See the discussion on the formation and development of the Child Welfare Association in Launceston in section 5.2.1.

reincarnated organisations were long-term members of that beacon of civic engagement, the LFTL.⁶⁹

7.2.5: The Darker Side of Progressivism

To Progressives, the ideal form of democracy was a highly qualified one. Society was best ruled by the educated elite.⁷⁰ For Progressives, mass participation in government was not a feature of the ideal society. Peter Haeusler has argued that Frederick Winslow Taylor and his scientific management theories may have had an influence on the Progressive vision of a functional democracy. In his analysis of Meredith Atkinson's work he identified the attempted application of scientific methodology to the problem of government. Taylor's scientific methods had sought to organise and control labour efficiently and had resulted in a two tier model – effective separation between brain-work and execution. The Progressive view of the ideal design of democracy appears to have followed a similar, elitist pattern.⁷¹ This view was evident amongst Launceston Progressives such as Senior Editor of the Examiner, F. J. Prichard. He was not fully committed to full democracy, but rather to rule by the most 'able'. In the liberal tradition of Andrew Inglis Clark, the franchise was viewed as properly a privilege of the most capable. Compulsory voting was seen to have contributed to the obstruction of parliamentary expression of Progressive ideas in a legislative context. Prichard saw the high level of informal

⁶⁹ Please refer to section 5.1.2.

⁷⁰ While President Franklin D. Roosevelt was by no means an intellectual, Anthony J. Badger notes that his administration was characterised by the utilisation of experts in various fields, in order to frame and institute policy in an effective manner. See: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal*, p. 6. This was also evident in Ogilvie's tenure as Premier of Tasmania, referred to by Roe as 'an Antipodean F. D. Roosevelt', who based his economic response to the depression on the 'mildly inflationary response' of Federal Treasurer E. G. Theodore, then Federal Treasurer and recruited by Ogilvie to help him in his 1931 campaign. See: Michael Roe, 'A. G. Ogilvie and the Blend of Van Diemen's Land with Tasmania', *Bulletin of the Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies*, Volume One, 2, 1986, pp. 46-7. Despite the very moderate radicalism of his government, the unorthodox influences of Theodore and Shadow Treasurer Edmund Dwyer-Gray may have cost it victory in May 1931.

⁷¹ Peter Haeusler, 'Progressives and the Janus Face of Efficient Citizenship, Meredith Atkinson and Australian Democracy', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 42, 1 (1996), pp. 31-5. Further reinforcing the pervasive influence of Taylorism on Progressivism, Haeusler argues: 'As to the role of the state, progressives saw it as a highly specialised institution – its function in many ways analogous to that of the brain in relation to the human body'.

votes as evidence of the legitimacy of his concerns, noting that it was simply the 'elimination of the unfit.'⁷²

Progressivism was also a movement concerned with preserving the class stratigraphy of society. The establishment of a branch of the Workers' Educational Association in Launceston in 1914 arguably allowed both the working-class to improve itself and the middle-class to reinforce its intellectual superiority and the hegemony of the capitalist system.⁷³ The original commission-government system involved direct government from boards of selected, expert commissioners. Martin J. Schiesl argued that in part, this was a conscious attempt across the United States to limit working-class access to the mechanisms of local government and consolidate middle-class political power and hegemony.⁷⁴ The commission-manager form of government, which emerged largely in response to criticisms over the former's focus on fiscal concerns over social ones, was an attempt to both

⁷² Andrew Inglis Clark ((1848-1907) lawyer, MHA and state Attorney-General. It is clear that Clark's view of the extension of the franchise was far from universal. To Clark good government appears to have been represented by the institution of a system that allowed those most capable to govern but be checked in their actions by the majority of the population. The right to vote according to Clark, should not be inherent but instead be a combination of a 'natural right or as a privilege to be acquired by some exertion or exhibition of merit, or as a trust conferred by the community', as he argued, 'only those persons who are prepared to exercise it spontaneously with intelligence and honesty have the right to elect the makers and administrators of the law'. To Clark, an uninformed - although democratic - rule by the 'majority of the hour' could be just as dangerous as any despotic form of government. See: Richard Ely, 'Protecting Commonwealth from Church: Clark's 'Denominational Education', and Beyond', in Richard Ely, Marcus Hayward & James Warden (eds), *A Living Force, Andrew Inglis and the Ideal of Commonwealth*, (Hobart, 2001), p. 155. Prichard himself argued: 'In our opinion, it is one of the weaknesses of universal suffrage that the biggest wastrel or ignoramus is equal to that of a Gladstone'. See: *Examiner*, 12 January 1920, p. 4.

⁷³ *Examiner*, 17 March 1920, n. p. The WEA established a branch in Launceston in 1914 and found fertile ground. Its growth was only eclipsed by the onset of war. Classes soon reopened in Launceston in 1920. The topics of economics and history were popular.

⁷⁴ Martin J. Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America, 1900-1920* (London, 1977), pp. 139-46. Even between two organisational historians with similar views on the importance of the new bureaucratic orientation, Wiebe and Schiesl demonstrate different views on the class origins and subsequent fundamental motivations of the Progressives in the United States. Wiebe in his work describes the rise of a new middle class of professionals with different motivations than the original middle and upper class reformers of the late nineteenth century. This was to him, best demonstrated in the difference between the approaches of the earlier settlement workers and the later social scientists. See: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, p. 170. In the case of Schiesl, his views are in direct opposition to those classed by David Kennedy as 'neo-progressive' as they emphasise 'context over essence'. See: David M. Kennedy, 'Overview: The Progressive Era', *Historian*, 37, 3 (May, 1975), p. 453 & 465. Although his definition is as diffuse as that of Schiesl, he does acknowledge that Progressivism offered a 'road to respectability' for the lower orders. See: Schiesl, *The Politics of Efficiency*, p. 3. This debate proves that since the time of Richard Hofstadter's generation, this question of who the Progressives really were (and the inherently linked question of motivation), has been an underlying concern of any history devoted to them. Please see section 1.1.2 for more detail.

democratise the policy process but also maintain the impersonal and scientific approach to administration.

