

# The Showgirls from Eltham, the Windmill Theatre and the V2 Rocket: One family's experience as a window on aspects of interwar cultural life.

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The journey of the Cooper family from small town New Zealand in the early 1920s to Sydney, and then to London, where they arrived in May 1935, provides a frame to look at aspects of social change in the interwar period. Their story, which sees the two daughters of the family appearing in the risqué nude revues at London's Windmill Theatre in the early years of the Second World War, could be viewed as exotic and atypical but does provide a vehicle to look at aspects of cultural change and media influence during a time when "modern women understood self-display to be part of the quest for mobility, self-determination, and sexual identity"<sup>1</sup>

At the end of the First World War Jack Cooper, as a young serviceman, returned to New Zealand with his English wife Ethel to set up a business and settle into family life in the small Taranaki town of Eltham. Their story would be a familiar one common to many returned soldiers but for the intriguing journey the family was to take in the interwar years. By 1935, after spending some years in Eltham, New Plymouth and Sydney, they had returned to England with their four children. In 1940 their two daughters, Huia and Desiree, were appearing in the famous 'Revudeville' nude revues at the Windmill Theatre, London. Huia was to appear at the Windmill as a chorus girl through the war years and Desiree established herself as a nude model, showgirl and actress. Their careers were supported by their parents, and the family lived together until their father Jack Cooper was killed in a V2 rocket blast which destroyed their home in Kew in September 1944.<sup>2</sup> This was a singular journey but its unfolding narrative provides an opportunity to reflect on some of the interwar cultural and media inspired movements which, particularly for women, have been characterised as helping to form a new 'modern' identity.

## BRITAIN OR THE UNITED STATES: CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN POST-WW1 NEW ZEALAND

In March 1919, Jack and Ethel Cooper embarked for New Zealand from Plymouth on the steamer 'Tainui'.<sup>3</sup> Jack had met his wife during a period away from the Western Front when he worked at a convalescent hospital in Hornchurch. They married in June 1918 and later that year he nursed her after she contracted Spanish flu. Although serving in the New Zealand army, Jack (John Henry) Cooper was born in Aldgate, London in 1893 of German parents. His father, who had owned a Butcher's shop, was found dead on the banks of the Thames at Woolwich in September 1896 in mysterious circumstances. After sixteen years of marriage Jack's mother Catarina (Kate) was a widow with five children and pregnant with a sixth. In December 1902 she married Reginald Cooper and the family moved to become licensees of the 'Princess of Prussia', a public house in Prescott Street, Whitechapel. Although Reginald and Kate separated before the outbreak of World War One, she continued as the licensee and ran the 'pub' into the 1930s.

Leaving a poor childhood and constrained opportunities Jack migrated to New Zealand in 1911 and at the outbreak of war in 1914



From a story in the Picture Post, 19 October, 1940. Desiree (second left) and Huia (R) in the basement of the Windmill Theatre during the Blitz. Photo courtesy of [www.arthurlloyd.co.uk](http://www.arthurlloyd.co.uk)



Jack (John Henry) Cooper, 1917. Photo courtesy of the family.

was working in Eltham, Taranaki for a local painter. He enlisted in the New Zealand Army in August 1914 and was among the first dozen to leave Eltham for war service. As a member of No.2 New Zealand Field Ambulance he saw service with the unit in Egypt, the Dardanelles and later on the Western Front.

In Eltham, Jack and Ethel established a café which they called 'The Missouri Bar'<sup>4</sup> and also catered for local functions, particularly at the Eltham Town Hall. Outside of running the new business with his wife, Jack had two strong interests. As a young man growing up in the East End of London he showed promise as a boxer and sparred with Gershon Mendeloff, who boxed as Ted 'Kid' Lewis and later became world welter weight champion.<sup>5</sup> Jack was to adopt the moniker 'Kid' Cooper in competitive bouts around South Taranaki. His other passion was Music Hall variety shows and this had been sparked during his childhood in London's East End where he had attended them regularly, observing the singers, dancers and comics with a critical eye. According to his grandson he also wrote down the jokes and was able to readily recreate dance steps he had seen on stage. Items in the local Taranaki papers mention some of Jack's performances, such as performing in an Eltham amateur theatrical show with an amusing 'eccentric' dance routine in August 1921.<sup>6</sup> His choice of 'eccentric' dancing, which developed in American vaudeville and was a very free form style

