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**“Something Radically Wrong
Somewhere”: The Kindred of the Kibbo
Kift, 1920-1932**

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M.A. History, B.A. History with a minor in Political Science

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Abstract

This thesis examines the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift, a co-educational outdoors organisation that claimed to be a youth organisation and a cultural movement active from August 1920 to January 1932. Originally part of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Kibbo Kift offers rich insight into the interwar period in Britain specifically because it carried forward late Victorian and Edwardian ideology in how it envisioned Britain. Members constructed their own historical narrative, which endeavoured to place the organisation at the heart of British life. The organisation's internal life revolved around the unique mythology members developed, and the movement aspired to regenerate Britain after the First World War physically and spiritually.

This thesis argues Kibbo Kift was a distinctive movement that drew upon its members' intellectual preoccupations and ideals and inspired its members to create unique cultural artefacts. While the Kibbo Kift was ultimately too politically ambiguous to have lasting political impact on a national scale, examining the organisation offers important insight into intellectual thought and cultural production during the British interwar period. This thesis charts the changes the organisation underwent through its membership and the different trends of intellectual thought brought in by individual members, such as its leader, John Hargrave, brought to the group. It examines the cultural production of the organisation's unique mythology, which created a distinctive historical narrative. It surveys gender issues within the organisation through the "roof tree", an experimental family unit, and the group's increasing anti-feminism. Finally, it considers how Clifford H. Douglas' economic theory of social credit caused the Kibbo Kift to transform into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit and later into the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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Dedication

For Tutu and Yeh-Yeh

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 “Keeness and Common Sense”? The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift was an organisation that thrived on the personal experiences and ideals of its individual members. It was also a communal body that members gathered around to exchange ideas and ideals. Dedicated members were independently opinionated but collectively collaborative. They worked together in attempts to bring to fruition their individual hopes and dreams for Britain following the First World War. What it meant to be a member of the Kibbo Kift developed in tandem with the overall purpose of the organisation. The Kibbo Kift and its membership waxed and waned together from its founding on 18 August 1920 until the organisation fully transformed into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit in January 1932. This outdoors coeducational organisation originally appealed to a variety of people interested in a new and unique forum for expressing unusual ideas, some of which attracted the attention of Special Branch and M.I.5. Ultimately, members envisioned the Kibbo Kift as the solution to the problems of their age. Together, they would be the heralds of a better world.

How to bring about a better world meant constantly defining and redefining the purpose of the organisation and of its members. In 1931, a small, tan-coloured 52-page booklet entitled *Kibbo Kift* was published. It was written by John Hargrave, the founder and Head Man of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. Better known within the organisation by his

woodcraft name, “White Fox”; he was referred to by both names on the title page of the booklet. Hargrave began with an exposition upon what a male member of the Kibbo Kift, who was called a Kinsman, should aspire to be:

The making of a Kinsman depends, first of all, upon a clear understanding of the aims and methods of The Kindred.

After that it depends, to a great extent, on his own keenness and common sense.¹

The two sentences were broken into their own paragraphs in order to outline a hierarchy between the two key requirements to be a Kinsman. The first requirement of a Kinsman was to understand what the Kibbo Kift as an organisation aimed for and its methods. The second requirement of keenness and common sense placed responsibility upon the Kinsman to motivate and guide his own self. With the Kibbo Kift as the guiding body of Kinsmen and personal experience motivating the individual Kinsman, the organisation itself emerged as a governing body of its members.

This, however, gave little idea to a new reader of what the Kibbo Kift was, what it did, and what its aims and motivations were. It was not, ironically, an explanation that demonstrated much common sense. Rather, it catered to those already in the know and who had prior exposure and understanding to John Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift’s discourse. At the

¹ The Youth Movement Archives are currently held by the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science. This archive includes members’ personal papers and the official papers of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift, the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit, and the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (SCP). Some files are erroneously labelled by date and have misspelled names of person and items. Sources will be referenced as YMA/section of collection/call number, further identifiers. Here: YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 1.

beginning of the 1920s, the phrase “Kibbo Kift” meant “great strength” and were words that were meant to carry power and promise.² While the phrase was supposed to have its origins in an archaic dialect, its exact form was coined by Hargrave in the May 1920 issue of the scouting publication, *The Trail*. The rest of the booklet was largely concerned with Clifford Hughes Douglas’ economic theory of social credit and its possible political and social applications within 1930s Britain. The booklet acted in practise less as an explanation of what the Kibbo Kift was but as promotional material for social credit. From this booklet, the Kinsman and the Kibbo Kift itself emerged as political entities concerned first and foremost with economic reform and political and social revitalisation.

This Kinsman and the Kibbo Kift bore little resemblance to the organisation founded a decade earlier in 1920. That Kinsman spent his weekends outdoors, camping in hand-painted tents and hiking in rain or shine. He carved wooden totems with Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, woven on standing looms secured to trees, and met up with fellow Kinsmen and women to sit around a campfire and exchange stories and songs. Members wrote extensively on the mythology of the Great Spirit, a broadly framed spiritual being that drew inspiration from multiple world religions. They envisioned reviving British society and culture from the ravages of the First World War by remodelling the family and bringing together men, women, and children to promote physical and mental health through outdoors living and education.

² The Kinlog along with other written material, photographs, and art of the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP are collected in the Social and Working History Collection, Museum of London. There are multiple catalogue numbers for some items and some items are erroneously labelled by date and name. For comprehensiveness, all items in this collection will be referred as MOL/SWHC/L198/call specifications. Here: MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 20.

This early version of the Kibbo Kift attracted support and some public endorsement from notable figures including writer H.G. Wells, scientist Julian Huxley, and rural revivalist Rolf Gardiner. The Kibbo Kift produced cultural artefacts dedicated to its utopian, mythological, and primitive aesthetic. This included an illuminated manuscript called the Kinlog which recorded the organisation's history and written and illustrated by Kinlog Scriptor, Kathleen M. Milnes.

By 1931, when the booklet *Kibbo Kift* was published, camping and hiking in the country were exchanged for marching and speeches in the city. The Great Spirit was exchanged for the economic system of social credit, and the Kibbo Kift aimed to change Britain not in its spiritual life but its political and economic habits. The booklet pointed out poignantly that “a Kinsman looks around him, just as you do, and sees that there [is] Something Radically Wrong Somewhere”.³ While the organisation was still attempting to address social issues, it was well under way to transforming into something completely different. The wording of this passage was deliberately vague to avoid narrowing down what issues the transforming Kibbo Kift could cover and was an attempt to sound both mysterious and comprehensive. The organisation had greatly changed over the course of a decade.

In fact, it had changed so greatly that, in January 1932, it renamed itself as the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit and gradually phased out public mentions of the Kibbo Kift, its outdoors practises, and its spiritual beliefs. It rebranded itself to promote social credit, making “a complete change without a break, from a cultural movement into a potentially powerful political instrument”.⁴ Some aspects of the Kibbo Kift's utopian ideals still underpinned the evolving organisation in its theatre and song as well as in the continuation of

³ YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 9 (capitalisation as in original text).

⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 87.

the Kinlog, which continued to document the internal life of the Green Shirts Movement and the subsequent transformation on 16 September 1936 to the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (SCP).

It would be all too easy to write off the early Kindred of the Kibbo Kift as an elitist and philosophically confused breakaway of the Boy Scouts. The Kibbo Kift was characterised by elaborate rituals, select membership, and a complex and ever-changing internal language of symbols. The Kibbo Kift was often internally at odds with how to intermingle within the political and social atmosphere of interwar Britain. The Woodcraft Folk, a coeducational outdoors organisation focused on children, grew out of the first major ideological split from the Kibbo Kift by a group of members called the Brockley Thing in August 1924. The Kibbo Kift itself would eventually transform into the Green Shirt Movement and then the SCP. The organisation actively attempted to adapt to changing beliefs and motivations inside as well as outside of the organisation. The Kibbo Kift's legacy as its subsequent political organisations has, however, overshadowed it in history as an organisation in its own right. Although it was never larger than 300 active and mainly English members at a given moment and it ultimately failed to achieve any of its original seven goals for world order, the Kibbo Kift sheds light on British interwar society and culture as it rapidly changed following the First World War.

The Kibbo Kift attempted to influence society and culture by relying on ideologies that had their roots prior to the First World War. Members drew from their various intellectual backgrounds in scouting and woodcraft and conceptualised the world around them with ideas and language based in popular eugenic science and folk revival. To fully understand the Kibbo Kift as an independent organisation and a cultural movement, it is necessary to examine its origin in its members and their intellectual thought rooted in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. These influences included and were not limited to the ideology of rural utopia, late Victorian and Edwardian anxieties of degeneration, *fin-de-siècle* pessimism,

adventure and naturalist literature, and folk revival-influenced Anglo-Saxon, Egyptian, and Norse mythology. It is then necessary to map how, over the course of the 1920s, membership shifted and how evolving gender roles and ideals of domesticity as well as conflicts of political and social interests within the Kibbo Kift guided and changed the organisation.

The Kibbo Kift went through three distinct phases over the course of its existence. The first Kibbo Kift lasted from August 1920 to the Althing of 1924. This iteration was the direct breakaway from the Boy Scouts led by John Hargrave that attracted the suffragette Emmeline Pethnick-Lawrence, the writer H.G. Wells, and the scientist Julian Huxley among others. The second phase lasted from late 1924 to 1928 following the split of the Woodcraft Folk, then called the Brockley Thing, and culminating with Hargrave's *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift: A Declaration and General Exposition of the Work of the Kindred* in 1927. The third phase occurred from 1929 to 1931 when, following its first Educational Exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery in the East End of London, the Kibbo Kift went into decline as it began to fully transform into the Green Shirts.

Throughout these three periods, there were two overarching philosophical themes: anxiety over the perceived degeneration of the British people and the Kibbo Kift's utopian vision of a regenerated, peaceful world. Therefore, this thesis seeks to examine the utopian ideology and dystopian vision of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. It examines their fears of racial and moral degeneration in industrialised Britain following the First World War. These built upon late Victorian and Edwardian anxieties about the British race and its moral calibre. To combat degeneration, the Kibbo Kift imagined and attempted to implement a regenerative process rooted in both open-air activity and Darwinian and Henri-Louis Bergson's theories of

evolution. Through this peculiar combination, they attempted to craft a new and supposedly, in Hargrave's words, "natural" British people and society.⁵

This thesis will also analyse how gender was interpreted and performed in the Kibbo Kift as part of and also at times at odds with its utopian narrative. While there was a well-developed ideal Kinsman, the Kinswoman was not as philosophically developed. Tensions regarding feminism, post-war changes to family structure and the domestic sphere, and the lack of women in positions of authority within the organisation fuelled intellectual debate in publications and influenced membership of the Kibbo Kift itself. While the organisation attracted suffragist membership in the early 1920s, the gradual move away from feminist ideals contributed to the major split in membership that occurred from late 1924 to 1926. This change in ideology was reflected in the published writing of the organisation, particularly the "roof tree" experimental family and in Vera Chapman's women's magazines, *Distaff* (1926) and *Hearthfire* (1928). Ultimately, while female gender roles started out as somewhat ambiguous in the early Kibbo Kift, the role of the Kinswoman became increasingly traditional as the decade progressed.

The life of the Kibbo Kift peaked during the second period of its activity in 1927 when *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* was published. This book expounded the political ideals through promotion of social credit and the social values and utopian vision of the Kibbo Kift lifestyle. In that year, there were two monthly publications available to members of the Kibbo Kift and to the public through subscription. The first was *Broadsheet*, which was aimed at adults and featured general Kibbo Kift organisation news as well as opinion pieces, and the second was *The Wikiup*, which was aimed at under-18s and featured scouting and woodcraft

⁵ John Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home: The Natural Reconstruction of an Unnatural Existence* (London: Constable, 1919).

lore and instruction.⁶ The Teacher's Guild was founded to promote and implement the Kibbo Kift's educational policy of recapitulation, which was based on G. Stanley Hall's childhood and adolescent developmental theory. 1927 was also the year in which Kathleen Milnes, whose woodcraft name was "Blue Falcon," took on the task of creating and maintaining the Kinlog, a large leather-bound illuminated manuscript that acted as the living history of the Kibbo Kift. The Kinlog acted, even after the Kibbo Kift transformed into the Green Shirts and later the SCP, as a community text and to a certain extent as a spiritual text, telling the story of the movement and attempting to place it in the larger history of the time. John Hargrave, in addition to writing *The Confession*, began two years of a weekly political cartoon feature in Kibbo Kift Press imprint publications in addition to those produced for English newspapers. Welsh photographer Angus McBean, known in the Kibbo Kift as "Angus Og", photographed the mumming plays put on by the Kibbo Kift at that year's Althing, the yearly gathering of the Kindred in the summer, and Gleemote, the yearly arts and music-focused gathering in the early fall.

Despite this flurry of activity visible in public newspapers and the private camps of the Kibbo Kift, the organisation's place in history has been opaque for both its contemporary observers and scholars attempting to situate it. As its public face and relationship with the press changed rapidly, it often appeared at odds with contemporary trends, such as by promoting social credit instead of more popular political ideologies. The most cohesive historical writing on the Kibbo Kift centres on the successor organisations which promoted social credit. When the Kibbo Kift has been mentioned in scholarly writing on the interwar period, it has been eclipsed by the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides or by its own successor group,

⁶ YMA/KK/170.

the Woodcraft Folk. This thesis will work to treat the Kibbo Kift as a movement in its own right as well as examine its impact upon British interwar society and culture.

1.2 The Historiography of the Kibbo Kift

The rapid changes in the Kibbo Kift's form and membership along with its often contradictory political agenda have not been lost on the handful of scholars who have worked on the Kibbo Kift. John Springhall and John Finley were the two main scholars who worked on the organisation and its political afterlife in the 1970s. Both focused their research more on the political afterlife of the Green Shirts and SCP, Springhall primarily focusing on the British activities.⁷ Finley looked across the Atlantic to Alberta, Canada, where social credit experienced moderate local political success in the 1930s.⁸ Both benefited from interviews with John Hargrave and other members of the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP. Both, however, left out the intricate mythology that the Kibbo Kift built up around itself except to reference the secrecy and exclusivity of the organisation. Springhall in particular was quick to write off the Kibbo Kift, calling it “esoteric” and “obscured by much pretentious ritual”.⁹ Both Finley and Springhall also largely left out the role of women in all three of the organisations.