Progressives were also universally concerned with protecting the status quo against the threat of working-class radicalism. Concerns over the potential horror of a revolution from below were just as intense in Launceston as they were in London or New York. To the middle-class in general, the calamity of the Russian Revolution of November 1917 reinforced the potential dangers ignoring the needs of the lower orders.⁷⁵ Middle and upper-class fears of social unrest and revolution and its effects on their own security had not vanished at the end of the First World War but they had instead arguably magnified many times over. Grant W. Rodwell argued that Darwin's biological writing had a strong influence on Progressive thought. While an altruistic ethic was very evident amongst the elite in Launceston, there were examples of an authoritarian view that they had the natural right to dominate. It was assumed that any working-class revolution would totally disrupt the natural social order and lead to the total disintegration of society.⁷⁶

At the end of the First World War, fear of a revolution from below was just as evident in Launceston as it was in any western city. The formation of the Tasmanian Loyalty League in 1918 for instance, was directly motivated by fears of disloyalty to both the established political and economic system.⁷⁷ The LCC withdrew permission for political orators to speak on Sundays in Cornwall Square owing to a recent disturbance in May 1919. This was evidence of a genuine fear

⁷⁵ Although not published in Britain until 1926, John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World* echoed the teleological mind-set of the Bolshevik movement as a part of an inexorable movement towards a communist world: '[T]his fraternal union of all the workers and all the exploited, will consolidate the power conquered by them, of the power into the hands of the working class in other countries, and that it will assure in this manner the lasting accomplishment of a just peace and the victory of Socialism'. See: John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World*, 3rd rev. ed. (Ringwood, Victoria, 1970), p. 271.

⁷⁶ Grant W. Rodwell, *With Zealous Efficiency*, pp. 7-8. Please refer back to section 2.1.4 for more a more detailed discussion.

⁷⁷ Lloyd Robson summarised the mission of the Loyalty League: 'The chief business of the Loyalty League in the Island State was maintenance of loyalty to the throne, unity of Empire and the national development of Australia'. See: Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania Volume II*, pp. 355-8. J. D. Oxley in his honours thesis on the topic of the foundation of the Loyalty League argues that it was primarily formed in response to fears of entrenched 'Romanism' in the community, although those fears were largely imagined or at worst greatly exaggerated. See: J. D. Oxley, 'The Foundation of the Tasmanian League of Loyalty, unpublished HONS thesis, University of Tasmania, 1974, p. ix.

that such disturbances could threaten the overall stability of society rather than an example of political censorship.⁷⁸ Restrictions on public speaking remained throughout the interwar period. As the city began to emerge from the worst effects of the depression, the Trades Hall Council encouraged the LCC to provide a venue for free public speaking. A site quite a walking distance from the city was selected in Royal Park.⁷⁹ Typically *Examiner* Senior Editor Stanley Dryden, being a renowned Progressive thinker, provisionally supporting the concept on the condition that the 'weekly escape of eloquence does not interfere with the rights of the public'.⁸⁰ Like many Progressives, Dryden appreciated the value of open expression as a means of helping to garner support for worthy ideas and to expose the weaknesses of those who were less worthy.

For Progressives, Communism became an increasing concern during the height of the depression. All levels of government were sensitive to the issue and did what they could to stifle the growth of the movement.⁸¹ The increase in radicalism was a prime concern of all conservative sections of the community in Launceston during the middle of the interwar period, not just the Progressive movement.⁸² The burning of the effigy of local Alderman and Chief Secretary Claude James in Franklin Square in 1933 was typical of the popular discontent with the response of all levels of government to the economic crisis.⁸³ Of most concern to Progressives and all

⁷⁸ *Examiner*, 23 May 1919, n. p. The fact that the first applications for public speaking to be turned down included one submitted by a member of the Labor Party appears to have been coincidental. The 'recent' disturbance was a clash on the 13 April 1919 between two factions of the Labor Party which involved the gathering of 4000 people in Cornwall Square. There was at that time a split between two main factions: 'official Labor' and 'Reform Labor'. Reform Labor were against the adoption of 'red flag principles' into the party platform. One speaker had the red tie he was wearing ripped off and had to be rescued by police. Large crowd followed them to the police station. See: Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania Volume II*, p. 390.

⁷⁹ The exact location, selected by Superintendent of Reserves William McGowan Junior, was an area at the east end of Royal Port near Alexandria Wharf. See: *Examiner*, 28 January 1938, n. p. One local larrikin had noted when the site was first suggested that 'crook' speakers could be conveniently thrown into the river. See: *Examiner*, 2 December 1937, n. p.

⁸⁰ *Examiner*, 27 January 1938, n. p.

⁸¹ The Nationalist Federal Minister for Immigration in 1919 indicated his intention to use the passport system to keep communist 'undesirables' out of the country. See: *Examiner*, 15 February 1919, p. 6.

⁸² Mass unemployment sparked violent protests even in the wealthiest of states. A march against retrenchments resulted in 3 deaths when there was an attempt to storm the Ford Motor Company premises at Rogue River, Oregon in the United States. This was reported in the *Examiner*, 9 March, p. 5.

⁸³ The burning was the culmination of a march organised by the United Workers Movement held under the Communist flag. The UWM were concerned about changes being made to the work relief program conducted by the state government, claiming that it was an increasingly degrading

conservative elements in society at the time devoted to maintaining social stability, was unrest amongst single men.⁸⁴

Another primary motivation of the wider Progressive movement was the shared concern over the virility of the Anglo-Saxon race. Progressives felt that the health of the race had been diminished by the onset of industrialisation and intervention was needed. The Progressives believed in the concept of the white man's burden. They also feared that without proper intervention western civilisation would fail to fulfil its potential. Therefore many Progressive reforms were geared towards improving the health outcomes of women of child-bearing age and children.⁸⁵ Housing regulation reforms in Launceston, directed by CMO and Progressive L. Grey Thompson in the first decade of the twentieth century, were in part motivated by these concerns. The working-class as the largest section of society, was responsible for producing the workers and soldiers of the future. Their implementation was ruthless though and illustrated the potentially counter-productive effects of such reforms. Ironically the program improved the general health standards of the city, but, without an accompanying municipal or private housing scheme, exacerbated levels of homelessness amongst the poorest. Homelessness in Launceston afterwards became an entrenched problem until the post-war period, exacerbating the poverty of most vulnerable residents.⁸⁶

system that made unrealistic demands on the unemployed as they were arguably not able to eat well enough to engage in hard manual labour and they lacked money for essentials such as transport and shoes. Reflecting his lack of empathy, James simply argued that the changes he was making would result only in the unemployed being expected to do a few hours work in return for aide! See: *Examiner*, 24 May 1933, n. p.