borrowing from the influence of African and traditional forms such as clog and tap dancing, and the name he chose for his café shows an awareness of American culture. James Belich in his book *Paradise Reforged* identifies movies, and from 1922, radio, along with the gramophone and the motor vehicle, as “the potential vectors of an ‘invasion’ by American popular culture”.<sup>7</sup> In his view they mounted a threat to both moral harmony and the cultural ‘recolonisation’ of the country by mother England after the First World War. He characterises New Zealand as a ‘tight’ society that handled the moral problem posed by these new media forms with ease citing heavy-handed film censorship and strong radio regulations outlawing radio programmes of a controversial nature.

Jack Cooper’s interests appear to be well catered for in Eltham. It was not a provincial backwater barren of arts and entertainment. Although it was a small rural service town with a population of 2,022 at the 1921 Census,<sup>8</sup> it had a lively arts and cultural life. The Eltham Town Hall boasted the second largest full stage and fly tower in the province<sup>9</sup> and a two tier auditorium with a fine dress circle. Completed in May 1911 the hall was used for many purposes including theatre, musicals, movies and opera. A local history<sup>10</sup> states that Eltham could provide an orchestra of eighteen players. Although Jack’s involvement in music and dance remained at the amateur level, he was able to pursue his interests and gained some local acknowledgement of his talent.

Film was the most popular medium of the age and the Eltham Town Hall was a popular venue. From September 1920 children were admitted to the movies there for free, and ten years later the first full-length local picture *Devil May Care* was shown at the hall.<sup>11</sup> Although conceding the American film industry’s dominance in the local market Belich still concluded that overall “recolonization did win the round on points”.<sup>12</sup> This appears to underestimate the power of the Hollywood movie in New Zealand in the interwar period. By the end of the 1920s New Zealand had 612 picture theatres throughout the country<sup>13</sup> and film audiences in New Zealand grew from just over half a million in 1917 to over 30 million people in 1939.<sup>14</sup> Motion pictures became a significant component of social life to people of all ages, but particularly women. The films, pre-dominantly from Hollywood,<sup>15</sup> “instructed viewers about current fashions in clothing, dancing, and, most important of all, personal conduct”.<sup>16</sup> And it was not just the impact of the movies themselves, the visual culture of Hollywood was circulated through press coverage, magazines, advertisements and consumer products.

The movies “constituted a crucial aspect in the formation of the modern feminine ideal of the 1920s”.<sup>17</sup> Shelley Stamp writes that at the movies women saw “‘flapper’ stars like Clara Bow and Joan Crawford embodying daring new modes of femininity”.<sup>18</sup> The film *It* (1927), starring Bow, is identified as having a strong impact on women’s cultural identities. A romantic comedy about a shop assistant who bowls over the store’s wealthy owner, the character played by Bow is said to say something important about the nature of the 1920s woman precisely because she “is able to look, desire, and pursue without being punished or condemned.”<sup>19</sup> The concept of a mysterious quality known as ‘It’ embodies a willingness of the ‘It girl’ to ignore convention and succeed and this “provided an opportunity for women to fantasize about engaging in rule-shattering behaviour”.<sup>20</sup>

It is not possible to ascertain to what degree, if any, that Jack and Ethell Cooper were influenced by these cultural influences and yet there is Jack’s adoption of current musical and dance forms and his challenging of authority and rules. The picture the family paints of Jack is of a man who, although just five foot seven inches tall and of slight build, was confident of his abilities as a boxer; a person who would stand his ground in the face of a challenge and may well have been quite aggressive if provoked. He was said “to have scant respect for authority and was quite prepared to bend or break the rules, particularly when confident that he couldn’t be found out”.<sup>21</sup> His later active encouragement of his daughters when they sought fame on the stage or through nude modelling indicated that he had few qualms in adhering to conservative conventions in this regard.