The Kibbo Kift's life prior to social credit's influence was less well-documented within the movement itself than the years following 1924, and the political narrative has dominated

⁷ John Springhall, *Youth, Empire, and Society: British Youth Movements, 1883-1940* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1977).

⁸ John Finley, *Social Credit: the English Origins* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972).

⁹ Springhall, *Youth, Empire, and Society*, p. 114.

the majority of scholarly literature on the Kibbo Kift. Mark Drakeford's *Social Movements and Their Supporters: The Green Shirts in England* addressed astutely the life of the Green Shirts and SCP in connection to various political movements and social preoccupations in 1930s London.¹⁰ He spent little time on situating or discussing the Kibbo Kift, which provides little more than an eccentric foundation for its successor groups. He also declined to discuss the Kibbo Kift's early associations with primitivism, evolutionary theory, and eugenics when these associations were the primary draw for many of the early Kibbo Kift membership. For political scholars, both prior to and after the literary and post-structural turn, it appeared that the Kibbo Kift was deeply problematic to situate and, therefore, it was downplayed or omitted from the main narrative.

The Kibbo Kift had multiple narratives that were shaped by multiple sources. Members utilised myths and fiction to situate themselves expressively and imaginatively in the contemporary period. They brought into the present ideas of the past and consciously attempted to reconstruct their present. How the Kibbo Kift understood and constructed their historical understanding was deeply entwined with how they experienced the present. This bore similarity to how tropes taken from literature allowed nineteenth century historians to identify and establish “stages of consciousness through which mankind has passed from primitivism to civilisation”.¹¹ The members of the Kibbo Kift utilised tropes to address the post-First World War world that they lived in as a whole. They desired to place themselves in a historically significant position by constructing the organisation's origins in relation to

¹⁰ Mark Drakeford, *Social Movements and Their Supporters: The Green Shirts in England* (London: Palgrave MacMillan Press, 1997).

¹¹ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), p. 32.

broader ideas of what had been influential in the past and reference to a broad political, spiritual, literary, and philosophical canon.

From a historical perspective, approaching the First World War and its aftermath has necessitated a multifaceted analysis and narrative. Arthur Marwick's influential book, *The Deluge*, mapped how the war affected Britain on political, social, and economic levels together to give a rich account of the British experience.¹² Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* brought literature and history together in its discussion of how memory, eulogy, and discontent in post-First World War fiction, poetry, and memoirs reflected the upheaval in British society following the war.¹³ These two books represented a liberal narrative of the First World War and interwar period; this narrative sought to chart and embrace change particularly during the years following the war. A more conservative view from George Robb's work noted that "the conservatism of British culture acted to constrain or absorb change".¹⁴ Gerald J. De Groot's *Blighty* argued that, despite great advances in technology and the sciences, the late Victorian and Edwardian social structures in Britain remained, especially in the upper classes.¹⁵ The political language of historical monographs

¹² Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War*. 1965. 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan Press, 1991).

¹³ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*. 1975. Revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 3.

¹⁵ Gerald J. De Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1996).

on the First World War and interwar period has been split regarding the concepts and measurement of change and progress.

There was a growing popular interest in non-Christian belief systems, such as Buddhism and Confucianism. Often, only a handful of aspects from these belief systems were appropriated and utilised by people drawn to them through popular media, such as adventure novels and naturalist accounts of foreign lands to Britain. This led to a type of othering that was connected to the search for origins of human civilisation by looking for primitive aspects in ethnic practises of the other.¹⁶ In my master's thesis, I discussed the early intellectual thought of John Hargrave and his preoccupation with primitivism in relation to his memoir of his service in Gallipoli as a stretcher bearer and primitivism's influence on Hargrave's early intellectual thought as iterated in his 1919 book, *The Great War Brings It Home: The Natural Reconstruction of an Unnatural Existence*.¹⁷ This idealised primitivism was the central theme of Hargrave's regenerative rhetoric during the first half of the 1920s. It was characterised by Springhall as mere “romantic tribalism” but in reality far more central and nuanced to the early Kibbo Kift than that.¹⁸ I drew methodologically from Marianna Torgovnick's influential book, *Gone Primitive*, which brought the ideology and prevalent cultural influence of the primitive in Interwar Europe to the forefront of art criticism.¹⁹ Rossetti's *Imagining the Primitive* adeptly applied ideas of the primitive to naturalist literature, utilising images of

¹⁶ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1978).

¹⁷ Rachel K. Cheng, “‘I Went Alone!': John Hargrave and the Origins of the Kibbo Kift” (MA dissertation, University College London, 2012).

¹⁸ Springhall, *Youth, Empire, and Society*, p. 114.

¹⁹ Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

animals to chart the metaphorical descent or ascent of man's moral state in social commentary.²⁰ Joel Kahn discussed John Hargrave and the early Kibbo Kift's connection to the development of “plural or multiple modernities” in the early twentieth century, which competed for justification and authenticity in a period of social and philosophical upheaval.²¹ Using the theme of primitivism, the Kibbo Kift emerged as an organisation concerned with the physical and moral state of Britain and actively engaging in early interwar period trends of Western intellectual thought. It did not intend to become removed from society nor was it one that only interacted with one select aspect of British life.

More recently, Matthew de Abaitua's 2011 autobiography mixed with aspects of cultural history, *The Art of Camping*, re-examined the legacy of the Kibbo Kift through its impact on English camping mythology and methods in its own time and through interviews with a handful of members' descendants. Characterising the Kibbo Kift as “a select group of hikers and campers [who] sought to change the direction of Western civilization,” de Abaitua discussed how *The Great War Brings It Home*, published at the end of the First World War, was a reactionary piece to the time period.²² This stance colours his historical examination of the Kibbo Kift, placing it within the historical narrative of the 1920s once more as an oddity with a handful of devoted followers and not much influence beyond. The question is, as

²⁰ Gina M. Rossetti, *Imagining the Primitive in Naturalist and Modernist Literature* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

²¹ Joel S. Kahn, *Modernity and Exclusion* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2001), p. 15.

²² Matthew de Abaitau, *The Art of Camping: The History and Practice of Sleeping under the Stars* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2011), p. 95.

Craven noted, “does a tiny organisation like the Kibbo Kift warrant close historical attention?”²³

I argue, along with two recent works, that it does. Cathy Ross’s recent book, *Designing Utopia: John Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift*, sets Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift within a narrative of an organisation searching for spiritual enlightenment and utopia.²⁴ Ross worked to distil how the Kibbo Kift attempted to represent and express its utopian ideology through its art as well as how it evolved visually upon transformation into the Green Shirts and later the SCP. To do this, she concentrated on Hargrave’s ideas and influence over the movements, interweaving the art of the movement with changes in Hargrave’s interests and political and social opinions. Recent research has had a tendency to focus on Hargrave as the central and leading figure in the legacy of the Kibbo Kift and its successor groups. Ross argued that utopian ideals were the primary motivator of the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations, and the organisation flourished in its attempts to design the society it envisioned. Ross constructed the life and performance of the Kibbo Kift under the leadership and firmly guided by John Hargrave. Hargrave was the central character, leader, and inspiration of the group. Ross' work combined Hargrave's bibliography with a continual account of the Kibbo Kift through the SCP and continued to Hargrave's death on 21 November 1982.

The history of the movements that Hargrave led appeared cohesive as Ross focused on Hargrave and the SCP's monarchist leanings in the mid-1930s. She argued that “the United Social Credit Kingdom of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland” that the organisation

²³ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 16.

²⁴ Cathy Ross and Oliver Bennett, *Designing Utopia: John Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd., 2015).

attempted to bring about was another mythical kingdom not dissimilar to what the Kibbo Kift has once envisioned.²⁵ This ideal, however, did not remain stagnant nor a regular focus. Using Hargrave's bibliography as a mirror to the life of the Kibbo Kift, while useful in adhering to a chronological structure, offered a lopsided impression of continuity of an organisation that was not always continuous in its ideas and general membership. The SCP, much as its predecessors, moved on from that particular idea in the late 1930s, and the organisation increasingly fragmented during the Second World War and after. Hargrave's leadership, while a central feature to the group, was also a decentralising presence; members who did not agree with him were fated to go separate ways. The drastic changes to the organisations' ideologies were also indicative that there were aspects of the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP that were vitally different from each other, despite Hargrave's leadership remaining stable from the 1920s through 1950s.

Annebella Pollen solidly situated the Kibbo Kift within modernism, noting that it represented Tim Armstrong's "contradictions of modernism" that combined a desire to move away from the immediate past with a "fetishisation" of periods further back.²⁶ The Kibbo Kift produced an alternative modernism through "their visual and material output", which was also their greatest contribution to British society and culture.²⁷ The impact of the Kibbo Kift was, as Pollen acknowledged and this thesis will argue, rather opaque and little known in its contemporary time period as well as today. This book supplemented her and Nayia

²⁵ Ross and Bennett, *Designing Utopia*, p. 1.

²⁶ Annebella Pollen, *The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift: Intellectual Barbarians* (London: Donlon Books, 2015), p. 202; Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005).

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 203.

Yiakoumaki's exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery, "Intellectual Barbarians: The Kibbo Kift Kindred", which ran from 15 October 2015 to 13 March 2016. This exhibition featured papers, photographs, and ephemera from the 1929 Whitechapel Education Exhibition put on by the Kibbo Kift's Teachers Guild.²⁸ Acting as a retrospective on the 1929 exhibition as well as an examination of the creative output of the Kibbo Kift itself, this 2016 exhibition gave insight into the later years of the Kibbo Kift.²⁹ The primary claim of the exhibition was that the items on display "[presented] a forgotten English social movement with a futuristic utopian vision that continues to resonate today".³⁰ Pollen's book and the exhibition aimed to increase awareness and interest in the Kibbo Kift. At times, however, the exhibition's goal of increasing awareness and interest came at the cost of being analytical of the more "problematic" aspects including the Kibbo Kift's enthusiasm for eugenics and issues with race that Pollen acknowledged in the book.³¹

The exhibition also had very little to do both visually and ideologically with the original Education Exhibition that it was supposedly recreating. The 1929 Educational Exhibition aimed to inform people of the Kibbo Kift's activities, explain and promote its recapitulation theory of education, and entice interested members of the public to join. This exhibition took place fairly late in the Kibbo Kift's lifetime and reflected the late 1920s focus upon educational policy as advocated by its Teacher's Guild. It was one of the first public

²⁸ "Intellectual Barbarians: The Kibbo Kift Kindred." 10 October 2015 – 13 March 2016.

Whitechapel Galleries, London.

²⁹ "Press Release – Intellectual Barbarians: The Kibbo Kift Kindred." Whitechapel Galleries. 15 June 2015.

³⁰ Entrance placard. "Intellectual Barbarians: The Kibbo Kift Kindred."

³¹ Pollen, *The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift*, p. 100.

displays of the Kibbo Kift's work, featuring costumes and photographs along with lectures on the Kibbo Kift Educational Policy and Method by members of the Teacher's Guild. The Educational Policy concentrated on relocating schools out of towns, building Open-Air Schools that were camps, and revising and providing equipment "in such a manner that the 'leading out' of individual personalities against a world background will be assured".³² It focused on developing children's understanding of economics alongside development and enrichment of the body and culture. It addressed that culture should influence the mind and religion, which included the spirit. This "final aim therefore of education [was] to develop a faithful service to the glory of God in everyday life".³³ In all of this, the Educational Policy meant to develop within children the Kibbo Kift's World Concept, the peaceful out-of-doors society that was ruled by the elements and a personal relationship with the Great Spirit. The 1929 Educational Exhibition that the Teacher's Guild put on in Whitechapel, London also contained a display addressing the issue of the unemployed.³⁴

In the Kibbo Kift's characteristic fashion, the exhibition attempted to discuss and promote a large number of ideas, filling the space that it occupied to the brim with about twenty displays. The recent exhibition was well-designed and made good use of audio recordings of Hargrave and Stanley Dixon by Chris Judge Smith in the 1970s and early 80s, but it was curiously divorced from the Educational Exhibition it was supposedly recreating. It was, more than a recreation, a retrospective on the Kibbo Kift itself. In its attempt to interest people in the Kibbo Kift, it also took the items on display out of their original context and applied to them the idea that the Kibbo Kift could be potentially subversive and radical.

³² YMA/KK/28, Kibbo Kift: Educational Policy and Method, p. 1.

³³ *ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁴ YMA/Hargrave/42.1, paper scrap stored in diary for 1938.

Although parts of the Kibbo Kift had subversive or radical elements, this approach risked promoting one of the major issues of the Kibbo Kift itself: the organisation carried forward Edwardian ideas of gender and race. It was also firmly rooted in Hargrave's authoritarian and undemocratic leadership.

Ultimately, Hargrave remained the major voice in how the Kibbo Kift has been portrayed. He both shaped the reception of the organisation and has remained a prominent figure in the accounts of it. While Hargrave was the leader of these groups and the obvious central character, his ideas and ideologies were not all these groups had. Aside from this thesis, the only work that has delved into this was Matthew de Abaitua's camping memoir, which situated the Kibbo Kift in the larger and continuing canon of British camping. The chapter devoted to the Kibbo Kift included interviews with descendants of members and reflected how the Kibbo Kift, while short-lived and with minimal political impact on wider society, mattered in individual members' lives. Camping remained a passion for many members after the dissolution of the Kibbo Kift, and some of the mythical and medieval imagery was maintained, in one particular case as heirloom items.³⁵ The fondness that members held for the Kibbo Kift differed from the associations with the later groups, and, among family, the Kibbo Kift appeared to be a positive part of former members' lives.

Overall, recent research has generally upheld the centrality of Hargrave's leadership as the guiding force behind the organisation. This thesis argues that while Hargrave was important, but his ideas were also contested and further developed by other members. Recent research has promoted the visual and aesthetic life of the Kibbo Kift as its major cultural contribution to the point of downplaying the nuanced intellectual and mythological life of the organisation. This may be because the intellectual thought, mythology, and domestic ideology

³⁵ de Abaitua, *The Art of Camping.*, p. 118.

of the Kibbo Kift, which guided the visual and material life of the organisation, was ultimately not communicated to the general public and became obscured by social credit. This thesis shows that legacy of the Kibbo Kift was not only in its visual and aesthetic remains but also in the complex and often contradictory aspects of the membership, intellectual thought, mythology, and gendered performance of the organisation both internally and externally.