⁸⁴ They were the most neglected sector of the unemployed – perhaps after women which were never mentioned as they were considered to be perennial dependents either as daughters or wives – and even the local Trades Hall Council were concerned about their susceptibility to recruitment by extreme left wing groups. See: *Examiner*, 21 May 1936, n. p. The problem remained throughout the remainder of the decade and expressed itself in three main ways: having to leave home due to unfair income testing rules; low rates of relief; less preference given than married men. It was solved only by the induction of large numbers of men into the armed services from 1939. This was wryly predicted by one contributor ('Sunny Jim') in a letter to the Editor of the *Examiner*, 12 May 1938, n. p.: 'It will only be for a little while for there is a good time coming and a big pick up for all for gun fodder.'

⁸⁵ See editorial discussion on the issue in *Examiner*, 20 August 1919, p. 4.

⁸⁶ For details refer to section 2.2.2.3.

7.2.6: Civic Altruism

Civic altruism remained a driving force behind the wider movement throughout the interwar period. Robert H. Wiebe identified what he called ‘humanitarian’ Progressivism, a form of social politics that preceded the more impersonal bureaucratic approach. The central theme was often the well being of the child.⁸⁷ Simon Harris has previously documented the civic altruism evident in Launceston during the interwar period. This form of altruism was a natural offshoot of civic pride and a growing sense of engagement that had predated the onset of Progressivism in Launceston.⁸⁸

On the retirement of Alderman Monds in 1937, Mayor Warland Browne reflected on the lack of recognition the city awarded to its unpaid civic fathers: ‘I wonder if the public realise what all this means... the months and years of self sacrifice to the city which it entails’.⁸⁹ The ongoing celebration of the philanthropy and voluntary service in the city was an important part of encouraging the same in others and it was not reserved just for politicians. Wealthy local philanthropist Elizabeth Fall left the majority of her estate to her nephew but a considerable residue went to various charitable institutions.⁹⁰

The formation of the LFTL both advanced and expanded the definition of civic altruism, as it was to be understood in the city during the interwar period. From the outset the LFTL encouraged a heightened level of civic engagement amongst the professional and business classes in the city. Sub-committees were immediately formed to encourage such booster ideals as increasing tourism, general economic development and increasing the local population through migration. At the same time the League devoted itself to improving the quality of life for its residents by helping to encourage the construction of facilities and events to raise health standards, to improve the aesthetic aspect of the city, to ensure improved levels of entertainment and most importantly to facilitate further debate on how the city

⁸⁷ Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 169-70. Please refer to section 4.1.1 for more details.

⁸⁸ Please refer back to sections 5.2.2.3 for more a more detailed discussion on this concept.

⁸⁹ *Examiner*, 8 December 1937, n. p.

⁹⁰ *Examiner*, 28 September 1935, p. 6.

could continue to be improved. From its instigation, the mission of the LFTL was a dual natured: a booster and a Progressive organisation. The ‘alternative social economy’ of the city was a decided influence on the agenda of the LFTL and it led the Progressive charge away from the more ‘impersonal bureaucratic approach’, back towards ‘humanitarian’ Progressivism during the Great Depression.⁹¹

7.2.7: Social Justice, Not Equality

Progressives embraced what Daniel T. Rodgers has labelled, the ‘alternative social economy’. This was largely a paternalistic concern and involved seeking to provide a general panacea to the perceived ills inflicted by modern industrial society on the lower orders.⁹² In pursuit of that goal, Progressives in Launceston advocated the expansion of the role of local government and the utilisation of traditional voluntary charity networks. Progressivism was inherently a radical conservative movement. Its social intervention was largely aimed at the immediate relief of poverty, never towards the achievement of long-term structural changes to the economy. Progressives were committed to the maintenance of the economic, social and political status quo. The ultimate goal was the creation of a healthy, content and productive working-class that would eventually reject radicalism. The values and actions of the UWM reflected the worst Progressive fears of political radicalism in the city.⁹³

Progressives in the city did advocate some mildly innovative strategies as part of their pursuit of the ‘alternative social economy’. The nearest approximation of the settlement schemes evident in several cities in the United States was arguably the Child Health Clinics funded jointly by several state governments and the BHA. These were education centres, but were designed for a single purpose (the training of mothers) rather than to facilitate the multitude of functions the settlement houses performed. Missions also provided some of the same services in Launceston, but they were not even the secular ‘modified missions’ that predominated in England.

⁹¹ *Examiner*, 12 May 1926, p. 6. See again: Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, pp. 169-70.

⁹² Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, p. 20. Please refer to sections 2.1.6, 2.2.1.6 and 5.1.4 for more details.

⁹³ Please refer to section 6.2.4 for more details.

They were simply the distributing arms of the established churches motivated by the general Christian ethos of charity.⁹⁴

The creation of a welfare state however, was never part of their agenda. The distinction between the deserving and non-deserving poor remained a fundamental principle of the Progressive movement.⁹⁵ Individualism and self-reliance was valued above all else, although there was a recognition that under certain circumstances (depression, natural emergencies etc.) the poor required special aid. There was no indication that Progressives in Launceston, at any time, actively sought ongoing income support for the lower orders. Even the federal pension scheme was viewed with some suspicion.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New York, 1967), pp. viii, 15-6, 18-9. The functions performed by the social settlements studied by Davis included: skill centres for home-making, schools, general social areas, kindergartens, play and recreation facilities, informal housing and employment bureaux! Davis insists that the English settlement houses divorced themselves from any religious mission mainly as they had to deal with large numbers of immigrants and therefore required a non-religious approach. Those facilities were still not as ambitious though as their American counterparts.