Birgitte Soland argues that the cinema constituted a crucial aspect in the formation of the modern feminine ideal of the 1920s. It was the “combination of a healthy, active, and energetic body and an exuberant personality (expressed by the movie star) that constituted a ‘modern’ female style.”<sup>22</sup> This new idealised femininity of the 1920s embodied notions of beauty and fame. The beauty contest emerged in the 1920s with close links to the film industry. Caroline Daley writes that the female form became a newly packaged commodity and a form of leisure. “In one short generation people had experienced a seismic shift in their everyday attitudes to displaying women’s bodies”.<sup>23</sup> The first Miss New Zealand pageants (1926 and 1927) offered Hollywood screen tests to the winners and the “public was captivated by the prospect of one of its ‘daughters’ finding success in the American film industry”.<sup>24</sup> In 1927, Dale Austen from Dunedin set off for Hollywood having won the Miss New Zealand title. She was to have minor roles in

a few movies before returning to this country and appearing in films by local film-maker Rudall Hayward. The sheer mass of imported American entertainment consumed in New Zealand led writer and future film censor Gordon Mirams to comment in 1945: "If there is any such thing as a 'New Zealand culture' it is to a large extent the creation of Hollywood."<sup>25</sup>

While in Eltham Ethel Cooper had a son John Keith (known as Keith) in 1920, and a daughter, Desiree, in 1922. Although in Eltham for only a few years, the New Zealand media were later to hail Desiree's success as a local woman who found fame on the London stage.<sup>26</sup> Although the town provided for Jack's stage and boxing interests, his business struggled. An initial post-war boom with high wartime prices for New Zealand's primary produce turned in 1920/21 as overseas prices for these products fell dramatically, bringing harder times with them.<sup>27</sup> The Coopers decided to sell the Missouri Bar in 1923 and move to New Plymouth. There Ethel was to have a second daughter, Huia born in 1924, and a second son Elsley (Bo), born in 1926. Although prices for primary produce rallied to some degree between 1923 and 1925, 1926 economically "was a bad year all round".<sup>28</sup> In his *A History of New Zealand*, Keith Sinclair states that "wherever one looks at life in New Zealand during the 1920s there is evidence of a loss of confidence, hesitancy, and disillusionment".<sup>29</sup> Jack found it difficult to find sufficient work to support a growing family and so decided to try a larger city. In October 1927 the family left for Sydney.

## **SYDNEY AND THE WORKERS' ART CLUB**

On arrival in Sydney, Jack obtained work as a carpenter with the Sydney City Council Electrical Department where he stayed until 1935. The family found a house in aptly named Cooper Street in working-class Paddington. Jack and his family were keen attendees at concerts at the Workers' Art Club and he encouraged his children to sing and dance. They occasionally appeared onstage as amateurs at the Club and at the Maccabean Hall. Jack saw that his daughter Huia had a particular aptitude for dance and enrolled her at the Lew Dunn Dance School. The Lew Dunn dancers were noted for their tap and 'eccentric' dancing.<sup>30</sup>

There was considerable cultural affinity between New Zealand and Australia. American film was similarly dominant in Australia and the advent of the talkies served to further strengthen their stranglehold.

The "arrival of talking pictures made the English-speaking markets even more important to Hollywood"<sup>31</sup> and Hollywood had "ultimate control of Australian cinema".<sup>32</sup> However what was different in the Australian cities, and which Jack was to come in contact with, was what one writer has described as 'radical bohemianism',<sup>33</sup> a moment when the coming together of left-wing politics and the avant-garde provided "models for a radical left-wing artistic practice".<sup>34</sup> The late 1920s and early 1930s have been characterised as a time when progressive ideas jostled with reactionary positions in the arts in Australia.<sup>35</sup>

While living in New Plymouth, Jack had contacts with the Labour Party and local leader Walter Nash, and when he left for Sydney, Nash wrote him a reference. The family state that he did not join the Australian Labor Party as he believed they were not sufficiently left-wing. However, they also feel that he may also have been fearful of repercussions for his employment if his political sympathies were widely known. Yet his involvement with the Workers' Art Club meant that he joined a group "with the object of bringing within reach of the working classes various advantages in the way of lectures, musical recitals, art classes, and exhibitions of pictures".<sup>36</sup> The club also published the small magazine *Masses* which stated as part of its logo, "Art is a weapon".<sup>37</sup> *Masses* was one of a number of small and mostly short-lived magazines published in Australian cities in the late 1920s and early 1930s by left-wing art groups. Another associated journal was *Stream*, which published three issues in 1931/32. The cover it used for its first two issues features a wasp-waisted, naked female figure, holding a copy of poems by T.S.Eliot and a paintbrush. The figure is set against a background of gear wheels above which are skyscrapers and factory chimneys. The whole effect signifies modernity. The artist was Jack Maughan who was a communist and a founding member of the Workers' Art Club.<sup>38</sup>