Moreover, the Kibbo Kift endeavoured to be all-encompassing of human existence. The organisation and its members attempted to address everyone's concerns ranging from but not limited to the right to vote to how to care for infants. They sought to influence humanity from birth to death, physically and spiritually. Due to their relatively short operational span of just over a decade before the organisation transformed into the Green Shirts, the Kibbo Kift's intellectual, spiritual, and educational philosophy did not have lasting impact in practical application. The organisation, however, left a legacy of cultural productions through its art.

To understand the Kibbo Kift's cultural production and therefore its legacy, it is necessary to engage analytically with the varied materials that inspired the Kibbo Kift and shaped the intellectual understanding and ideals of individual members. As inspiration ranged from Confucius as a spiritual figure to G. Stanley Hall's developmental psychology to Robert Lewis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, this thesis engages with multiple methodologies including literary theory and language pragmatics to examine the organisation as a whole. Although the organisation seems contradictory and often ambiguous, its function becomes clearer by analysing the context of members' ideas and ideals. Together, the members of the Kibbo Kift created a collective lexicon traceable in the organisation's publications and members' personal papers. This collective lexicon was an internal tool for rich discussion and debate that underpins the cultural production of the Kibbo Kift as a whole.

The push in both Ross and Pollen's work was to place the Kibbo Kift in a progressive, even radical historical narrative. This, however, faces the danger of overlooking the

ambivalent and archaic foundations of the Kibbo Kift's intellectual underpinnings. The primitive and barbarian ideology was constructed in modern terms but also attempted to bring forward older forms and structures of gender and society. This was most prominent in the organisation's shifting stance on feminism, beginning with ambivalence and ending in official rejection in Hargrave's *The Confession* in 1927, which bluntly stated it had moved away from feminist ideas and that "a 'women's movement' within The Kindred is an absolute impossibility".³⁶ The Kibbo Kift had alienated itself by this time from formerly supportive feminists and was in the process of transforming into something completely different. There were, however, complex stances within the membership, which I will examine by analysing Kathleen Milnes' draft speech about feminism and Kinswomen in my third chapter and in Vera Chapman's Kinswomen magazines in my fifth chapter. On the surface, the Kibbo Kift was a uniquely coeducational outdoors organisation that was supposed to be attractive to all ages. In practise, however, the male-female gender binary recognised by the Kibbo Kift was also a source of tension. Men and women were often against each other ideologically as much as they worked alongside each other. Membership of the Kibbo Kift was mostly young men and women in their twenties and thirties, and youth activities were not the main focus. Both the ideological changes regarding gender and its imagined domestic practise in what the Kibbo Kift termed the "roof tree" family unit will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

Although the organisation attracted women in equal and at times greater numbers than men, there has been almost no detailed analysis of the Kibbo Kift's female membership. Very little detailed attention has been paid to its female membership except to acknowledge that they were there. John Hargrave, Rolf Gardiner, Leslie Paul, and Charles A. Tracey have

³⁶ John Hargrave, *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift: A Declaration and General Exposition of the Work of the Kindred* (London: The Kin Press, 1927), p. 84.

dominated the historical narrative, partly because their papers have been preserved in their own sections of archives and partly, I suggest, because the published literature of the Kibbo Kift consciously neglected the female presence within the movement. The Kinswoman is a complex and sometimes troubled figure both in the historical narrative and in the Kibbo Kift itself. In an organisation supposedly inclusive of all ages and coeducational, the Kinswoman was much less defined than the Kinsman.

Marwick's conclusion that due to the First World War women were able to move from the private to the public space has come under increasing scrutiny within the last two decades.³⁷ Davidoff and Hall identified separate spheres between male and female, public and private in the mid-18th to mid-nineteenth centuries whilst also acknowledging that there was movement between these divisions.³⁸ Separate sphere ideology has remained influential and useful for examining the social changes and anxieties women faced in the interwar period. As historians Janet Wolff and Mica Nava pointed out, women have remained marginalised in the history of the public sphere in the 1920s. Research has been done about the movement of women from the private domestic space into public roles in the workplace in factory settings and in politics through suffrage during and following the First World War, but general “women's activities and labour, even where these are not confined to the home, are largely

³⁷ Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1972).

³⁸ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Classes, 1780-1850*. 1987. Revised ed. (London: Routledge, 2002).

invisible”.³⁹ Non-traditional modes of employment and domestic life remained outside of the historical narrative.

There were two main themes that connect the three different periods of the Kibbo Kift: utopian intellectual thought and gender. While utopian revisionisms of British society had been the prerogative of many over the centuries, the Kibbo Kift took a distinctive stance on not only how it envisioned a utopian Britain but also attempted to bring it about through completely peaceful means. Beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the utopian narrative was increasingly set in contrast to the dystopian narrative of industrialisation and destructive urban expansion. These “dark representations of the city” were connected to a rise of “urban criticism” and rural yearnings and imaginings in literature and popular culture.⁴⁰ In the essay compilation, *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*, which explored the temporal and spatial dimensions of the two interlinked concepts, Gordon, Tilley, and Prakash established that utopian and dystopian ideas and dialogue during this time were not just a British phenomenon.⁴¹ As the essays in this book argued, dialogues of utopia/dystopia occurred throughout the modern world as industry and intellectual exchange became increasingly globalised. Dennis Hardy was able to situate the Kibbo Kift in the English utopian community experiments during the first half of the twentieth century, defining the

³⁹ Mica Nava, “Modernity's Disavowal: Women, the City, and the Department Store,” *Modern Times: Reflection on a Century of English Identity*, eds. Mica Nava and Alan O'Shea (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 40.

⁴⁰ Gyan Prakash, *Noir Urbanisms: Dystopic Images of the Modern City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 2.

⁴¹ Michael D. Gordon, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash, eds. *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

concept and the debate surrounding utopia as its own “genre” within British literary and intellectual canon.⁴² The ideology of leisure camping in urban environments also became increasingly popular throughout the interwar period across Western Europe.⁴³ During this time, utopian communities were formed in reaction to *fin-de-siècle* anxieties and in relation to increasing awareness of what Antonio Gramsci defined cosmopolitanism and cultural hegemony.

The study of masculinities within gender history has grown since the 1990s through the work of Joanna Bourke, Michael Roper, John Tosh, and Jessica Meyer. Roper and Tosh worked together to discuss the often paradoxical methods of performing and conceptualising British masculinity in the past two centuries. In *Manful Assertions*, they and the contributing essayists argue that men's behaviour is dictated in opposition to women's, and British masculinity has been ultimately created and maintained by the subjugation of women over the past two hundred years.⁴⁴ There has been an interest in psychoanalytical approaches in gender history in the past decade with Michael Roper, Joan Scott, and Joanna Bourke utilising psychology and psychoanalysis in attempts to recover the experience of masculinity and gender from the past. Roper argued that, by applying psychoanalysis and sociological approaches to historical sources, it is possible to recover emotions and how they influence men's identity and narrative. He also drew into question “subjectivity” within gender history;

⁴² Dennis Hardy, *Utopian England: Community Experiments 1900-1945* (London: E & FN Spon, 2000), p. 5.

⁴³ Olivier Sirost, “Les débuts du camping en France : du vieux campeur au village de toile,” *Ethnologie française* 31, no. 4 (2001): 607-620, p. 609.

⁴⁴ Michael Roper and John Tosh, *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800*, (London: Routledge, 1991).

since an individual's personality and experiences influenced their gender identity and performance.⁴⁵ Scott established that, while "time and causality" were not the same in history as in psychology, psychoanalysis offered the historian a tool by which implicit information such as personal emotions and opinions influenced actions.⁴⁶ Emotions such as pain and fear were at the heart of Bourke's discourse on the male body in the First World War, and the male body itself became remembered as an object of public and private discourse.⁴⁷ The First World War marked a turning point in history of masculinities. Victorian and Edwardian values could be challenged, and this led to experiments with gender roles and performance in the interwar period. The Kibbo Kift was one such group as it was, for its time, novel as a coeducational organisation.

While there is this body of work that concerns First World War masculinities, it suffers from a lack of perspective outside of the literate and highly educated. In this, the Kibbo Kift offers a new perspective as its active membership was literate and educated but from a large variety of backgrounds. As an organisation, prominent members had different educational backgrounds, including Oxford-educated Julian Huxley and Vera Chapman and non-university educated John Hargrave and Kathleen Milnes. The Kibbo Kift's membership approached changes to gender normativity as part of the problems faced by society as a mass and held onto the notion that there should be an organisation, such as itself, that would guide society.

⁴⁵ Michael Roper, "Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History." *History Workshop Journal Issue 59* (2005): 57-72, p. 57.

⁴⁶ Joan W. Scott, "The Incommensurability of Psychoanalysis and History." *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 1053-1075, p. 63.

⁴⁷ Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*, rev. ed. (London: Reaktion Press Ltd., 1999).

Membership was entirely made up of the established elite, which allowed for new perspectives on how to influence and change the mass. The Kibbo Kift, however, did adhere to the existent dialogue around the mass. While Mangan and Walvin noted that “to encourage manliness among the poor and the deprived seemed to offer an antidote to a variety of human and social problems,” the voices of “the poor and deprived” are more difficult to recover in history.⁴⁸ This project is dependent on the literacy of the subjects under study and their willingness to record public or privately their experiences.

Those whose stories have been intimately and publicly recorded in war memoirs, like John Hargrave, dominated the discourse. As Jessica Meyer pointed out, personal narratives have aided gender historians greatly in examining identity in the First World War. Letters, autobiographies, and other forms of written narrative “present one very simple message: war changed men”.⁴⁹ At the same time, what has become the classical literature of the period reflected much the same class and racial anxieties as the literature before the war. John Carey's analysis of late-nineteenth to early twentieth-century British intellectuals placed the dialogue of anxiety and degeneration front and centre. From the point of view of intellectuals like H.G. Wells, D.H. Lawrence, and Virginia Woolf, “the masses were not merely degraded and threatening but also not fully alive”.⁵⁰ Carey's book was also important for its analysis of the interconnected and often contradictory relationship between the intellectual and the mass.

⁴⁸ J. A. Mangan and James Walvin, *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), p. 4.

⁴⁹ Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 162.

⁵⁰ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 10.

Especially after the First World War, the necessity of the mass was at juxtaposition with the distrust and dislike held by the upper classes.

The “philosophical pessimism” present in late nineteenth-century English sociocultural discourse gave away to the disillusionment of the Great War from which the Kibbo Kift also was born.⁵¹ The *fin-de-siècle* concern with degeneration originating from general Western cultural anxieties in the late nineteenth century and encapsulated in 1892 by Max Nordau's now infamous *Entartung (Degeneration)* continued throughout the interwar period and contributed to the distrust and dislike of the mass. As Nathan Roberts pointed out, “matters of citizenship and the health of the society were seen to concern more than a wealthy minority”.⁵² Stephan Collini's article on the definition and concept of character tracks the evolution of character as an ideal and preoccupation of “the political thought of the Victorian period,” whilst acknowledging that defining what the ideal character was differed greatly within Victorian political thought itself.⁵³ Tammy Proctor aimed to untangle the female perspective to scouting and character-building discourse in her 2002 book on the Girl Guides of Interwar Britain with a “bottom up” approach rather than focusing solely on the ideology and actions of youth leaders.⁵⁴ Her book's success lay in her discussion of adult anxieties about maintaining

⁵¹ Nicholas Shrimpton, “Lane, You're a Perfect Pessimist': Pessimism and the English 'Fin de siècle',” *The Yearbook of English Studies* 37.1 (2007): 41-57, p. 49.

⁵² Nathan Roberts, “Character in the Mind: Citizenship, Education and Psychology in Britain, 1880-1914,” *History of Education* 33.2 (2004): 177-197, p. 180.

⁵³ Stephan Collini, “The Idea of 'Character' in Victorian Political Thought,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 35 (1985): 29-50 p. 31.

⁵⁴ Tammy Proctor, “*On My Honour*”: *Guides and Scouts in Interwar Britain* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2002), p. 3.

strength as an imperial power through nationalism. The perceived need to build a certain type of physical and mental character of British youth affected the structure and activities of the Girl Guides during the Interwar Period. The Kibbo Kift sought to educate boys and girls alongside each other. It attempted to address the character of both sexes and further blending the stark distinctions set out by its predecessors. It was, however, unsuccessful as its philosophy in character training remained both lopsided with that of the boys far more developed than the girls and because the organisation rapidly and constantly changed its stances and approaches.

1.3 Approaching the Kibbo Kift's History

The Kibbo Kift's place in history of Britain in the interwar period remains opaque for a large part because it did not slot neatly into a particular category of youth movements. In terms of its active membership, it was only nominally a youth movement. Most of its active membership throughout its existence was well above the age of 18. It broke away from the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides and drew much of its early membership through that, but, unlike the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and the Boy's Brigade, recruitment of youth was never a main focus of the Kibbo Kift. Although it held two youth camps called the Dexter "Fam" Camps in 1927 and 1928, those below the age of 18 were not considered full members of the organisation and were therefore not consistently recorded; rather, adult members who acted as teachers were.⁵⁵ Instead, the Kibbo Kift spent the first half of the 1920s largely focused on legitimisation as a cultural movement among and through association with British political activists and literary intelligentsia. It did not, however, officially associate itself with the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry, which was also a scouting and woodcraft organisation. It also did not

⁵⁵ YMA/KK/26.

officially attach itself to other established outdoors education groups, such as the Camp Fire Girls. In Michael Rosenthal's biography of Robert Baden-Powell and analysis of the early years of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, Rosenthal situated Baden-Powell and scouting firmly into post-colonial dialogue about Edwardian militarism and usefully questions scouting groups as “agencies of social control”.⁵⁶ The Boy Scouts’ early association with the German *Wandervögel* fit well into this dialogue.⁵⁷ The Kibbo Kift, while undoubtedly influenced by its origins in the Scouts and Guides, was founded explicitly on a non-militaristic model and shunned association for money or political gain with religious bodies. Until D.H. Douglas's social credit was published in 1924, the Kibbo Kift was also, at least on the surface, apolitical and avoided discussion of empire. As an organisation, it flirted with but ultimately rejected over the course of its twelve years of activity overt connections to communism, socialism, and fascism. Individual members, however, began increasingly to align themselves with these political movements, leading to internal tensions and membership schisms.