⁹⁵ Dryden also voiced concerns over the potential for abuses within the work relief system in an editorial article entitled 'Work or Joy Riding' published in the *Examiner*, 27 June 1930, p. 10: 'Apparently some not so badly off, but are receiving assistance which should go to more urgent cases. Many of the men are genuine workers, and give of their best for the remuneration received. But there are others'. By the end of Dryden's tenure, the same sentiments were being expressed. There were congratulations to an anonymous letter which had led to the detection of a case of welfare fraud which resulted in a six week sentence. Police Magistrate F. N. Stops in reference to that case called for tougher penalties to provide an adequate disincentive. See: *Examiner*, 11 June 1938, n. p.

⁹⁶ Senior Editor Stanley Dryden in an editorial article entitled 'Abuse of Federal Pension System' argued that the system was much abused by the elderly and cited the Federal Auditor-General's recent report as evidence. Dryden added his voice to the chorus calling for penal provisions for those who rorted the system. See: *Examiner*, 14 March 1932, n. p.

7.3: Final Conclusions

Progressivism had a direct influence on the social, economic and political development of interwar Launceston. However Progressivism, even in Launceston, can only be fully understood when it is analysed within the context of the larger international movement. If considered solely as a local phenomenon, the history of Progressivism within the city might appear disparate and even trivial. Often the Launceston Progressive experience consisted of initiatives that simply echoed ideas formulated in such far-flung, innovative and more densely populated centres such as Glasgow, Birmingham or Dayton. As an historical case study however, it does reinforce how pervasive Progressivism remained on an international level between 1919 and 1939.

The Progressives in Launceston tended to be well educated, urban professionals or business men. Their civic engagement was motivated by a genuine sense of altruism and responsibility to effect urban reform. They were most successful in their reformist aims when they enjoyed the strong support of the working-class. As elsewhere in the Western World, there was no ‘official’ Progressive movement in Launceston. Instead several coalitions shared a distinctly homogenous Progressive value system and reform agenda. The energy of the business classes within the city became the engine for Progressivism over the next two decades. Progressivism during the period was also fuelled by the sustained vocal support of the only remaining local daily newspaper after 1928, the *Examiner*.

There was of course never a single Progressive movement within the boundaries of the city. The CWA and the LFTL were two of the most successful Progressive coalitions that formed in Launceston after 1918. Both of these organisations had a profound influence on the quality of life within the city. In a practical sense both helped to improve the demographic health of the city for an entire generation. While it started as a simple booster organisation, the League proved significant in strengthening a local culture of civic altruism. As a Progressive platform, the LFTL exceeded its original mandate and helped facilitate the transmission of Progressive

ideas within the city. Both the CWA/BHA and the LFTL were prime examples of the importance of the professional dynamic to the success of local Progressivism.

The Progressives of interwar Launceston shared a traditional conservative disposition, but believed in the use of radical means to achieve their objectives. These were ardent interventionists, keen to employ a rational approach to the wide range of social problems which had first gained their attention during the depression of the 1890s. Their strident pragmatism sometimes incurred the wrath of other reformers including the more traditional moral campaigners, the orthodox conservatives devoted to liberal individualism, as well as radicals at the opposite end of the political spectrum who pursued the social, economic and political emancipation of the working classes. Their greatest opposition though from their own perspective, was deeply embedded working-class ignorance, apathy and resentment of their open paternalism.

There were four central themes of Progressivism in Launceston during the period: calls by Progressives for the local government to expand infrastructure and services; the push by Progressives for the new bureaucratic orientation to be accepted and adopted by all levels of society to improve overall efficiency; the formation of coalitions intent on championing Progressive ideas; and a somewhat qualified push for increased intervention to achieve an increase in the levels of social justice evident in the city. At any one time it would not have been surprising to discover that of the fifty to 100 ardent Progressives resident in the city, most of them were involved at some level with a number, if not all, of those campaigns.

Interwar Progressives left a definite physical legacy within the city. While the pace of infrastructure development slowed considerably during the interwar period, there were three essential progressive additions: the sewage treatment scheme, a water filtration plant and a new city abattoir. The abundance of recreational space still left in the city at the start of the twenty-first century attests to a tangible, physical legacy. However, the failure to implement several other infrastructure schemes and the specific motives behind the implementation of the aforementioned examples undermines any case for the LCC to have remained a distinctly Progressive body. Indeed, the local aldermanic culture surrendered to the security of fiscal

conservatism and presented the strongest opposition towards Progressive reform during the period.

The legacy of the Progressives was as much one that was conceptual as it was physical. A trial of the city manager system of government was a truly beneficial, albeit a short-lived, exercise for the city. The organisation reforms instituted by Frederick M. Nicholl helped to imbue the apparatus of local government with the new bureaucratic orientation of the age. Nicholl's reforms facilitated the reorganisation of the administration of local government along more rational lines and delivered a level of efficiency never before experienced. Nicholl also instilled a trend towards a greater appreciation of town planning. Both of these developments would continue to benefit the city long after his termination.

While Progressives did much to alleviate the suffering of those worst affected by poverty in Launceston between the wars, their greatest failure was in their response to the social horrors of the Great Depression. Progressives remained committed to encouraging greater interventionism on the part of local government, while at the same time utilising the traditional private networks for the distribution of welfare. While Progressives could appreciate the potential of state regulation of welfare services, their inherent conservatism prompted them to oppose the idea. Progressives largely refocused their attentions on the 'alternative social economy' in the face of the crisis, but their approach was inadequate. Many of the poorest in Launceston during this time were to remain largely at the mercy of inadequate and capricious voluntary charity networks. This was arguably a result of division among the social elite in the city over the issue of the mechanics of supply. Progressives failed to acknowledge that state and federal funding would be necessary to fund the levels of intervention that they thought necessary to reform the urban environment. Levels of private charity were inadequate, and the LCC was not financially capable of large-scale intervention, even when it was willing to contemplate it.

Regardless, it was the Nationalist McPhee State Government in 1933, which redefined the boundaries of responsibilities on the issue of welfare intervention between the state and local levels of government. While the state became the primary financial contributor, the council became the direct provider of works.

Progressives accepted a larger role for local government, but were suspicious of reliance on the state government for programs. This step towards bigger and more intrusive state government was exacerbated by Ogilvie and his ministers from 1934. Inspired by the American New Deal, the Ogilvie State Government were to expand the work relief program across the state to unprecedented levels, and the unemployed in Launceston were to finally benefit from more work and more generous rates. The state building solution to the unemployment crisis, in part helped to establish the foundation of the welfare state in Tasmania. Greater interventionism in relation to issues such as education, health and housing were to soon follow after the Second World War.