The content of *Stream* is interesting as an example of the challenge to mainstream artistic and literary practices at a time when Australia "had arguably the severest censorship laws of any democratic country".<sup>39</sup> In the first issue of *Stream* in July 1931, there is a four page review of D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. At that time, the book was banned from sale in Australia and other English-speaking countries. The writer notes that because of four or five proscribed monosyllables that appear in it, "this truly great book has been relegated to the literary underworld".<sup>40</sup> The book is praised as being "the healthiest sex book ever written" and the reviewer states that by the time the reader has finished it the offending "little words have acquired an entirely new significance – a significance almost lyrical, and entirely

purged of the obscene".<sup>41</sup> These attitudes questioned censorial positions on nudity, sex and language found in Australian society and the mainstream arts community.

The workers' art groups in Australia at this time were modelled on similar organisations in Europe and the United States. They undertook a wide range of activities aimed at bringing art, performance and literature to the service of workers and encouraged them to take part in artistic activities. They held to an understanding of the radical democracy of modernity where "every person could be an artist"<sup>42</sup> and what they had at hand could be the materials of their art. Depression and the rise of fascism fuelled these groups which sought "to draw together workers and 'progressive' members of the 'bourgeoisie'".<sup>43</sup>

The search for regeneration in the face of anxiety about global events and the direction of the nation saw not only new thinking about the arts and culture but 'body culture' as well. An Australian 'type' was proposed in the 1930s – a white Australian drawn from British stock, but with an outdoors athleticism honed in the Australian sun and surf. This was also the case in Britain where a number of activities "which had formerly been relegated to the world of foreigners and health cranks began taking on a mass popularity – sunbathing and tanning, hiking, dieting and slimming".<sup>44</sup> For women these elements of physical culture "were celebrated as emblems of modernity, and women who cultivated their bodies in the pursuit of beauty, health and fitness represented civic virtue".<sup>45</sup> The same physical culture trends were apparent in New Zealand where Daley writes that like their counterparts elsewhere, "New Zealanders were trying to cope with the transition from traditional to modern society. Modern society offered unparalleled freedoms".<sup>46</sup>

Jack Cooper's own physical well-being suffered a significant setback when he had an accident while working on the site of the Bunnerong Power Station. He had a serious fall and broke both legs with his injuries leaving him with a permanent limp. The Sydney Council continued his employment until he was granted early retirement due to ill-health as a result of a diagnosis of 'neurasthenia'. The family is sceptical of any diagnosis intimating 'shell shock' despite Jack's First World War experiences.<sup>47</sup> His son relates an incident when they were walking home during the blitz in London. As bombs began to fall he ducked for cover, but Jack calmly informed him that if a bomb landed near them hiding behind a bush would not do much good. The family believe that this may be another instance where Jack 'bent the rules' as they had decided to return to Britain and his retirement settlement was just enough to pay the family fares back to England.



Stream magazine, August 1931 edition, cover by Jack Maughan.



Huia, Unknown male & Desiree in a shipboard revue on the 1935 trip back to England from Sydney. Photo courtesy of the Cooper family.

## CHANGING ATTITUDES TO THE BODY

In May 1935 the Cooper family arrived in England to a social environment that had undergone considerable change since 1919 when Jack and Ethel had left for New Zealand. The interwar years have been variously categorised by social historians: one familiar trope was that after the horrors of the First World War there was a hedonistic 'live for the day' attitude in the 1920s. The 'roaring twenties' were then followed by the 'anxious thirties', as gloom once more descended with the rise of fascism and the Great Depression. Richard Overy, drawing on the words of prominent politicians, academics, scientists and writers, identifies a language of menacing catastrophe and pronounces it "the morbid age".<sup>48</sup> He states that this was not merely the view of an educated elite but "flourished in the first real age of mass communication".<sup>49</sup>