In addition, the Kibbo Kift as a movement in its own right was confined to just over half of the interwar period and was not as neatly documented as its successors. It was formally founded in August 1920, influenced increasingly by social credit theory from 1924, and turned into the Green Shirts in 1931. The historical narratives of the Kibbo Kift, the Green Shirts, and the SCP have largely remained separate. While acknowledged as chronologically connected entities, the life of the Kibbo Kift was intrinsically different from the political parties that grew out of it. The Kibbo Kift's historical narrative therefore suffered

⁵⁶ Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory: Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts and the Imperatives of Empire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 7.

⁵⁷ John R. Gillis, “Conformity and Rebellion: Contrasting Styles of English and German Youth, 1900-33,” *History of Education Quarterly* 13: 3 (1973): 249-260, p. 250.

from a strange sort of othering as it was neither a political nor a social movement. It was a cultural movement with social and political aspects and appeared constantly at odds with the mainstream trends of British intellectual thought. As Frank Trentmann pointed out, there was a distinctly romantic element to the Kibbo Kift that wasn't generally included in the historical discussion of interwar youth groups.⁵⁸ The classification of the Kibbo Kift as a youth group was itself problematic as we have already seen.

To deal with the Kibbo Kift, it is therefore necessary to approach the organisation as a social and cultural movement and with an interdisciplinary lens that includes methods from art and literary criticism, gender studies, and philosophy. Only by examining the Kibbo Kift as a whole can its essence be fully captured. The organisation must be considered as a whole to begin to untangle the rapidly evolving ideology and how the organisation's history goes through three phases. Much of the ideology of the organisation did not make it into practise; new ideas were discussed in publications and private writing but only a handful were put into custom. The most important elements of this study are, therefore, distilling what the members of the Kibbo Kift did and what they envisioned as possible outcomes of their ideas and work.

Historians have utilised terms such as public and private, sex and gender, traditional and modern as analytical tools that gave perspective to the historical period, persons, and circumstances in which these terms were used. When members of the Kibbo Kift utilised these terms themselves, they did not treat these words as historians do. Often their usage of these terms was, from members' point of view, assumed to be self-evident. These terms served as states of being and were assumed to be universally held concepts. They were part of

⁵⁸ Frank Trentmann, "Civilization and Its Discontents: English Neo-Romanticism and the Transformation of Anti-Modernism in Twentieth-Century Western Culture," *Journal of Contemporary History* 29:4 (1994): 588-625, p. 589.

members' analysis of other concepts and ideologies. The implicit assumption was that the Kibbo Kift's audience was already informed on these supposedly universal ideas. At the same time, these ideas overlap and rapidly change over time and are additionally influenced by individual members. These terms and their usage reflected the highly personal nature of the organisation and individual members' identity within and outwith it. Therefore, this thesis will examine the terms as utilised by members within the context of the internal life of the organisation as well as from the contemporary historical perspective to illuminate the complex interplay of ideas and ideals that underpinned and guided organisation as a whole.

The Kibbo Kift itself wrote its own version of its history. The primary source of their personalised history was the highly stylised linguistically and visually organisational narrative in the Kinlog. Writing its own history to chronicle its public activities and its internal life and struggles, the organisation built up a sense of its importance to the wider events of the interwar period and developed an outwardly consistent version of internal events. At the same time, the Kinlog sometimes oversimplified, omitted, or outrightly contradicted accounts of events by others both inside and outside the organisation. This creates a complex, even ambiguous narrative. The Kinlog constructed a narrative that, by its very nature as living communal document of the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent life, was incomplete, constantly evolving, and occasionally deliberately partial.

Examining the Kibbo Kift in history requires engaging not only with the history that surrounds it but also with the history crafted by the organisation itself. The Kibbo Kift, through such books as the Kinlog, the Script of the Lodge of Instruction, which ran over the course of the 1920s, and Hargrave's early 1920s logbook *Ōm-Kā*, consciously and

meticulously constructed their own historical narrative visually and textually.⁵⁹ Using Biblical, mythological, and popular literary devices, they constructed a vision of the utopian world they desired alongside their activities and beliefs as an organisation. To a certain extent, they created and promoted a lifestyle based on fiction, embracing fictional elements in real life in hopes that they could create and regenerate reality. The internal history of the Kibbo Kift combined with the larger historical canon of post-First World War Britain. The Kibbo Kift's internal history is an often ambiguous narrative, but this narrative is no less historical and factual although it may contain fictional elements. By binding the internal history of the Kibbo Kift to its members' intellectual ideals, the organisation is no longer an anomaly. Rather than being fictitious, the Kibbo Kift is unique in how its members expressed themselves but also clearly a product of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Members observed the events and anxieties of its time, and they reacted by producing items of aesthetic value that created the Kibbo Kift's distinct internal history.

Utilising the literary references and invocations by the Kibbo Kift thus allows for a nuanced historical narrative closely connected to Interwar intellectual thought to emerge. The influence of naturalist writer and poet Henry David Thoreau and woodcraft and naturalist writer Ernest Thompson Seton was readily apparent and remained strong throughout the early 1920s in the Kibbo Kift. A 1989 article for *The Thoreau Society* gave a brief but insightful overview of the influence of Thoreau and *Walden* in particular on John Hargrave's philosophy of self-sufficiency in the outdoors.⁶⁰ Much like Thoreau in *Walden*, Hargrave did not want to

⁵⁹ MOL/SWHC/198/The Kinlog; *ibid.*/C2, Script of the Lodge of Instruction; *ibid.*/C2, Ōm-Kā.

⁶⁰ Lonnie L. Willis, "Thoreau and John Hargrave, English Founder of the Kibbo Kift," *The Thoreau Society Bulletin* 189 (1989): 1-3.

remove people from civilisation so much as he desired to reconnect human society with its basis in nature. This was an overarching theme in Kibbo Kift philosophy throughout the 1920s, echoed in Kathleen Milnes' private writing and in other members' contributions to Kibbo Kift magazines, *The Mark* and *The Nomad*. Joseph Craven's 1998 thesis identified and discussed influences of the naturalist and adventure literary genre on John Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift's founding philosophies. It specifically examined how the imagery of Native American and Indian peoples in naturalist and adventure authors' stories influenced the “strict ritual[s]” which characterised early Kibbo Kift gatherings and camping activities.⁶¹ James Webb's 1976 book, *The Occult Establishment*, discussed the rising interest in the late nineteenth through the twentieth century in the occult both as a concept and in practise in Britain and how the influence of the occult was present in many different political and social organisations from the period.⁶² The occult was also understood to mean not simply black or destructive magic but primarily non-Judeo-Christian belief systems that gained popular interest in the early part of the twentieth century.

On the surface, the Kibbo Kift did not appear to refute gendered trends of its period. The published literature aside from the internal newsletters of the Kibbo Kift by the Kibbo Kift was almost entirely written by John Hargrave. Articles within internal publications like *The Mark* and *The Nomad* were written by both male and female members of the Kibbo Kift. The authors' sexes were not readily apparent as articles were published under members' woodcraft names. Gender, when discussed, was a traditionalist conception of gender differences and, despite the coeducational face of the organisation, ideologically segregated:

⁶¹ Josef Francis Charles Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest: John Hargrave, the Kibbo Kift and the Woodcraft Experience” (Ph.D. dissertation, University College London, 1998), p. 2.

⁶² James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle: Open Court Publishing Company, 1976).

either the authors speak of men or they speak of women, never the two together. This did not, however, accurately reflect the internal membership or participation of both men and women in the Kibbo Kift. Beginning with a feminist following, the Kibbo Kift gradually moved away from association with and membership from feminist figures. The Kibbo Kift's active membership roster consisted at the beginning of the 1920s of a number of prominent female figures, including suffragettes Rosa May Billinghurst and Baroness Emmeline Pethnick-Lawrence of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). By 1927, however, there were no longer any women on the Kin Council, the general government of the organisation, and the Advisory Council list, which featured women, fell out of use. This dramatic shift in membership and what was considered desirable qualities of membership was echoed in the published literature with Vera Chapman's women's magazines, *Distaff* (1926) and *Hearthfire* (1928), and Hargrave's *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*.

1.4 This Thesis

Overall, the Kibbo Kift spent its existence attempting to address anxieties about the state of the British population at large. The Kibbo Kift's website reproduces the organisation's internal chronology of the movement's history, entitling the active years of the Kibbo Kift from 1921 to 1931 as "The First Phase," which purpose was specifically "to draw apart from the mass".⁶³ The mass that the Kibbo Kift withdrew from consisted of the general British populace which had fallen into degeneration from industrialisation and urbanisation, which fits firmly into H.G.Wells' dystopia and late Victorian and Edwardian rhetoric of degeneration. Their attempt to solve British degeneration was to engage, from 1927 onwards, in character-

⁶³ Kibbo Kift Foundation, "Kibbo Kift Chronology." <http://www.kibbokift.org/chronolo.html> (accessed 16 September 2016).

building education and promote social credit. Education and social credit occupied the second and third phases of the Kibbo Kift, returning to the group's origins in the Boy Scouts and borrowing age-stratified activities to shape both boys and girls into their ideal men and women. Education and character-building were, throughout the first half of the twentieth century explicitly intertwined. More often than not, there was a religious agenda to character-building programmes like those of the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and Boy's Brigade from which the Kibbo Kift grew. The Kibbo Kift attempted to move away from established religions, instead introducing Hargrave's concept of the Great Spirit, a God-like figure based in nature and the outdoors. This Great Spirit formed the spiritual base of the Kibbo Kift and served as the beginnings of its complex aesthetic and philosophy. The eight-part spiritual philosophy series on the Great Spirit that ran in *The Mark* in 1922 was written by Margaret A. Ormrod under the woodcraft name "Owaissa" and was the most detailed exposition on the Kibbo Kift's spiritual theory. The Great Spirit was an integral part of the Kibbo Kift's utopianism, the new spirituality in its regenerative vision of British civilisation.

Like the rather ambiguous Kinsman figure, character had no singular definition, and there was no one ideal type of character. Rather, there were multiple ideals and narratives of character in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, and there were no finite qualities ascribed to each ideal of character. This ambiguity was central to the Kibbo Kift, both in why it attracted some of its early membership and why it ultimately failed to succeed in its goal of reconstructing Britain into an outdoor-living, woodcraft-based society and culture. The Kibbo Kift engaged in a narrative of often divided dualities: primitive/civilised, male/female, conservative/liberal, positivism/pessimism, and regeneration/degeneration. These concepts were intertwined in the Kibbo Kift but also considered separate, and, particularly with primitive/civilised and male/female, the spaces in which these concepts met were sources of cultural tension within and outside of the organisation. The Kibbo Kift's rapidly evolving

definition of itself allowed for multiple narratives to occur alongside each other, which reflected internal tensions. While the Kibbo Kift only lasted a little over a decade before transforming into the Green Shirts, it was a rich and nuanced organisation that, much like Britain in the interwar period itself, was constantly and rapidly evolving in its internal questions and world view.

The Kibbo Kift's development is relevant to the history of post-First World War Britain not just because it is an interesting narrative but because close examination of the organisation offers insight into different trends of intellectual thought and performance of identity. The rapid and constant changes to the Kibbo Kift occurred not because the membership was divorced from issues and anxieties of its time but rather because they were reacting to the contemporary milieu. The interwar period saw continuation of late Victorian and Edwardian anxieties around racial degeneration in the Western world and of the imagery and metaphors that conducted scientific and social discussion of race prior to the First World War. Due to the social effects of the war, there was also an intense perceived need in the dialogue of anxiety both to prevent further degeneration and to rescue and regenerate a weakened Britain into a physically and morally strong state in order to avoid repeating the Great War. The Kibbo Kift attempted to be the solution, speaking through its early published literature to attract a mixture of intellectuals, educators, and like-minded individuals to participate in its grand, socially regenerating scheme.

This thesis begins by tracing the membership changes over three stages. It charts the early membership immediately post-First World War to the Kibbo Kift's founding in 1920, the first membership conflict with the growing prominence of social credit in 1924, and the second body of membership from 1925 to 1929 which focused on social credit and open air education. It also examines the Advisory Council, a published list of notable figures, alongside as well as separate of the Kibbo Kift's active membership. This third chapter is concerned

with the Kibbo Kift's intellectual thought, influences, and preoccupations. It discusses John Hargrave's early published writing, in particular *The Great War Brings It Home* and his idea of the Great Spirit, a God-like figure based in nature and the outdoors. This book formed the early blueprint for the Kibbo Kift's ideology and activities. This thesis argues, however, that Hargrave was not the only influence nor was he always in control of the different intellectual interests that other members, such as Kathleen Milnes, brought into the organisation. This chapter also discusses the decline of feminist influence in the Kibbo Kift over the 1920s. Originally a point of pride for the organisation, it became a source of internal conflict, culminating in an anti-feminist stance in the 1927 *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*. These two chapters together seek to establish that the Kibbo Kift was by no means a static or harmonious organisation. It may have been relatively small in number, but membership was active, argumentative, and energetic in attempting to address a multitude of social issues with ultimately little lasting success both on an organisational level and upon society at large. It wanted to do "something radically different somewhere" but was ultimately unable to come to agreement about what exactly that something was and where to carry it out.⁶⁴

The Kibbo Kift, however, was successful in developing a distinctive and rich mythological life. The fourth chapter of this thesis concerns the mythology of the Kibbo Kift that was built from the idea of the Great Spirit and combined existing mythologies, especially Anglo-Saxon and Norse. This mythology was the idealised world of the Kibbo Kift, a conceptual utopia that was to be brought about by the organisation's membership and its eventual influence upon society. While this ideal world never came to fruition, it served as the inspiration to much of the Kibbo Kift's seasonal celebrations and art as recorded and demonstrated in the Kinlog. This chapter argues that the Kibbo Kift created a new and unique

⁶⁴ YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 9.

mythology and associated rituals whilst drawing from Victorian and Edwardian notions of the spiritual and supernatural. The community text of the Kinlog also established an internal, organised history and therefore imposed a cohesive narrative for an often intellectually fragmented organisation.