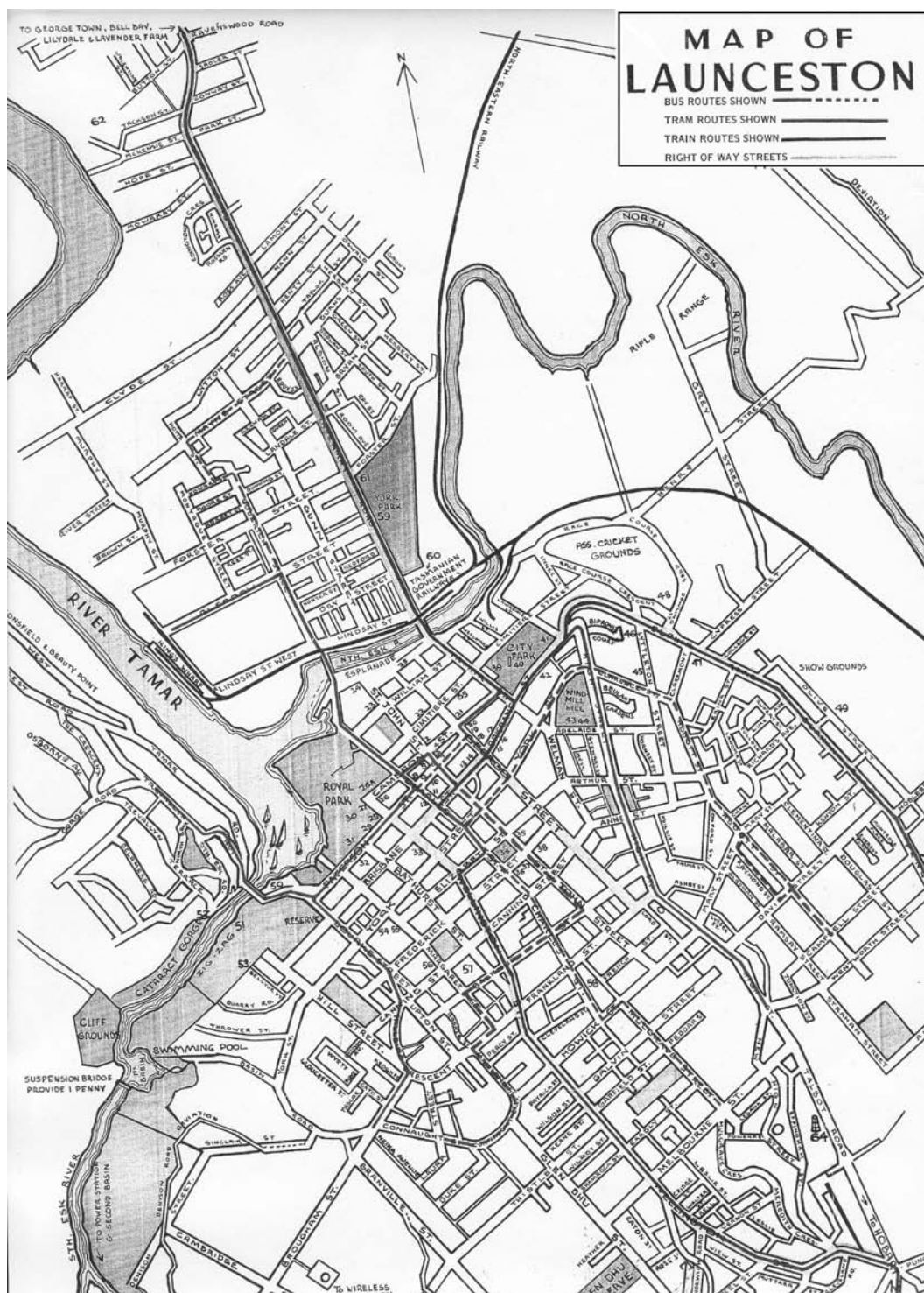
The overall nature and development of Progressivism in Launceston reflected the basic course of the international movement. There was perhaps a five to ten year lag behind the experimentation evident in the international hot-beds of Progressivism. The early phase was characterised by typical brand of moral pragmatism. Long-term political neglect and economic isolation had created a culture of determined self-reliance. This seemed to encourage civic pride and engagement and fuel long-term municipalisation. By 1900 the LCC had been responsible for leading the city through a very successful municipalisation phase. The advances of the local government convinced a number from among the professional classes of the city, to be more ambitious in their calls for intervention.

The Progressive agenda in the city before 1919 was dominated by social politics spurred on by a degree of 'moral indignation'. The emerging 'alternative social economy' of the city was a direct result of concerns raised by the 1890s depression, access to the 'intellectual traffic' of Progressive ideas by local professionals and the success of municipalisation in proving how much could potentially be achieved in reforming the urban environment. This new social agenda, characterised by conservative ends being sought through radical means, blended well with the native ethic of civic altruism. As elsewhere on the international scene, professional dynamics played a central role in transmitting, refining, and reinforcing Progressive ideas.

The early 1920s saw the emergence of the new bureaucratic orientation in the city. Best exemplified by the city manager experiment, this could be considered representative of the second wave of Progressivism in Launceston which was more concerned with the goals of economy and efficiency. Rationalism appeared to have become a means and an end in itself. In relation to Launceston this appealed more to an increasingly fiscally conservative local government plagued by continual economic mismanagement. While social concerns were sometimes used to justify this kind of Progressive reformism, the underlying agenda proved mostly to be the economic benefits. The true horrors of the Great Depression heralded a renewal of interest in the traditional social agenda. Massive unemployment and a sudden rise in poverty served to refocus Progressives energies towards the traditional concerns of social politics, although with limited success.