Yet Overy's view has been challenged as top-heavy and lop-sided as he has little to say about women that "felt emancipated from Victorianism or whose world - however temporarily - expanded".<sup>50</sup> Other writers on the interwar women's movements have identified their effectiveness in campaigning for reform whilst others have "highlighted the significance of changes in social opportunities, leisure activities and dress codes of the young women of this period."<sup>51</sup> There is also the challenge to Overy's contention that mass communication, and

he was highlighting the press and radio, were echoing the concerns of the elite. Women were influenced by the movies and Hollywood film offered an escapist world when compared to Britain's press and BBC radio. Recent studies of young people in this period have noted their changing expectations and self-conscious 'modernity'. Films, women's magazines and advertising provided a repository of images encouraging new aspirations and expectations. During the interwar period "the taboo of bodily exposure had been swept away by its redefinition as an acceptable part of the new cult of health and efficiency".<sup>52</sup>

On the voyage back to London Jack arranged a ship-board show which featured his two daughters, and after finishing their schooling in London both girls were to embark on stage careers. For Desiree, winning a beauty contest held by the Lyons tearooms in July 1939<sup>53</sup> led to a suggestion by one of the judges that she could have a career as a model, a proposition which she actively pursued. At sixteen Huia became subject to war-time labour controls and was directed to work in a factory making goggles for flight crew. This was a job she hated but was not permitted to leave. Jack advised her to feign ill-health and to eat soap prior to visiting a doctor. It was believed that ingesting soap caused heart palpitations, and in any event she was certified as unfit for further factory work and instead joined the chorus line at the Windmill Theatre. This would have needed her parent's consent and her family supported her and signed the consent form. She then assisted her sister Desiree getting work there as a Revudebelle and her younger brother Elsley (Bo), a temporary job at the Victoria Palace Theatre as a junior stage hand.

Both the chorus girls and the Revudebelles, who were the tableaux nudes and fan dancers, were members of the British Actors' Equity Association and had signed Equity contracts where clause 8(a) stated that the artist "has witnessed a show of the production and agrees to pose in the nude if called upon by the Manager and to be photographed for the Manager's publicity purposes only."<sup>54</sup> Both Huia and Desiree were to feature in stories about the Windmill Theatre during the war, particularly in the illustrated magazine *The Picture Post*.<sup>55</sup>

During the war Jack, as a former carpenter, was drafted into the Heavy Rescue Section of the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) organisation. Their role was to make structures safe and dig people out from the rubble. The Cooper family's own house at Burnaby Gardens, Chiswick was bombed in the Blitz in October 1940. Desiree and Huia were at the Windmill and Jack was on duty. Although two elderly women died in a neighbouring house, his wife Ethel and their two



1942 Windmill Theatre 'Revudebelles'. From the Left: Joan Jay, Desiree Cooper, Margaret McGrath and Margot Harris. Photo courtesy of Arthur Lloyd, the Music Hall and Theatre History Site. [www.arthurlloyd.co.uk](http://www.arthurlloyd.co.uk)

sons Keith and Bo emerged unscathed from a shelter which Jack had made himself using railway sleepers. He had drawn on his experience constructing bomb proof structures for dressing stations during WW1. The family moved across the Thames to a home at 46 West Park Avenue, Kew just across the road from the British assembly plant of Chrysler Motors. Through the war Huia continued at the Windmill Theatre whilst Desiree modelled for photographers and appeared in a number of West End productions.<sup>56</sup> Both girls also toured Britain with troupes entertaining allied forces.

Desiree became one of the leading nude models of the war years.<sup>57</sup> The photographer Horace Narbeth, who photographed under the name Roye and claimed to have signed her on an exclusive contract,<sup>58</sup> published a book of nude photographs of her in 1942 entitled *Desiree*. Roye was one of a number of photographers in Britain<sup>59</sup> who, from the 1930s took advantage of the growth of the nudist or naturist movement to photograph for their publications and to sell as 'art nudes' photographs of women who were part of the movement or were professional models.<sup>60</sup> The genre was deemed artistic because it borrowed from the presentation of the nude in western art. The photographers often reinforced this association by giving their nudes classical titles such as 'Aphrodite', 'Naiad' or 'Pandora'. However, by the advent of the Second World War the term glamour photography was more commonly used for a practice which more accurately was composed to satisfy what John Berger and Laura Mulvey have described as the 'male gaze',<sup>61</sup> a depiction of the female from a perspective that



A photo of Desiree by the photographer Roye. It was taken in his garden and featured in the book *Desiree*.