While Ross and Pollen have argued that the Kibbo Kift's stance was radical and progressive in its art, this thesis maintains that the Kibbo Kift fit with its gendered and social ideals into a continuation of the anxieties centred on degeneration due to industrialisation. It was also reacting to post-war challenges to masculinity from feminism and shifts in the domestic sphere. The fifth chapter of this thesis addresses the Kibbo Kift's attempt to form a new family structure called a "roof tree" and a new communal and outdoors domestic space centred on the campfire. It also examines the lifestyle of the Kibbo Kift in the camp space and how members attempted to codify roles in running and living in the camp according to gender. The camp and the roof tree were ultimately a new form of the domestic sphere that in practise did not aim to change pre-existing masculine and feminine roles. Rather, it was the setting that changed, moving the home into a tent and the community camping space outdoors. The growing prominence in the Kibbo Kift of social credit ideology, however, prevented the new domestic space, family unit, and gender roles from fully taking shape as the organisation transformed into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit in 1932.

The sixth chapter of this thesis discusses the legacy of the Kibbo Kift. After transforming into the Green Shirts, the Kibbo Kift faded into the background both ideologically and visually. Social credit took the forefront, and the organisation became regularly watched by Special Branch. Much of the Kibbo Kift was removed from the public face of the organisation as hikes were exchanged for public marches and the Kin habit was changed into the Green Shirts' paramilitary uniform. It remained, however, in the double "K" logo of the Green Shirts and SCP, and the Kinlog continued to be updated until Hargrave's

death in 1980s. While the transformation of the organisation into the Green Shirts and later the SCP was unsuccessful on a political and social scale, the art and aesthetic life of the Kibbo Kift has had some lasting influence in continued scholarly interest and as artistic inspiration to artists such as Chris Judge Smith. The final chapter of this thesis draws together the nuanced story of the Kibbo Kift. It was a distinctive organisation that came about both as continuation of late Victorian and Edwardian values as well as in reaction to the First World War. By attempting to bring the British people into the outdoors, the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift imagined and attempted to bring about a physical and mythological rebirth of the body, mind, and spirit.

Chapter 2

Membership and Target Audience

2.1 “If You Stand for Peace”, Then Join the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

Despite being a separate organisation from the Boy Scouts since the beginning of the 1920s, the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift continued to target members. In a flyer entitled “Things All Scouts Should Know”, the organisation attempted to attract Scouts to “hike along to the camps of the K.K.”¹ The flyer, coloured attractively in green and red ink, featured a green-clad and hooded Kinsman kneeling to chat with a sitting Scout beside a strongly burning campfire. The Mark of the Kibbo Kift, a circular logo which featured a large “K”, burning campfire, and an evergreen tree, lay between them. The Kinsman in the flyer not only invited the Scout to hike but to think on how “if you stand for Peace you ought to understand the causes of modern war. Do you?” This barbed question revealed that, while the offer to hike with the Kibbo Kift was open to all Scouts, it was also eager to stir doubt in Scouts about the moral standing of the Boy Scouts as an organisation itself. This flyer would likely have been distributed by members of the Kindred to those subscribed to other Kibbo Kift publications, such as the main paper for this time *Broadsheet*, or to those they thought may have been interested. This flyer’s existence revealed that the Kibbo Kift was still attempting to recruit member from the Boy

¹ YMA/KK/99, “Things All Scouts Should Know” flyer (c. 1927-29).

Scouts in the late 1920s. From the tone of the flyer, which asked the reader to make a fairly complex moral decision, it appeared that the audience was older members of the Scouts rather than the youth. At the same time, the Kibbo Kift was attempting to recruit teachers to the Teacher's Guild, an educational body that aimed to "organise education" in Britain with an outdoors foundation and utilising "the Kibbo Kift reconstruction of modern education".² This demonstrates that there were two targeted audiences for the Kibbo Kift—Scouts and teachers—as well as those who would be attracted to an outdoors movement or to the growing social credit values of the organisation.

This chapter examines the membership of the Kibbo Kift over three distinct chronological stages from 1918 to 1931. Firstly, it delves into the pre-Kibbo Kift membership in the groups the Ndembo and the Scalp Hunters from the end of the First World War in November 1918 to July 1920. These two groups were precursors to the Kibbo Kift: the Ndembo, which was much like a governing council, and the Scalp Hunters, a luncheon club open to general attendance and membership. The second part of this chapter focuses on the period from August 1920, when the Kibbo Kift was formally created, to the first major split in membership at the August 1924 Althing, the annual summer gathering. Thirdly, this chapter charts the organisation's membership from September 1924 to the beginning of its transformation into the Green Shirt Movement for the promotion of Douglas' theory of social credit in 1931.

The reason for this chronological division of membership is two-fold. The first reason is internal as the Kibbo Kift had constructed its own history as told in the Kinlog. The Kinlog tells the story of the life of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation, conceptualising it with a distinct chronology. It begins with John Hargrave's birth and the formation of the group as part of the

² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Teacher's Guild logbook.

Boy Scouts and Girl Guides after the First World War. The story of the Kibbo Kift continued through the period of time that the organisation operated prior to the introduction of Social Credit in 1924. It thereafter became a chronicle of how Social Credit began to be integrated into the Kibbo Kift framework and eventually became the main focus of the organisation, transforming it into the Green Shirts. Over a period of November 1918 to January 1932, the Kibbo Kift was founded, shifted focus, and transformed as interests shifted and members came and went.

The second reason is that the archival papers of the Kibbo Kift collected in the late 1970s to early 1980s were consciously arranged by these periods by former members of the movements, including Lawrence Paul Elwell-Sutton, Professor of Persian at the University of Edinburgh, and William Bond.³ They had both been heavily involved with the Social Credit Party and were responsible for the organisation and deposit of the Youth Movement Archives at the University of Cardiff; the Youth Movement Arches are now at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The donation of larger items and costumes to the Museum of London's Social and Working History Collection occurred in 1980 and retained a conscious chronological organisation of archived materials.

The foremost challenge with reconstructing the membership of the Kibbo Kift is that membership numbers were not regularly recorded until 1927. Figures from Easter 1927 to 1930 were kept by the Chief Tallykeeper and summarised in a report in April 1930.⁴ Membership earlier than the 1928 creation of the Totem House, which was a paid membership scheme that collected proper names, woodcraft names, and current city location alongside

³ Floreeda Safiri, "Lawrence Paul Ewell-Sutton (1912-1984)." *Iranian Studies* 17, no. 4 (Autumn 1984): 485-7.

⁴ YMA/KK/2, Report of Chief Tallykeeper presented to Kin Council, 30 April 1930.

pictorial totemic representations of the individual member, was not maintained in a uniform manner nor did it have an internal filing system.⁵ The original membership scheme was an informal, word-of-mouth network that was used from around 1919 to 1921. Members either were part of a close-knit group called the Lodge Ndembo or were associated with Ndembo members by attendance at the Scalp Hunters luncheon group. Neither group had a fee scheme. Members often held parallel or double membership with the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides or the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry, a group that promoted woodcraft and animal conservation founded by Ernest Westlake in 1916. Members of the Ndembo and attendees of the Scalp Hunters meetings were connected primarily by a pre-existing interest in woodcraft training and philosophy.⁶ While this network led to the Kibbo Kift attracting members from the suffragette, socialist, and Labour movements, it is difficult to identify how often and in what capacity they attended Kibbo Kift meetings. It is possible only to conclude that denoted members without any further record were involved, whether very actively or only nominally.

The second membership scheme active from 1922 through the rest of the decade was a mail-order document system advertised through the Kibbo Kift publications, such as the magazines *The Mark* and *The Nomad*, as well as by word of mouth. People interested in the Kibbo Kift could become members by sending a fee of 3d. to the Keeper of the Great Roll and Tally for a copy of the Kibbo Kift Woodcraft Covenant to sign and then join a local Kibbo Kift group or, lacking one nearby, start their own.⁷ Unfortunately, very few signed covenants survive from this period as it appears they were kept not by the Keeper of the Great Role and

⁵ YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list (see Appendix A for the full list of members in the Totem House).

⁶ YMA/KK/125, Cecil Mumford's notes.

⁷ YMA/KK/165, June 1922.

Tally but by the purchasing member. It is possible, however, to reconstruct what the Kibbo Kift membership would have looked like from a close reading of the movement's published materials and some surviving circulation numbers.

Membership in the second half of the 1920s remained similar to the previous years in that it remained word-of-mouth, but there was an attempt to implement a formal membership scheme and maintain a reference list. The Totem House is the most comprehensive list of active and paying Kibbo Kift members, listing proper names, woodcraft names, and current residence as of 1928.⁸ Membership of the Totem House stipulated that, unlike in previous years, no two kinsmen or women could have the same woodcraft name; this was aimed to reduce a recurring source of confusion since before the Kibbo Kift was formally founded. Membership for the Totem House had to be applied for by all members, no matter how long they had been involved. The list of registered names would come to number 132 before the use of the Totem House itself was phased out in favour of developing the membership scheme of the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit. This list of 132, while not complete, offers a clear profile of the membership that was not available before 1928. Because of this lack of similar record-keeping until then and because some members had changed their chosen woodcraft names over the course of the 1920s, it is difficult at times to identify members from woodcraft names over the course of the decade.

The target audience of the Kibbo Kift also shifted along the chronological divisions of late 1918-1920, 1920-1924, and 1925-29. Recruitment was through pre-existing interpersonal networks from late 1918-1920, pooling heavily from within the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. This strategy was understandably not well-received after the formal formation of the Kibbo Kift in August 1920 by those in charge of the scouting movement, and it led to John

⁸ YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list.

Hargrave's excommunication from the Scouts in 1921. The second stage of recruitment was aimed at members of the scouting and woodcraft movements as well as towards figures of prominence and influence on both a national and international scale. Throughout the 1920s, the Kibbo Kift attempted to reach out to figures like H.G.Wells and Rabindranath Tagore and aimed to establish transnational organisations such as briefly in the Soviet Union in 1922 and Belgium throughout the second half of the 1920s.⁹ These connections were of interest to Special Branch and part of the surveillance of the group as discussed in the sixth chapter of this thesis.

The first half of the 1920s also saw some members of the Kibbo Kift appeal to Labour, socialist, and cooperative groups, which caused tension and an eventual organisational split in 1924 between political factions. The establishment of the Teacher's Guild in 1927 built and expanded upon the educational philosophy which had been iterated in the earliest renditions of the Kibbo Kift. This educational philosophy had not yet implemented, so the Guild aimed to attract schoolteachers to the Kibbo Kift. This was the only time that the Kibbo Kift targeted a specific professional group for recruitment, and these new members provided a much-needed source of income through their membership fees paid to the Totem House.¹⁰ While recovery of all of the names of the Kibbo Kift is no longer possible, this chapter aims to reconstruct a clear picture of what the group looked like from the end of the First World War until the beginning of the transformation of the Kibbo Kift into the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit in 1932. The three distinct chronological stages provide a useful framework to chart the gradual shifts in the types of people who joined the Kibbo Kift and why they did or did not stay between the stages. It also examines the target audience of the Kibbo Kift during these

⁹ YMA/KK/165, August 1922.

¹⁰ YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list.

chronological stages and how the target audience occasionally came in conflict with the Kibbo Kift's actual membership.

2.2 Post-First World War Membership, 1918 to August

1920

The immediate post-war membership of the Kibbo Kift from November 1918 to August 1920 was primarily made up of personal contacts of John Hargrave (1884-1982) and Ruth Clark (1899-1964) with the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.¹¹ The two married in late 1919 after a period of correspondence and camping meetings before and during the war through the Scouts and Guides. They were early proponents of combining woodcraft techniques with scouting for a more complete, enriching, and possibly gender-inclusive outdoors experience meant to create a “hearty, happy, helpful man for the nation”.¹² As a published author of scouting texts like *Lonecraft*, which went into multiple editions through the 1910s to 20s and the 1919 philosophical book, *The Great War Brings It Home*, Hargrave was a well-known figure in early twentieth century scouting, woodcraft, and youth movements in Britain. Hargrave was an ex-serviceman of the Royal Army Medical Corps; he had been a stretcher-bearer at the Battle of Gallipoli, and he published a 1916 illustrated memoir of his experiences in *At Suvla Bay*.¹³ This memoir appears to have sold relatively well and was advertised in *The Trail*, a scouting magazine, alongside Hargrave's scouting and woodcraft handbooks that were

¹¹ H. F. Oxbury, “Hargrave, John Gordon (1894–1982)” rev. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹² Robert Baden-Powell, “Scouting Grows Up,” *Boys' Life*, February 1928, p. 17.

¹³ John Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay: Being the Notes and Sketches of Scenes, Characters, and Adventures of the Dardanelles Campaign* (London: Constable & Company Ltd., 1916).

published in *The Wigwam Papers* and *Totem Talks*. His war experience, which was specifically framed in terms of his scouting abilities and narrated in a voice which heavily referenced popular boys' adventure and naturalist literature, resonated with other servicemen returning to the Boy Scouts during and after the war.¹⁴

Previous scholarship firmly placed John Hargrave at the forefront as the driving force behind the Kibbo Kift and associated movements, such as in John Finley's work on the English origins of social credit.¹⁵ Hargrave's personality, charisma, and public conduct characterised him during and following his lifetime as intelligent, intense, and innovative. At the same time, he was deeply divisive in personality and opinions as well as consciously both intimidating and inspirational. While Hargrave's place and influence in the Kibbo Kift and later groups the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have been examined, most notably by Mark Drakeford, the place of other members who were influential and heavily involved in the group remained obscured.¹⁶ Hargrave, while the author of the two main books iterating the Kibbo Kift, *The Great War Brings It Home* in 1919 and *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* in 1927, was far from the only figure to have influence in the development of Kibbo Kift from the late 1910s to 1930. Ruth Clark had been involved in the Girl Guides from at least 1913 and wrote the first woodcraft skills training handbook geared

¹⁴ Rachel K. Cheng, "I Went Alone!: John Hargrave and the Origins of the Kibbo Kift" (MA dissertation, University College London, 2012).

¹⁵ John L. Finley, *Social Credit: the English Origins* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972).

¹⁶ Mark Drakeford, *Social Movements and Their Supporters: The Green Shirts in England* (London: Palgrave MacMillan Press, 1997).

towards girls, *Camp Fire Training for Girls*, in 1919.¹⁷ She was the early connection between the Girl Guiding branch of the scouting movement, and her work was supported by the wife of Baden-Powell, Olave St. Clair, who wrote a forward to her training handbook.