While never becoming a 'model town' in the sense of Glasgow, Birmingham or Dayton, Launceston might be considered a close approximation. By the end of the interwar period, from a Progressive perspective, the city was still very much a 'work in progress'. Local Progressives in Launceston could never achieve the level of reform necessary to fully satisfy their whole agenda. The sustained fiscal conservatism of local government continually frustrated the Progressive crusade throughout the interwar period. The Progressives of Launceston lacked the authority and the resources necessary to realise most of their objectives. However by the beginning of the Second World War, it could be argued that their fire had naturally begun to diminish. While the emerging welfare state was considered to be too radical by the majority of Progressives, it did provide effective solutions for the majority of their social concerns. Despite their declining influence and relevance in the increasingly interventionist political landscape of the second half of the twentieth century, the history of their combined struggles in the city of Launceston became a testimony to the virility and scope of many international Progressive ideas. Those Progressive ideas which freely permeated national boundaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, proved to have a lasting influence on the development of the city.

Appendix A: A Map of Interwar Launceston, 1938



This is a map of the city included in the tourism pamphlet *The Charm and Interest of Launceston* (Launceston, 1938) produced by Tourist and Immigration Department of Tasmania. Points of interest that were numbered are listed below.

Points of Interest Listed:

1. Town Hall
2. Post Office
3. Government Tourist Bureau
4. Northern Club
5. Public Library
6. Saint Andrew's Kirk
7. Public Buildings
8. National Theatre
9. Paterson St. Methodist Church
10. ANZAC Memorial Hall
11. King's Hall
12. Commercial Traveller's Club
13. Majestic Theatre
14. Site of the first Building, Brisbane Hotel
15. Princess Theatre
16. Masonic Hall
17. Young Men's Christian Association
18. Plaza Theatre
19. Site of first Union Bank Building
20. Historic Hotel where Batman stayed, Cornwall Hotel
21. Holy Trinity Church
22. Tasmanian Steamers Office
23. Military Buildings
24. Customs House
25. Marine Board Port Offices
26. Site of first Bank of Australasia
- 26a. Supreme Court
27. Queen Victoria Museum
28. Technical School
29. Municipal Swimming and Turkish Baths
30. Royal Park Bowling Green and Tennis Courts
31. Soldiers' Memorial, Royal Park
32. State High School
33. Memorial Church
34. Prince's Square
35. St. John's Church of England
36. Christ Church (Congregational)
37. Chalmers Church (Scotch)
38. St. Margaret's Hospital
39. Albert Hall
40. John Hart Memorial Conservatory
41. Site of Governor's Cottage
42. Site of John Pascoe Fawkner's Cottage
43. Site of Signal Station, Windmill Hill
44. East Launceston Bowling Green and Tennis Courts
45. Homoeopathic Hospital

46. Broadland House Girl's School
47. Methodist Ladies College
48. ABC Bowling Green
49. Association Tennis Courts
50. Site where Colonel Paterson first landed
51. Zig Zag Reserve
52. Cataract Gorge
53. Gee's Look-out
54. St. Patrick's College
55. Church of the Apostles
56. Church of Christ
57. South Launceston Bowling Green
58. Public Hospital
59. York Park Oval
60. Railway Section
61. Invermay Bowling Green
62. Launceston Church Grammar School (Boys)
63. Scotch College (Boys)
64. Look-out Tower, View of the Valleys
65. Baptist Tabernacle

Appendix B: A Launceston Interwar Time-Line

- 1889 Launceston declared a city from 01 January by virtue of an Act of State Parliament passed on 16 October 1888.
- 1891 The Albert Hall is opened on 10 March by Mayor Samuel Sutton. At the time it was the 11th largest exhibition Hall in the world. It hosts the Tasmanian International Exhibition which opens on 25 November and operated until the following March. The Queen Victoria Museum (QVM) is opened the same year having been built by the State Government. The local campaign to establish the facility began in 1887.
- 1893 F. J. Prichard becomes Senior Editor of the *Examiner* and an advocate for Progressive reform.
- 1894 The effects of the Depression reach a peak. This year the Launceston Benevolent Society has approximately 2000 casual relief cases – many from the ‘respectable classes’ of the city.
- 1895 The Duck Reach Power Station is opened by Mayor Ferrall. Launceston becomes the first city in the Southern hemisphere to be lit by Hyrdo-electric power on 10 December.
- 1896 Mayor McCracken forms the Citizen Relief Committee as a rather belated response to the Depression.
- 1902 City Engineer and Surveyor Charles St. John David are asked by the Council to issue a report on the ‘advisability’ of establishing a tram scheme in Launceston.
- 1904 On the recommendation of the City Medical Officer (CMO), L. Grey Thompson, the quality of the city water supply is improved by the cleaning of the Distillery Creek Dam throughout the year. The city water supply infrastructure is gradually improved over the next several years.
- 1905 Carr Villa Public Cemetery is opened. It had been designed by City Engineer and Surveyor, Charles St. John David. The first interment takes place on 1 August.

- 1906 A local plebiscite is held on the issue of establishing a tram scheme in Launceston is successful. However the LCC fails to attract an investor to establish the scheme.
- 1907 CMO L. Grey Thompson agitates the Launceston City Council (LCC) to introduce a bounty scheme based on the Glasgow scheme designed to help lower the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) amongst the lower classes.
- 1908 Extensions to the QVM begin and are completed the following year.
- 1909 A successful local plebiscite is held on the issue of the LCC establishing a municipal tram scheme. City Engineer and Surveyor Charles St. John David and Electrical Engineer R. J. Strike formulate four separate schemes for consideration by the Council that is presented in July.
- 1911 Tram scheme begins to operate in Launceston. The first trial run of the system occurs on 28 July. The official opening occurs on August 16, a ribbon being cut in a ceremony by Mayoress Oldham and free rides throughout the rest of the day to mark the event.
- 1912 The first Tasmanian Cremation Society (TCS) in Tasmania is formed in Launceston by a coalition of professional men. A delegation approaches Mayor Storrer in late July in order to lobby for permission and support in establishing a crematorium in Launceston. The LCC grants the Society half an acre of land in October for the purpose on the grounds that they can raise the money in two years. The area reverts back to the LCC when they failed to raise the funds in time but the area is left vacant for a quarter century until construction begins on the LCC's own project.
- A study of the developmental potential of the Tamar River is commissioned by the Launceston Marine Board and conducted by Engineering Consultant W. Henry Hunter. The subsequent finds are published in the Examiner in August and are immediately adopted as a long term policy by the LMB.
- Local Labor Member of the House of Assembly, Charles Howroyd (North Launceston), introduces a public member's bill related to instituting a public housing scheme, based on NZ legislation. After some amendment in the House of Assembly it fails to pass the Legislative Council.