presents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer. In the 1930s the meaning of the word glamour was changing and was widely used to describe fashions and a particular kind of feminine appeal. The catalyst here was the cinema, as the fledgling modernity of the 'It' girl was superseded by the 'glamour' of the iconic screen goddesses of 1930s Hollywood.<sup>62</sup>

As the war entered its final phase in Europe after the fall of Paris, Hitler deployed his latest weapon, the V2 rocket. On the 3 September, 1944, the mobile rocket launchers were moved into the suburbs of The Hague in the Netherlands in readiness for strikes on London. On 8 September the first fatal V2 blast hit Chiswick. Four days later on the 12th just after 6am, a V2 hit West Park Avenue, causing severe damage to the Chrysler plant and destroying six houses, including number 46. Ten people lost their lives, including Jack Cooper. Jack and Ethel were buried in the rubble of their house and they talked to each other until he died. The house's airing cupboard was located in the bedroom shared by Desiree and Huia, and this included the main hot-water cylinder. When the house collapsed the water cylinder burst and damped down much of the usual dust that may otherwise have asphyxiated Ethel, Huia, Desiree and Keith, who were all at home at the time of the attack. Bo was away in the army.

At the end of the war both Desiree and Huia married American servicemen and moved to the United States. They did not continue

with their stage or modelling careers. Desiree, who after she won the Lyons beauty contest just before the war stated that "Englishmen leave me cold";<sup>63</sup> met and married American Air Force Brigadier General Harold Huglin. On her death in 2006 she was buried beside him at the Arlington National War Cemetery, just across the Potomac River from Washington D.C. Her life appears to have many analogies with the 'It' girl who ignores conventional behaviour and is successful in winning the heart of a powerful man.

## CONCLUSION

The path of Jack Cooper and his family is set in the context of social change in the interwar years. In recent years social histories have recognised the impact of media on attitudes, dress, manners and social behaviour and the role of popular Hollywood films as the paramount medium of the period. British, Australian and, "in spite of their geographical isolation, New Zealand women, fashioned their modern identity through the mass media and consumer culture".<sup>64</sup> The degree to which the Cooper family were influenced by film, other media and 'radical bohemian' ideas is unknowable. Correspondence with the family indicates that there was never any negative comment about the careers of Desiree and Huia and the family view was that they "were fortunate to be talented enough to earn a living in the performing arts" and "what they did on stage never appeared to be an issue".<sup>65</sup> However, the trajectory of their lives meant that they were part of activities on the stage and in photography which challenged conventional and traditional attitudes concerning women's behaviour. Unquestionably the motivation by Hollywood, other media producers and photographers was to exploit these changes for commercial profit, but even at the time commentators "praised the modern woman as bored by the decorum, ridiculous suppressions and false modesties of (their) grandmothers".<sup>66</sup> There is no question that the Cooper family were exceptional in the course their life took but by 1940, when the two daughters were on the stage at the Windmill Theatre, their lives could be viewed as successful and glamorous because of the cultural shift that had occurred since 1919.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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- Zweiniger-Bargielowska, Ina, "The Making of a Modern Female Body; Beauty, health and fitness in interwar Britain". *Women's History Review*, Vol.20, Issue 2, (March 2011): 299-317.