Of those who became part of Hargrave and Clark's circle of friends, seven formed the predecessor group to the Kibbo Kift. The Lodge Ndembo, or the Chapter of Seven Eremites, was formed in August 1919 in London. Use of the religious term “eremites,” Christian hermits, implies the early desire for autonomy and represented the early Kibbo Kift agenda “to draw away from the mass”.¹⁸ Naming the lodge “Ndembo”, perhaps related to the Tanzania city then under colonial rule and called Tanganyika, was possibly meant to invoke the early Kibbo Kift idealisation of the primitive, which was the term used for all cultures outside of Western Europe, Canada, and the United States. The Lodge Ndembo were “seven men by White Fox chosen” and acted as the first council of what would become the Kibbo Kift.¹⁹ These men were involved in scouting and woodcraft and were required to pass “woodcraft tests [to] prove themselves” to be part of the Ndembo.²⁰ They included Cecil Mumford, a scoutmaster who had sought out Hargrave personally regarding woodcraft lore, C. S. Cullen, another scoutmaster and member of the Camelot Club, and Russell Jones, a third scoutmaster who became involved in English educational policy in the mid-1920s. The Camelot Club was

¹⁷ Ruth Clark, *Camp Fire Training for Girls* (London: C. A. Pearson, 1919).

¹⁸ “Kibbo Kift Chronology.” The Kibbo Kift Foundation.

<http://www.kibbokift.org/chronolo.html>

¹⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 18.

²⁰ *ibid.*

a Sunday luncheon club associated with women's and suffragette groups.²¹ Cecil Mumford was one of the closest to Hargrave in the Ndembo and had the additional duty of Chief Archivist to record the activities of the group.²²

The purpose of the Lodge Ndembo was two-fold. Although the original “mystical and hidden” aspect of their agenda has been lost, the secondary “secular” purpose of the group was to spread knowledge of woodcraft through the Scouts.²³ Most of the Ndembo also formed the Scalp Hunters, an open-attendance luncheon club established in September 1919 for senior scouts and adults interested in woodcraft. Most likely, the Scalp Hunters were actively attempting to recruit those who attended the luncheon meetings to the future Kibbo Kift. As Mumford described in a brief autobiographical recollection of the formative period of the Kibbo Kift:

In the early days of KK those of its members who were also members of other organisations did not immediately withdraw from the latter. They remained in their old organisations for the purpose of conducting K.K. propaganda therein, & , in the main, remained in their original organisations until forced out.²⁴

Membership numbers from August 1919 to early 1920 were small, consisting of the Lodge Ndembo and a handful of other scouts and guide members who were woodcraft enthusiasts.²⁵ It was a close-knit nucleus, not yet called the Kibbo Kift but instead conceptualised as part of

²¹ David Doughan and Peter Gordon, *Women, Clubs and Associations in Britain* (Oxon: Routledge Taylor and Francis, 2006), p. 50.

²² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 18.

²³ YMA/KK/125, Cecil Mumford's notes (punctuation as in original).

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*

the woodcraft arm of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The woodcraft arm was popular enough to attract the attention of Baden-Powell, who made Hargrave Commissioner for Woodcraft within the Boy Scouts.²⁶ To a certain extent, woodcraft was a rival of the scouting movement in the early part of the twentieth century with groups like Ernest Westlake and Ernest Thompson Seton's the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry, which attracted members of the scouting movement. The Order of Woodcraft Chivalry and the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were rivals in membership and ideology to a certain extent, but the two organisations did allow members to membership of both groups.²⁷

The Kibbo Kift's policy about dual membership was not so accommodating. Following an announcement of the Kibbo Kift by name in *The Trail* in May 1920, the Kindred of Kibbo Kift was formally created on 18 August 1920 at a London meeting with the Lodge Ndembo and Ruth Clark in attendance.²⁸ By early 1921, the issue of dual membership between the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides and the Kibbo Kift was becoming increasingly contentious, especially once John Hargrave was excommunicated by Baden-Powell from the Boy Scouts in January. This was read in two ways. Firstly, the Kibbo Kift and its members were no longer welcome in the Scouts and Guides if they continued to associate with Hargrave. Secondly, those who remained in the Scouts and Guides and would not become exclusively members of the Kibbo Kift were not welcome in the newly independent organisation. The new Kibbo Kift did, however, have to remain somewhat connected to the Scouts and Guides as it attempted to draw members away as well as exchange ideas. The two

²⁶ YMA/Hargrave/33, "Twelve Years in the Boy Scouts".

²⁷ Derek Edgell, *The Order of Woodcraft Chivalry as a New Age Alternative to the Boy Scouts* (Edwin Mellen Press, Ltd., 1993).

²⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 22.

organisations did, during the first half of the 1920s, remain connected through the contingent of members interested in woodcraft within the scouting movement.

The woodcraft arm also provided the early Kibbo Kift with notable connections not just to scoutmasters but to social reformists. Suffragettes who joined, such as Mary Neal (1860-1944) and Baroness Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence (1867-1954), were woodcraft supporters and were associated with the Girl Guides during this immediate post-war period.²⁹ Neal and Pethick-Lawrence were the co-founders of the Espérance Club, which was a women's folk dancing club, and its associated dressmaking cooperative for young working women, Maison Espérance. Neal was also publicist and organiser for the Revival and Practise of Folk Music with Cecil Sharp (1859-1924).³⁰ Sharp was a “collector of English folk-songs and dances,” and had provided much of the material used in the Espérance Girls' Club.³¹ Neal's regular membership and active involvement was a large asset both to the connections of the Lodge Ndembo and to the philosophical development of the Kibbo Kift. She would be the only woman to sit on the Kin Council throughout the Kibbo Kift's existence, serving from its inception in 1921 to early 1926, despite the Kibbo Kift having a fairly equal ratio of male and female members.³²

²⁹ Brian Harrison, "Lawrence, Emmeline Pethick-, Lady Pethick-Lawrence (1867–1954)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed, Jan 2011).

³⁰ Michael Heaney, "Sharp, Cecil James (1859–1924)." *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed, Oct 2008).

³¹ Roy Judge, "Neal, Mary Clara Sophia (1860–1944)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2006).

³² *ibid.*

Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence was the treasurer of the Women's Social and Political Union and was known as part of the militant suffragette wing.³³ In 1918, she stood as a Labour candidate for Rusholme, Manchester, and she had worked with internationalist campaigns during the First World War.³⁴ Her husband, Frederick William Pethick-Lawrence (1871-1961), was also involved in the Women's Social and Political Union and was elected as a Labour MP for West Leicester in 1923. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence was a woodcraft supporter in the scouting movement, hosting a table at the 1922 *Trail* dinner that included other members of the scouting woodcraft wing.³⁵ Their support was a source of pride for the early Kibbo Kift and often advertised in writing through Kin Press publications with Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence listed on the Advisory Council. The connections of the Pethick-Lawrences proved valuable to attract those outside of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides to the early Kibbo Kift, bringing in members from liberal and experimental educational bodies like the Matlock Modern School and the Garden Schools as well as from the Espérance Club.

Evelyn Sharp (1869-1965), sister of Cecil Sharp, was a militant suffragette and part of the Women's Social and Political Union and prolific children's author who was actively involved in the Kibbo Kift in the first half of the 1920s.³⁶ She became a journalist as well during the interwar period, employed as a regular feature writer at *The Manchester Guardian*,

³³ Brian Harrison, "Lawrence, Emmeline Pethick-, Lady Pethick-Lawrence (1867–1954)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed, Jan 2011).

³⁴ Jennifer S. Uglow, "Pethick-Lawrence, Emmeline." *The International Dictionary of Women's Biography* (New York: Continuum, 1985), p. 370-371.

³⁵ YMA/KK/125, *The Trail* dinner seating arrangement chart.

³⁶ Angela V. John, "Sharp , Evelyn Jane (1869–1955 *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009).

The Daily Herald, and *The Daily Chronicle*. She used some of her article to expound upon on the virtues of the Kibbo Kift, explaining how the organisation related to her regular topics on youth education, children's issues, and public health. In an article about “the probable influence of books and toys on the formation of character,” Sharp expounded her view that the Kibbo Kift offered a non-militarist alternative to “combativeness” occasionally present in youth organisations.³⁷ This focus on peaceful and whimsical activity remained the main attraction to the group for her, and its gradual phasing out for social credit would herald her leaving in the mid-1920s. Sharp's personal connections were also an asset to the Kibbo Kift in the first few years of its existence. Henry Woodd Nevinson (1856-1941), a fellow journalist at *The Daily Chronicle* and a long-term friend of Sharp's, was a member of the Kibbo Kift Advisory Council, a body of influential people that the Kibbo Kift hoped would support them and give them advice in the early days of the organisation.³⁸ The Kibbo Kift was a small in its membership but ambitious in its cultural aims. This council, as examined in the following section, was particularly important to the organisation because it brought social and cultural relevance by association with well-known figures of the time.

2.3 The Advisory Council

The Advisory Council contained select important political and cultural figures that members of the Lodge Ndembo had invited to join the Kibbo Kift. In response, the Advisory Council members had either personally written to express interest in or had attended meetings of the

³⁷ Evelyn Sharp, “Sermons in Toys: A Nursery Problem.” *The Manchester Guardian*. 31 January 1923. Proquest Historical Newspapers.

³⁸ H. N. Brailsford, "Nevinson, Henry Woodd (1856–1941)," rev. Sinéad Agnew. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Oct 2009).

group. Mumford recalled the council members “agreed to the aims of the KK as expressed in the Covenant & were prepared to give advice, but never met as a body”.³⁹ Altogether there were twenty-four named Advisory Council members. These names were listed in early Kibbo Kift letterhead and on the back page of Kibbo Kift publications from 1920 to 1926 as both a demonstration of organisational legitimacy and as advertisement.⁴⁰ The names were:

Table 2.3.1: Advisory Council List

Norman Angell	Julian S. Huxley
Lawrence W. Chubb	Emmeline Pethnick-Lawrence
Chief Deskaheh	Maurice Maeterlinck
Reverend Herbert Dunnico	Mary Neal
Havelock Ellis	Henry W. Nevinson
Herbert Henry Elvin	Baron Philip Dirk van Pallandt
Alexander Haldane Farquharson	J.F. Schaap
Stephen Graham	Vilhjalmur Stefansson
Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell	Rabindranath Tagore
C.H. Grinling	Sir John Arthur Thompson
Somerville Hastings	H.G. Wells
Maurice Hewlett	J Howard Whitehouse

Not all of these people had become members or had direct contact with the Kibbo Kift. This Advisory Council was rather a mix of persons who members of the Kibbo Kift admired, had communicated with at some point in the early 1920s, or were directly involved in the activities of the Kibbo Kift itself. From this list of names, the early social, political, and intellectual preoccupations of the Kibbo Kift may be read explicitly through their association with invited Advisory Council members.

³⁹ YMA/KK/125, Cecil Mumford’s notes.

⁴⁰ YMA/KK/165, June 1922.

Intellectual and philosophical preoccupations are immediately noticeable in the heavy influence of H.G. Wells (1866–1946) and Julian Huxley (1887–1975) upon the Kibbo Kift. H.G. Wells was a well-known novelist of science fiction classics and social commentator who contributed heavily to *The New Age* Fabian magazine.⁴¹ Contact with Wells in particular was a source of great pride to the Kibbo Kift, and they were able to use his name in promotional material, such as on a text card in a Topical Budget newsreel segment in 1923.⁴² Wells' 1909 book, *A Modern Utopia*, and his 1920 book, *The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind*, substantially influenced the Kibbo Kift's early philosophy and conceptualisation of human history. The Kibbo Kift continued to imagine and appropriate non-European cultures in its mythological and ideological self-understanding. An example is the March 1927 “Bushido of the Kin” flyer.⁴³ Featuring a multi-coloured image of a heavy-set Japanese samurai alongside an upright male kinsman, it contains such maxims as “I must camp out and keep fit for world service” and “I must stand for organised peace”. This view of the samurai as an exemplary outdoors physical figure hark back to H.G. Wells' concept of the samurai in *A Modern Utopia*, and it influenced not only iconography but also governed the spiritual philosophy utilised throughout the Kibbo Kift's existence.⁴⁴ While the effect of Wells' fiction writing is less clear, the Kibbo Kift shared many of Wells' anxieties regarding technology and the moral and social changes that had taken place in the late Victorian and

⁴¹ Patrick Parrinder, "Wells, Herbert George (1866–1946)." *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Jan 2011).

⁴² “The Kibbo Kift (1923).” BFI. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uko6ppVRWDE>

⁴³ YMA/KK/99.

⁴⁴ H.G. Wells, *A Modern Utopia* (London: Chapman and Hall), 1909. Ebook ed., The Project Gutenberg. <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mdntp10h.htm>

Edwardian periods as well as during the war. They were deeply influenced by Wells' "[commitment] to formulating ways in which this dreadful future could be averted" but much less so by Wells' obsession with controlling population growth.⁴⁵

Julian Huxley's scientific and philosophical influence on the Kibbo Kift concerned the solutions the Kibbo Kift came up with to the Wellsian problems they identified in contemporary British society. The Huxley family were well-known as "members of the intellectual aristocracy"; his father was the editor of *Cornhill Magazine* and his brother, Aldous, became an influential novelist.⁴⁶ Huxley was known at this time for his work in zoology and his observations of birds and amphibians, most notably in *The Courtship Habits of the Great Crested Grebe* (1914) and his 1920 work on the axolotl.⁴⁷ He also promoted the idea that natural selection was gradual and continuous, expressed in his 1942 work *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis* after the declining popularity of theistic and Lamarckist approaches to evolution.⁴⁸ Wells and Huxley influenced each other through the interwar period in writing exchanges and collaborative publishing.⁴⁹ Huxley was also publicly involved with the British Eugenic Society, which is now called the Galton Institute. He became its Vice President in

⁴⁵ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1992), p. 123.

⁴⁶ Robert Olby, "Huxley, Sir Julian Sorell (1887–1975)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Sept 2012).

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Peter J. Bowler, *The Eclipse of Darwinism: Anti-Darwinian Evolution Theories in the Decades around 1900* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 9.

⁴⁹ Robert Olby, "Huxley, Sir Julian Sorell (1887–1975)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Sept 2012).