- 1914 The Worker's Educational Association (WEA) establishes a branch in Launceston during March.
- City Engineer and Surveyor Charles St. John David provide plans for four different schemes to the Council aimed at improving the quality of the water supply in July.
- Britain enters the conflict in Europe on 4 August. The Cook Federal Government immediately commits Australia to support the Allies in the conflict. The subsequent Fisher government confirmed this support after winning the election in September.
- 1915 Launceston Town Planning Association (LTPA) formed following local lecture by Charles Reade (Garden Cities and Town Planning Association of London).
- 1917 The Launceston Child Welfare Association (CWA) is formed during a meeting of concerned residents at the Town Hall in September.
- 1918 J. F. Ockerby is elected as an Alderman for the first time.
- A Child Health Nurse (Searle) is stationed in Launceston by the State Government in March. Clinics are attended by local surgeons.
- 1919 Mayoress Shields (daughter of the Mayor) organises a meeting of the representatives of the various charitable organisations of the city in late May.
- Town Clerk, C. W. Rocher, retires after more than fifty years service, forty seven spent in that position in June. He remains in a consultative capacity for a further twelve months.
- The mid-year national Maritime Strike causes a surge in unemployment in Launceston. Mayor Shields leads the charge to minimize the suffering by organising an employment bureau. The LCC then petition the state to allow them to institute a 'pound for pound' municipal employment scheme. The creativity and energy displayed by the LCC contrasts strongly with their response a decade later to the Great Depression.
- The first case of Spanish Influenza is reported in Launceston on 21 August. By the end of the epidemic there were to be 154 cases reported and 31 deaths attributed to the disease.
- The CWA hosts a lecture by Dr. Truby King at the Mechanics Institute in December.

- 1920 The Mill established by Kelsall and Kemp Limited of Rochdale, Yorkshire, England, begins operation.
- An Infectious Disease Hospital is established in Launceston with State Government aide. It is to be operated by the LCC in conjunctions with the Launceston General Hospital, through an appointed Board of Directors.
- F. J. Prichard, Senior Editor of the *Examiner*, dies in May. He is succeeded by the equally Progressive, Stanley Dryden.
- Alderman J. F. Ockerby becomes the first Alderman to push for the appointment of a City Manager with the strong support of the *Examiner* through Senior Editor Stanley Dryden. A local plebiscite on the issue fails to pass in July.
- By the end of the year, The LCC has resolved to connect to the State Government's hydro-electricity network rather than expand the capacity of the Duck Reach station.
- 1921 Paton and Baldwins Limited of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, begin production at their mill.
- CMO, L. Grey Thompson, begins to agitate the LCC in his annual report to them delivered in January, for them to establish a public housing scheme to deal with high levels of homelessness in the city.
- Claude James is elected to the Council for the first time on a reform ticket.
- A motion to approve the city manager scheme instigated by Alderman James is passed by the Whole Council Committee in April.
- Frederick M. Nicholl is appointed as City Manager in August. His first report, delivered in November, becomes infamous for its condemnation of both the administration and financial practices of the LCC.
- The dredge *Ponrabbel II* arrives in April and the LMB immediately begin their program of channel deepening.
- City Manager Nicholl, having instituted widespread administrative reforms, consolidates all Council debt and restructures it with a locally floated loan of £157,000 at seven per cent by early December.
- 1922 There are the first calls for a Booster organisation to be formed by the *Examiner* in February.

A promotional handbook for Launceston is published in February by the LCC with the aide of the LMB, Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Manufacturers.

Frederick M. Nicholl resigns as City Manager in late February, and was then reappointed on renegotiated terms by the LCC. His contract is finally terminated in October.

- 1923 CMO L. Grey Thompson dies in October 1923 having served in that capacity for 20 years. He is succeeded by local surgeon and Progressive Dr. James M. Pardey.

Captain Thomas Arthur Newton is appointed unofficial City Publicity Officer in July by the LCC. He was to act in that capacity for 25 years.

The residents of Launceston raise £717/06/06 for the victims of an earthquake on the Kanto Plain, Konshu, Japan in September.

The Veterinary Department is established by the LCC in December. The responsibility for the meat and milk supply from this point is held by the City Veterinary Officer.

- 1924 During this year, Mowbray residents (then living within the St. Leonard's municipality) petition the LCC to be incorporated into the city of Launceston. The application is approved by the Minister for Lands and Works. A poll was also conducted on the issue of incorporating a considerable area at the Southern boundary of the city which by then was being supplied with Launceston water and light. The poll was answered in the affirmative.

Claude James is appointed Mayor by the city aldermen.

City Engineer Charles St. John David dies in July, having served in that capacity for 32 years.

- 1925 J. F. Ockerby is appointed Mayor of Launceston by the city aldermen. The Water Filtration Plant is fully functional by the end of the year.

- 1926 The Launceston Fifty Thousand League (LFTL) is formed in May. The LCC restructures debt and makes the fateful decision to take the 'London Loans' amounting to £100,000 for 25 years at a lower rate through the Commonwealth Bank in London.

- 1927 The LFTL lobbies the LCC on the issue of water rates relief for the poor.