## END NOTES

- 1 Liz Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), p.29. Conor argues that the importance of the association of feminine visibility with agency cannot be overestimated.
- 2 The story of the family is the result of correspondence with Elsley (Bo) Cooper, the surviving son of Jack and Ethel Cooper and Edward (Ted) J Cooper, the son of Elsley and grandson of Jack.
- 3 John (Jack) Henry Coopers WW1 military records can be accessed at <https://www.archway.archives.govt.nz/ViewFullItem.do?code=21897247&digital=yes> Accessed 15 May, 2018.
- 4 The name was chosen after the state another of his brothers had taken up residence. It is also interesting he called his café, which did not have a licence to sell liquor, a 'bar'. The advent of Prohibition in the United States led to a number of former 'bars' reopening as cafes.
- 5 See <http://www.jewishsports.net/BioPages/TedLewis.htm> Accessed 17/09/2018
- 6 *Hawera & Normanby Star*, Issue XLI, 6 August, 1921.
- 7 James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000* (Auckland: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2001), p.247.
- 8 From G.I. Rawson, "The Evolution of the Rural Settlement Pattern of Lowland South Taranaki 1860-1920", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury (1967), p.66. [https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/12951/Rawson\\_thesis.pdf?sequence=1](https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/12951/Rawson_thesis.pdf?sequence=1) Accessed 19/09/2018. The population of Eltham in 2006 was 1,980.
- 9 See <http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/lifestyle/2584982/On-the-set> Article about Eltham's historic buildings. The provinces largest full stage is the New Plymouth Opera House. Accessed 14/08/2018.
- 10 Russell Standish, (1984) *Eltham: One Hundred Years 1884-1984* (Eltham: Eltham Centennial Committee, 1984): p.160.
- 11 See <http://pukeariki.com/Learning-Research/Taranaki-Research-Centre/Taranaki-Stories/Taranaki-Story/id/430/title/eltham-town-hall-has-good-friends>
- 12 Belich, p. 247.
- 13 Figures from Wayne Brittenden, *The Celluloid Circus: The heyday of the New Zealand Picture Theatre* (Auckland: Godwit, 2008), p.11.
- 14 Belich, p.254.
- 15 Apart from a handful of New Zealand, Australian and British films, Hollywood dominated the box office in New Zealand in the interwar years. Even with a quota for British films they still at their peak accounted for only 20% of the films shown in New Zealand in 1940. See Wayne Brittenden, *The Celluloid Circus: The heyday of the New Zealand Picture Theatre* (Auckland: Godwit, 2008), p.124.
- 16 Kathleen Drowne and Patrick Huber, *The 1920s* (Westpoint, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), p.42.
- 17 Jeanette Hoorn and Michelle Smith, "Rudall Hayward's Democratic Cinema and the 'Civilising Mission' in the 'Land of the Long White Cloud'" pp. 65-81 in Alistair Fox, Barry Keith Grant & Hilary Radner (eds.) *New Zealand Cinema: Interpreting the Past* (Bristol: Intellect, 2011), p.75
- 18 Shelley Stamp, "Women and the Silent Screen", Chapter 7 in *The Wiley-Blackwell History of American Film* edited by Cynthia Lucia, Roy Grundmann and Art Simon (London: Blackwell, 2012), p.2.
- 19 Marsha Orgeron, "Making It in Hollywood: Clara Bow, Fandom, and Consumer Culture", *Cinema Journal*, 42, no.4 (Summer, 2003): 87.
- 20 Ibid, p.89.
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- 54 Jill Millard Shapiro, *Remembering Revueville: A souvenir of the Windmill Theatre 1932-1964* (Milton Keynes: Obscurity Press, 2014), p.111.
- 55 See the *Picture Post*, 'BackStage: 1940', 19 October, 1940.
- 56 Apart from her appearances at the Windmill Theatre, Desiree also appeared in *Strike up the Music* at the London Coliseum and *Black Vanities* at the Victoria Palace in 1941, *Wild Rose* at Prices Theatre in 1942, *Looking for a Melody* in 1943 and in *Phyllis Dixey's Peek-a-boo* at the Whitehall Theatre in 1945 and 1946.
- 57 Her brother Elsley Cooper recalls her appearing in *Lilliput* and *Men Only*. Correspondence 14 June, 2018.
- 58 Roye, *Nude Ego*(London: Hutchinson, 1955), p.136. He states: "Desiree posed for me more than any other girl". He describes her as "the photographer's dream-model come to life" and having a "fascinating dual personality, an amazing blend of ingenuousness and sophistication". However, the contract does not appear to have been exclusive as Desiree was photographed by at least one other photographer ('Jason' in a book entitled *Blonde and Brunette: Thirty-two studies in the nude* published by Chapman and Hall, 1941.
- 59 Photographers such as John Everard, Bertram Park, Yvonne Gregory and Walter Bird. Bird, Everard and Roye in 1939 set up a joint company to sell their work called Photo Centre Ltd. They also published two books containing work by the three partners, *Eves Without Leaves* and *More Eves Without Leaves*. See Roye's biography: *Roye, Nude Ego* (London: Hutchinson, 1955), pp.151-152.
- 60 Desiree appeared, for example, on the cover of *Health & Efficiency* (a British naturist magazine) in February 1944 (Vol.14, No.2).
- 61 John Berger in the 1972 Television series *Ways of Seeing* broadcast by the BBC and in the 1972 book of the same name published by Penguin, London. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, edited by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford, 1999), pp.833-844.
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