1937 and later President in 1959.⁵⁰ His ideas and promotion of evolution and eugenics are present in the Kibbo Kift concepts of regeneration and understanding of human history.

Another intellectual figure who influenced Kibbo Kift philosophy was Sir John Arthur Thompson (1861-1933). He was a Scottish naturalist and chair of natural history at the University of Aberdeen.⁵¹ His 1909 South African lectures were collected and published in both the United States and the United Kingdom in 1911 as *Darwinism and Human Life*.⁵² He and Hargrave had been in communication since 1921 about the Kibbo Kift and its conceptualisation of human history and health.⁵³ It was Thompson who suggested that the Kibbo Kift place emphasis on the teaching and understanding of history, which became evident in the Lodge of Instruction, the adult education and lecture course offered by the Kibbo Kift from 1922. His influence continued later into the decade as evidenced in the rough draft of the recapitulation curriculum for youth education by the Teacher's Guild.

The Kibbo Kift drew inspiration not only from science, philosophy, and history but also from poetry that was distinctly anti-imperialist and anti-militarist in flavour.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a Bengali writer and poet who won the Nobel Prize in

⁵⁰ John Timson, "Portraits of the Pioneers: Sir Julian Huxley, FRS – Evolution and Eugenics," *Galton Institute Newsletter* (December 1999).

⁵¹ "Obituary." *Nature* 131: p. 296. 04 March 1933.

⁵² John Arthur Thompson, *Darwinism and Human Life: The South African Lectures for 1909* (London: Andrew Melrose, 1911). OpenLibrary.org.

<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924003109935#page/n9/mode/2up>

⁵³ YMA/Hargrave/28-3.3.

Literature in 1913.⁵⁴ His poetry was very popular during the First World War and the interwar period, referenced in newspapers as well as by the British war poet, Wilfred Owen, as exemplary for the period.⁵⁵ Quotes by Tagore appear in the writing of members, notably in Evelyn Sharp's 1923 article on educational issues where she uses the Tagore quote, "every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man".⁵⁶ Evelyn Sharp and Henry Nevinston's connections to Indian and Bengali figures may have been the origin of Tagore's connection to the Kibbo Kift. The Kibbo Kift also was heavily influenced by Gandhi, who Tagore worked with and promoted in his writing. Gandhi's influence would remain strong even after the Kibbo Kift had transformed into the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit. A 1931 visit to London by Gandhi prompted a seven page write up by John Hargrave in which he praised Gandhi's personal presence and speaking ability at a time when Hargrave himself was concerned with the political mobilisation.⁵⁷ The use of peaceful tactics that Gandhi employed in his fight for international recognition of the Indian independence movement established a philosophical parallel to another Advisory Council figure. Deskaheh was the chief of the Cayuga People of the Iroquois and worked to have the Iroquois nations

⁵⁴ "Rabindranath Tagore - Biographical". Nobelprize.org (Nobel Media AB, 2014).

http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1913/tagore-bio.html

⁵⁵ Michael Collins, *Empire, Nationalism and the Postcolonial World: Rabindranath Tagore's Writings on History, Politics and Society* (London: Routledge, 2011).

⁵⁶ Evelyn Sharp, "Sermons in Toys: A Nursery Problem." *The Manchester Guardian*. 31 January 1923. Proquest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁷ YMA/Hargrave/28-3.3.

recognised in Canadian and American politics as well as at the League of Nations.⁵⁸ His speech before the League of Nations in 1923 was part of his on-going appeal for European support of Haudesaunee sovereignty, which he had also petitioned King George V to support in 1921.⁵⁹

The Kibbo Kift's interest in adventure into the unknown and undiscovered was reflected in the presence of Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell, and Stephen Graham on the Advisory Council. Vilhjalmur Stefansson was a Canadian Arctic explorer and ethnologist best known for his work with the Inuit and exploration of the Alaska Islands.⁶⁰ Although his success as an adventurer was often costly, his writings and photography on the 1913-16 Canadian Arctic Exhibitions were popular in the United States, Canada, and United Kingdom. His fame was at its height during the 1910s through the 1920s, so his support would likely have been an appeal to popular sentiments that were still enamoured with the Victorian and Edwardian sense of adventure. Other figures that were likely to have captured the adventurous imaginations of the Kibbo Kift were Stephen Graham and Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell. Graham was a travel writer best known for his tramping

⁵⁸ Donald B. Smith, "Deskaheh." *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* vol. 15 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2005). http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/deskaheh_15E.html

⁵⁹ Bruce Eliot Johansen, *Native Americans Today: A Biographical Dictionary* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2010), p. 81-82.

⁶⁰ "Vilhjalmur Stefansson." *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014).

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/564880/Vilhjalmur-Stefansson>

adventures in pre-Soviet Russia.⁶¹ He promoted the “wisdom and experience of ‘holy Russia’” to British readers and was highly influential in how Russian affairs were covered during the First World War.⁶² Graham was an ardent supporter of cultural exchange between Britain and Russia, although his relationship with the new Soviet government was poor due to Graham's support for religion in Russia prior to the revolution. Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell was a doctor and Christian missionary who ran “a floating medical service for the fishing communities of northern Newfoundland, coastal Labrador, and the Quebec north shore” and founded a network of hospitals to serve these coastal communities in the early twentieth century.⁶³ His work and his lectures were very popular during his lifetime, and he dedicated his life to the maintenance of the medical service and philanthropy.

The Kibbo Kift also maintained a close connection to members of the scouting movement through the Advisory Council. Baron Philip Dirk van Pallandt was a Dutch nobleman heavily involved in the Boy Scouts in the Netherlands from the 1910s to his death in 1979.⁶⁴ He was a direct contact of the Kibbo Kift and Hargrave and was likely to have hosted Hargrave when he went abroad in Holland 9 June 1921 for nine days on a speaking tour to attempt to gain further support and funding for the Kibbo Kift.⁶⁵ While this tour does not appear to have actually procured additional funding sources for the Kibbo Kift, it was a good

⁶¹ Michael Hughes, "Graham, Stephen (1884–1975)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, May 2010).

⁶² *ibid.*

⁶³ Ronald Rompkey, "Grenfell, Sir Wilfred Thomason (1865–1940)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008).

⁶⁴ “Philip Dirk baron van Pallandt.” <http://www.wieiswieinoverijssel.nl/zoekresultaten/p2/332>

⁶⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog.

opportunity for the Kibbo Kift to have a voice abroad. Pallandt's name remained on the Advisory Council until it was phased out in the mid-1920s, and his commitment to the Boy Scouts continued throughout his life. He willed his estate upon his death to the Dutch Boy Scouts and the grounds remain in use today for scouting activities.⁶⁶

The Advisory Council included a number of individuals who had left-wing to socialist leanings, many of whom became involved in interwar Labour politics and campaigns. The Reverend Herbert Dunnico was a Labour MP associated with Rose Rosenberg, a suffragette, and an outspoken critic of the First World War.⁶⁷ He had given a speech in 1917 advocating negotiations with Germany, invoking the issues of a conditional surrender like in the Boer War to cheers from the listening crowd.⁶⁸ Another left-wing figure on the Advisory Council was Herbert Henry Elvin, an “engineer's clerk, trade unionist, and lay preacher”.⁶⁹ He was author of the 1909 pamphlet “Socialism for Clerks”.⁷⁰ His son, Herbert Lionel Elvin, also became actively involved in union and Labour politics, including an appointment to the Secondary School Examinations Council and the University Grants Committee in 1946.⁷¹

⁶⁶ “Pallandt.” <http://www.wieiswieinoverijssel.nl/zoekresultaten/p2/332>

⁶⁷ M. C. Curthoys, ‘Rosenberg , Rose (1892–1966)’, *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶⁸ “The Case for Peace,” *Merthyr Pioneer*. 17 February 1917. Reproduced by Cymru 1914 (online). <http://cymru1914.org/en/view/newspaper/4001615/2>

⁶⁹ Richard Aldrich, "Elvin, (Herbert) Lionel (1905–2005)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, Jan 2009).

⁷⁰ H. H. Elvin, *Socialism for Clerks* (London: Clairon, 1909).

⁷¹ *ibid.*

Somerville Hastings was a surgeon and politician who advocated the creation of a national health service following the First World War.⁷² He also served as a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War and was active prior to the war in the Fabian Society, a group “founded by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells [to promote] non-Marxist evolutionary socialism”.⁷³ He became involved with the Labour Party's public health advisory committee in the mid-1920s and promoted his “ideal of socialised medicine” into the 1960s through his Labour positions and the affiliated Socialist Medical Organisation, which he founded in 1930.⁷⁴ Hastings’ ideals and influence on state medicine had begun prior to the war and continued after his death in 1967.⁷⁵

The Advisory Council is important not because the members met with the Kibbo Kift and camped with them but because their association offers valuable insight into how the Kibbo Kift was intellectually conceptualising itself in relation to society and politics. Continuing late Victorian and Edwardian social ideals, as well as post-war anxieties present in Wells' writing, were conceptualised through council members’ views on evolution and history. The internationalist flavour of the Kibbo Kift is evident in the inclusion of explorers like Vilhjalmur Stefansson and writers like Tagore and Stephen Graham. The Advisory Council's inclusion of Labour and socialist politicians also implies that the Kibbo Kift did lean heavily to the left even though it advertised itself as apolitical. The various qualities of Advisory

⁷² John Stewart, "Hastings, Somerville (1878–1967)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁷³ “Homepage.” The Fabian Society. <http://www.fabians.org.uk/>

⁷⁴ John Stewart, "Hastings, Somerville (1878–1967)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁷⁵ John Stewart, “Socialist Proposals for Health Reform in Inter-War Britain: The Case of Somerville Hastings.” *Medical History* 39: pp. 338-357.

Council figures would be heavily reflected in the membership of the Kibbo Kift in the first half of the 1920s.

Recruitment efforts went through similar phases as the membership changed over the course of the late 1910s through 1920s. Until the establishment of the Kibbo Kift publication *The Mark* in June 1922, which publicised the Advisory Council and developed a Covenant purchasing scheme, members joined through word of mouth and by attendance at Scalp Hunters luncheon meetings and camping excursions arranged by members of the Kibbo Kift. Based on photographs and the “Topical Budget” newsreel from 1923, it appears that the camping excursions were relatively well-attended, but it is uncertain how many of the people who attended were actually members of the Kibbo Kift during the early 1920s as it was common for members to invite friends to hike with them at that time.⁷⁶ Later camping excursions were more formal, and members had to register guests for official Kibbo Kift hikes and camps.

The target audience from late 1918 to 1920 were the Lodge Ndembo's family and friends, woodcraft-minded members of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and influential people who would become members of the Advisory Council. Target audiences were dependent upon the personal connections and word of mouth recruitment efforts of the Ndembo and luncheon gatherings of the Scalp Hunters, which focused on appealing to the woodcraft arm from within the Scouts and Guides. The Scalp Hunters remained active in a similar capacity from 1919 through January 1921, hosting a “high feast” on 1920's New Year's Eve in commemoration of a successful year.⁷⁷ While the Scalp Hunters' original function was likely to be a social group for adult scouts with woodcraft interests, its name came to reflect its

⁷⁶ “The Kibbo Kift (1923).” BFI. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uko6ppVRWDE>

⁷⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 26.

purpose by at least the latter half of 1920: it was intended to draw members of the scouting movement away from the conventional ends of the Scouts and Guides and into the woodcraft arm of the Kibbo Kift. It was this "recruitment from within" strategy that ultimately soured Hargrave's relationship with the Scouts and led to his expulsion from the Scouts at the beginning of 1921. Hargrave's contributions to *The Trail* had increasingly reflected both his discontent with "scoutcraft" in comparison to woodcraft, and he made these criticisms clear with an article entitled "What I Am Driving At" in the November 1920 issue.⁷⁸ Following his excommunication from the Boy Scouts in January 1921, Hargrave put more personal time into the recruitment of members for the Kibbo Kift on its own with his travels abroad.⁷⁹

Throughout the 1920s the Kibbo Kift sought an international audience. The travels abroad of Hargrave and the international connections of the Advisory Council made this goal clear from the very start of the Kibbo Kift's life as an independent organisation in 1921. The Kibbo Kift advertised through personal connections and, from 1923 onwards, through its magazine publications, *The Mark*, *The Nomad*, and *Broadsheet*. Early on, the Kibbo Kift established that it was easy to join through knowledge of the Kibbo Kift's existence and willingness to pay for and sign a copy of the Covenant. This mail-order system allowed for people to join without having to know someone within the Kibbo Kift already and came, at least on the surface, with a very low time commitment. While the Kibbo Kift philosophy in the Covenant clearly stated that it was to be a broad reaching endeavour, it was not a protracted or complicated process beyond sending money and waiting for a copy of the Covenant to arrive to become a member of the Kindred.

⁷⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 27.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 29.

2.4 Utopian and Regeneration Membership, 1921-August 1924

During the first five years, overall membership numbers remained small and geographic relationships between members were relatively intimate, particularly for the majority of active members based in and around London. Remaining connections to the Scouts and Guides as well as members' interpersonal connections through friends, colleagues and family were utilised to bolster membership and participation. Hargrave's father, Gordon, was also creatively involved with the Kibbo Kift, contributing short verses to *The Mark* and discussing in letters the philosophy and activities of the group with his son.⁸⁰ Gordon Hargrave was a painter and active Quaker in Midhurst, Sussex, and he contributed poetry and art to publications of the Kibbo Kift from 1922 to 1924. John Hargrave was his and his wife, Babette's, only surviving child; there had been two older brothers, Ellwood, who died at eighteen in 1906, and Douglas, who died as an infant.⁸¹ Gordon does not appear to have become a member of the Kibbo Kift, but he was supportive of his son's interests as he had been of Hargrave's scouting and artistic endeavours in his youth. While Gordon and Babette were both devout Quakers throughout their lives and brought their children up in the faith, Hargrave drifted from the Society of Friends as he grew older and, by later life, was heavily involved in New Age and pagan-like belief systems and practises.⁸²

It also does not appear that his father's involvement with the Kibbo Kift continued as the organisation took on more political tones. Politics in the membership of the 1921-1924 period became a source of new members as well as growing contention. Connections were

⁸⁰ YMA/KK/165.

⁸¹ YMA/Hargrave/28-2.3.