- The Trevallyn sewage treatment scheme, the first for the city is completed this year.
- 1928 The Rapson Tyre Factory decides to establish a factory in Launceston. Like several businesses before them, they were in part attracted to the city by the offer of cheap electricity.
- 1929 The pan system of sewage disposal is phased out. Tidal disposal is retained.
- The new city abattoir and saleyards are completed.
- There is extensive flooding across the state in early April; the low lying areas of Launceston are severely affected for several days. Public agitation for an effective flood protection system begins almost immediately afterwards.
- The Great Depression officially begins on Black Tuesday with a devastating stock market crash on 29 October. For several years the global economy had been souring, confidence has suffered with evidence of higher lending rates and lowered liquidity. The 'London Loans' become an increasing burden due in part to the increasing cost of remitting funds to the London Market.
- The LFTL responds to the unemployment created in the city by the crisis through organising a clean up month in August.
- The TCS is reformed during a public dinner in Hobart held for cremationist Victorian, Charles Lucas in December. Launceston Mayor Robert Osborne is appointed Chairman.
- 1930 The Rapson Tyre Factory closes temporarily in February as a direct result of the global depression. It resumes operation in November. It closed for good in 1932.
- The Unemployment Grants Scheme is instituted for local authorities by the Scullin Federal Government based on a similar British Scheme in June.
- The Ideal Home Exhibition is organised by the LFTL in May-June. Now Chief Secretary, Claude James oversees a proposal to establish work camps for single unemployed men. Labor opposed the idea. Camps eventuate but they operate on a rota rather than a semi-permanent basis. There is a dole strike led by the United Workers

Movement at the Beaconsfield Forestry Reserve scheme in August. This is attempt to secure better rates and conditions for the unemployed workers and it ultimately fails due to a lack of solidarity amongst their ranks.

- 1931 City Engineer W. E. Potts delivers a report on the proposed flood protection scheme in October.
- The Nationalists win the state election in May and Premier John McPhee is returned to power. While the Nationalists had to this point struggled to deal with the effects of the Depression within the confines of their conservative ideology, they display a higher level of informed intervention in this term, most significantly refining the work relief program.
- 1932 Part of the Beaconsfield Municipality known as Trevallyn, is incorporated into the city of Launceston on 1 July.
- The Launceston branch of the state Labor Party, call for a public housing scheme at the state conference in October.
- The Launceston Minister's Association petitions the Council to create more work in June.
- The Unemployment Relief Bill is passed in June allowing the State Government to borrow £150,000 to fund the settlement scheme and municipal relief programs. Municipal authorities were expected to cover half the cost of all projects.
- 1933 In May the LCC and the State Government (through negotiations conducted by Chief Secretary Claude James) come to an agreement on a sustained work relief program. The State Government agrees to provide £300 per week in exchange for the LCC to generate work for 372 men per week.
- Mayor Hollingsworth, partly in response to widespread criticism over the Council's inaction, begins the S. O. S. (Spend a Shilling) Campaign during winter.
- Negotiations between the State Government and the LCC are complete in Mid-August when cabinet agrees to indemnify the LCC against any compensation suit that might arise from the work relief program.

- The LTPA is reformed in October as the Northern Regional Planning Association. A provisional committee formed including Mayor Hollingsworth, Superintendent of Reserves William McGowan Senior and several member of the LFTL.
- 1934 The LCC Mayoral Winter Relief Appeal begins. It continues to operate with declining effect until the end of Winter 1936.
- The state Labor Party win the election in June and Albert George Ogilvie becomes Premier. Ogilvie arguably becomes the most overtly Progressive state leader in its history.
- 1935 In October a delegation for the UWM meets Mayor von Bibra to discuss problems with the Work Relief Program.
- 1936 The LCC resolves to establish its own Crematorium in September.
- A Relief Worker (J. McCullagh) is killed in an accident during the levelling of Glen Dhu Park in September.
- 1937 Consultant Engineer H. H. Dare delivers his recommendations on a Flood Protection Scheme for the LCC in April.
- The LFTL lobbies the State Government to incorporate regular drilling of children to improve overall physical development. This is also the first year the LFTL is paid a subsidy to help develop the local tourism industry. It is paid until 1942.
- 1938 A dispute erupts between local relief workers and the State Government in February. The LFTL attempts to intervene. A dole strike is declared and again fails to achieve its objectives to raise the relief wages to the level of the minimum wage.
- The Sandhill Baby Clinic is established in November.
- A pamphlet entitled *Tasmania for the Tourist and Settler* is published by the Premier's Department as a result of lobbying from the LFTL.
- There is an alarming increase in cases of diphtheria in the city. The LCC introduces a free immunisation program for children.
- 1939 The LCC crematorium begins operation in February.
- Consulting Engineer H. H. Dare submits an updated report on the proposed flood protection scheme in May.
- J. F. Ockerby is again appointed Mayor of Launceston by the city aldermen.

Australians are informed by their Prime Minister Robert Menzies on 3 September that following the German invasion of Poland and the declaration of war by Great Britain, that the country was subsequently at war with Germany.

By the end of the year, the cost of retiring the debt associated with the 'London Loans' before the maturation date of 1946, is now effectively twenty per cent of the city's annual income.

Appendix C: A List of Launceston Mayors (1889-1939)

1889	D. Scott
1890	S. J. Sutton
1891	S. J. Sutton
1892	S. J. Sutton
1893	H. J. Dean
1894	R. H. Price
1895	W. H. Ferrall
1896	P. McCracken
1897	R. J. Sadler
1898	S. J. Sutton
1899	E. H. Panton
1900	E. H. Panton
1901	F. K. Fairthorne
1902	F. K. Fairthorne
1903	D. Storrer
1904	J. W. Pepper
1905	J. W. Pepper
1906	C. Russen
1907	P. Boland
1908	P. Boland
1909	W. C. Wilson
1910	W. C. Oldham
1911	W. C. Oldham
1912	G. Paton
1913	G. Hills
1914	R. Gee
1915	F. P. Hart
1916	F. P. Hart
1917	W. Coogan
1918	W. Coogan

1919	G. Shields
1920	G. Shields
1921	A. W. Monds
1922	A. W. Monds
1923	G. Shields
1924	C. E. W. James
1925	J. F. Ockerby
1926	A. A. Evans
1927	H. C. L. Barber
1928	H. C. L. Barber
1929	R. M. Osborne
1930	R. M. Osborne
1931	F. Boatwright
1932	A. W. Monds
1933	A. Hollingsworth
1934	A. Hollingsworth
1935	E. E. von Bibra
1936	E. E. von Bibra
1937	F. Warland Browne
1938	A. E. Wyett
1939	A. E. Wyett
	F. Warland Browne (Acting)
	J. F. Ockerby ¹

¹ John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (Melbourne, 1969), p. 191; QVM: LCC8 Series, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Reports of Head of Department (1898-1955); LLS Stack Serials, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Reports of Head of Department (1901-1989); UTAS Ltn Serial, Mayor's Valedictory Addresses and Reports of Head of Department (1912-1951).

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