⁸² YMA/Hargrave/28-3.3.

established during this period to the Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society through Joseph Reeves, secretary and educational officer in the cooperative.⁸³ The Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society was a South-East London-based consumer cooperative that was in operation throughout the interwar period and eventually merged in 1985 with South East Retail Group.⁸⁴ Other members that came through this connection were Leslie Allen Paul (1905-1985), who would eventually found the Woodcraft Folk in 1925 and write an autobiography titled *Angry Young Man* in 1951 chronicling this period of his life.⁸⁵ The Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society brought more working class membership to the Kibbo Kift than from the previous scouting and woodcraft connections.⁸⁶ These members also brought explicit socialist ideas into the Kibbo Kift. This would come to clash with Hargrave's increasing interest in social credit in 1924.

Another notable member who joined during this time was Henry Rolf Gardiner (1902-1971). Son of Egyptologist Sir Alan Henderson Gardiner and sibling of art collector and patron Margaret Emilia Gardiner, he was an interwar promoter for English folk dance and later became heavily involved in British far-right politics as well as promotion of the German *Bünde* youth organisation, which became the Hitler Youth.⁸⁷ Mary Neal introduced Gardiner

⁸³ Joel S. Kahn, *Modernity and Exclusion* (London: Sage Publication Ltd., 2001), p. 29.

⁸⁴ "Co-operative Societies." National Co-operative Archive (Co-operative Heritage Trust).
<http://www.archive.coop/collections/coop-societies>

⁸⁵ W. H. Saumarez Smith, "Paul, Leslie Allen (1905–1985)" rev. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸⁶ Kahn, *Modernity and Exclusion*, p. 30.

⁸⁷ Frank Trentmann, "Gardiner, (Henry) Rolf (1902–1971)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004) online ed., Jan 2009.

to the Kibbo Kift in late 1923 or early 1924, and Gardiner was involved from 1924 to 1925 offering information on folk dancing and connections to the growing German youth movements. While Joseph Craven put a bit too much emphasis on Hargrave's personal relationship with Gardiner, he was able to demonstrate how a single member in the Kibbo Kift could, over a relatively short period of time, influence both belief and policy.⁸⁸ Frank Trentmann concluded that the ideological split arose from the Kibbo Kift's "brew of Native American culture and boy scouts [being] too intellectual and materialist".⁸⁹ Gardiner's sentiments about the Kibbo Kift's ideology reflected the transitional period the organisation underwent between 1924 and 1925 as political and economic ideas, especially social credit, began to play a greater role.

While the Kibbo Kift's membership politicised over the course of 1921 to August 1924, membership also expanded through connections to teachers and liberal schools. An important educational body that would feed Kibbo Kift membership during the early 1920s was the Matlock Modern School, then called the Matlock Garden School.⁹⁰ It was a private boarding school for girls in Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, which had been recently expanded to include boys. Tom C. Wycroft, a teacher at the school, founded the High Tor Tribe, named for a local countryside crag or hill, and recruited from his colleagues. These members

⁸⁸ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 243.

⁸⁹ Frank Trentmann, "Gardiner, (Henry) Rolf (1902–1971)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004) online ed., Jan 2009.

⁹⁰ "Matlock Modern School: Monthly Letter 1935." Matlock: Twentieth Century Photographs, Postcards, Engravings and Etchings.

http://www.andrewsgen.com/matlock/pix/matlock_school_modern_bulletin.htm

included Joyce Reason, who wrote plays for the Kibbo Kift throughout the 1920s.⁹¹ She went on to be a successful children's author in historical fiction and was also missionary to Africa for the Leprosy Mission following the Second World War.⁹² She also wrote a memorial biography of Advisory Council member Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell in 1941.⁹³

Connections during this period to the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were not as strong as they had been while members maintained dual membership between the groups, but members of the Scouts and Guides were still finding their way to the Kibbo Kift. Idrisyn Oliver Evans (1894-1977) joined the Kibbo Kift from the Boy Scouts and Order of Woodcraft Chivalry. He had served on the Western Front during the First World War in the Welsh Regiment and Special Brigade Gas Companies.⁹⁴ He became heavily involved in promoting the Kibbo Kift in his local community, leading the Icení tribe in Liverpool while part of the Kibbo Kift.⁹⁵ Besides contributing to Kibbo Kift publications, he also wrote the 1929 book *Woodcraft and World Service* which included the Kibbo Kift alongside the much larger organisations of the Boy Scouts and the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry.⁹⁶ Joyce Reason and Evans later

⁹¹ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 180.

⁹² "Reason, Joyce 1894-." WorldCat Identities. <http://orlabs.oclc.org/identities/lccn-n88-624930/>

⁹³ Joyce Reason, *Deep-Sea Doctor* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1941).

⁹⁴ Brian Taves, "'Verne's Best Friend and his Worst Enemy': I.O. Evans and the Fitzroy Edition of Jules Verne." *Verniana: Jules Verne Studies/Etudes Jules Verne* 4 (2011–2012). <http://www.verniana.org/volumes/04/HTML/IOEvans.html>

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁹⁶ I. O. Evans, *Woodcraft and World Service* (London: Noel Douglas, 1929).

collaborated on a Kin Press publication entitled *Notes on the Evolution of Art, Science and Religion*.⁹⁷

Kathleen M. Milnes joined the Kibbo Kift after being introduced to the ideas of the organisation from a newspaper article in the possession of a W. S. Horlock in 1923, signing her copy of the Covenant on June 15.⁹⁸ Her initial impression of the organisation was not entirely positive, but the points of the Kin Covenant, a more positive impression at the 1924 Althing, and her own concerns about the state of civilisation drove her to remain involved. She brought the concept of creative evolution to the Kibbo Kift, a concept developed by Henri Bergson in 1911 that hypothesized that it was humanity's creative impulse rather than Darwinian natural selection which could be the driving force of evolution. She became deeply involved in the Kibbo Kift and the political parties that it transformed into as a teacher and youth leader. She was the scriptor, illustrator, and maintainer of the living historical document of the organisation, the Kinlog. She also ran the youth Kibbo Kift tribe, the Cherry Tree Clan, in Suffolk, which was active as late as 1932. Critical and respected within the organisational structure of the movements, she remained active until her early death in 1942.

Roland Berrill (1897-1962) would eventually found the high IQ society, Mensa, and was a member of the interwar Men's Dress Reform Party.⁹⁹ He became involved in the Kibbo Kift between 1922 and 1924 and stayed on until he was expelled for unrecorded reasons in

⁹⁷ YMA/KK/70.

⁹⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook.

⁹⁹ The Men's Dress Reform Party advocated more colour and aesthetic beauty in men's dress in the late 1920s through 1930s.

1929.¹⁰⁰ His membership was very active, partly because Berrill was never formally employed and lived off different investment ventures. Berrill's membership of the Kibbo Kift provided the organisation with Oxford contacts and further developed the physical expression of the new utopian life that the Kibbo Kift pursued. Taking the name “Death Watch”, Berrill designed the 35-hour World Time system, which was introduced at the 1924 Althing, the annual summer gathering of the Kibbo Kift, to commemorate the signing of the Covenant in 1920. This time and map system became the basis for several different designs of world maps produced by the Kibbo Kift and was made into publicly distributed banners and flyers.

The first major split within the Kibbo Kift occurred at the 1924 Althing. It was led by Eric Peake and C. S. Cullen, members of the original Lodge Ndembo, and Gordon S. M. Ellis, a former scoutmaster. It also included members who had joined with the Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society. The dissenting contingent was called the Brockley Thing, which was named after the London suburb where most of the members involved lived. This contingent broke from the Kibbo Kift following debate and a vote. Those that left with the Brockley Thing would eventually found the Woodcraft Folk the following year. Leslie Allen Paul, then nineteen, was another of the members who left with the Brockley Thing and became the leader of the newly formed Woodcraft Folk. The Woodcraft Folk was formed with socialism explicitly in its foundations with focus on “the communal ownership of means of production”.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Victor Serebriakoff, *Mensa: The Society for the Highly Intelligent* (New York: Stein and Day, 1986), p. 22.

¹⁰¹ W. H. Saumarez Smith, "Paul, Leslie Allen (1905–1985)" rev. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

The reason for the Brockley Thing's split from the Kibbo Kift was due to political, philosophical, and leadership disputes. The Brockley Thing wanted to work closer with the Labour Party and other cooperative groups while Hargrave wanted to follow the economic plans of Major Clifford Hugh Douglas's recently published theory of Social Credit. Douglas was an engineer who had worked on the reorganisation of the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Farnborough during the First World War.¹⁰² Douglas had expressed his political and economic ideas in the Fabian publication *The New Age* before the war but had only just reissued them as a book.¹⁰³ Douglas and Hargrave had had contact at some point earlier in the year, and they worked together to promote social credit increasingly over the rest of the interwar period. Matthew de Abaitua additionally blames the split on the influence of H. G. Wells on the Kibbo Kift, relating that Wells' concept of the samurai, which was central to Kibbo Kift philosophy throughout the 1920s, perpetuated a non-democratic atmosphere.¹⁰⁴ Other scholars, like John Springhall and Mark Drakeford, cite the authoritarianism of Hargrave's leadership as an impetus for the split, which was very much a contributing factor. Growing focus on social credit and Hargrave's leadership together contributed to the split not only of the Brockley Thing from the Kibbo Kift but also incited other members to leave over the course of August 1924 through to 1926.

Besides Peake, Paul, and several other members listed in the Kinlog only by their woodcraft names, the exact number of members who left with the Brockley Thing remains uncertain. Throughout this period, no formal membership list was compiled, or, if it was, it

¹⁰² B. Macpherson, "Douglas, Clifford Hugh (1879–1952)," rev. Mark Pottle. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁰³ C. H. Douglas, *Social Credit* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd.), 1924.

¹⁰⁴ de Abaitau, *The Art of Camping*, p. 116.

does not survive. Even with a conservative estimate of seven to fifteen people, the number of people who left would be significant in the small, intimate membership of this early stage of the Kibbo Kift. Financial issues were occasionally mentioned regarding most Kibbo Kift activities, occasionally bluntly in monthly publications through calls for payment of membership and subscription fees.¹⁰⁵ While there were always upwards of three hundred subscribers to the main publication, *The Mark*, not all of these were members who attended Kibbo Kift meetings or camps.¹⁰⁶ With the loss of the Brockley Thing and the support of the Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society, it became necessary to look for a new source of membership.

2.5 Social Credit, Open Air Education, and the Kibbo Kift, 1925-1929

Over the next several years, C.H. Douglas's economic and political theory of social credit would play an increasingly important role in the make-up and philosophy of the Kibbo Kift. Woodcraft remained central to Kibbo Kift mythology and philosophy, but it became increasingly augmented by social credit until the Kift was essentially a promotional arm of the social credit movement. Social credit advocated distribution of wealth based upon the perceived social and cultural contribution of an individual's work. For the Kibbo Kift, this meant "Just Price" for meaningful work instead of being tied to wage labour. The integration of social credit into Kibbo Kift philosophy and woodcraft practise was often more than a little ham-fisted. This period was one of experimentation and protracted transition between the utopian idealism expressed through woodcraft and the growing political expression anchored

¹⁰⁵ YMA/KK/165, multiple examples.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

in social credit. Social credit's integration and eventual centralisation in the Kindred of Kibbo Kift came at the cost of its original woodcraft aesthetic and utopian ideals, and this both attracted new members and alienated older members by the end of the decade.

One new member who came for the woodcraft and stayed initially as social credit grew in importance was Vera Chapman. She joined the Kibbo Kift in 1925 following the receipt of her diploma from Bingley Teacher's College in 1924 where she first heard of the Kibbo Kift.¹⁰⁷ Chapman was a teacher at Primrose Hill School in Leeds from 1923 to 1929, and she became the general executive secretary of the Girls League of England in London in the 1930s.¹⁰⁸ The integration of a political and economic agenda to the framework of the Kibbo Kift was not something she initially objected to, even initially approving of it.¹⁰⁹ As a member, she contributed through editing two women's magazines of the Kibbo Kift, *The Distaff* and *Hearthfire*.¹¹⁰ These publications were concerned with both women's roles in the Kibbo Kift and the development of Kibbo Kift mythology and ritual, which remained mainly separate from the political ideology of the group. Chapman remained interested in women's representation in modern mythology and their roles in rituals throughout her life. She wrote a number of young adult books re-imagining Arthurian legends with female protagonists, and she founded the Tolkien Society in 1969 to promote discussion of J.R.R. Tolkien's fictional world, Middle Earth.

¹⁰⁷ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 196; Alana Harris, "Mace, David Robert (1907–1990)." *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹⁰⁸ Primrose High School is now the Co-operative Academy of Leeds and the Girl's League of England appears to have a young women's organisation sponsored by the Methodist Church.

¹⁰⁹ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 196.

¹¹⁰ YMA/KK/173B-C.

David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930) also had contact with the Kibbo Kift during this period. D. H. Lawrence was a poet, playwright, and novelist whose philosophic views against industrialisation and emphasis on instinct aligned with the utopian and regenerative aspects of Kibbo Kift philosophy. His involvement is an interesting case in the Kibbo Kift because, while he never became a member, he appears to have kept an eye on the movement. He was aware of the Kibbo Kift and its philosophy and aesthetic through his knowledge of John Hargrave's writing as early as 1924 when Hargrave gained literary success with his novel *Harbottle: A Modern Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*.¹¹¹ Through letters to Rolf Gardiner during the 1920s, it does not appear Lawrence ever initiated contact with the Kibbo Kift beyond Hargrave and Gardiner. His opinion of the Kibbo Kift's philosophy appears to have been positive; it was Hargrave's leadership that prevented him from joining the group actively. In his 1928 letter to Rolf Gardiner on *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*, Lawrence wrote:

He's overweening, and he's cold. But for all that, on the whole he's *right*, and I respect him for it. I respect his courage and his aloneness. If it weren't for his ambition and lack of warmth, I'd go and kibbo kift along with him. But he'll get no further than holiday camping and mummery. Tho' even that will have *some* effect. All luck to him.¹¹²

¹¹¹ D. H. Lawrence. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 5, 1924-27*. Edited by James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 67.

¹¹² D. H. Lawrence. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 6, 1927-28*. Edited by James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton with Gerald M. Lacy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 267.

It is possible, by comparing letters by D. H. Lawrence on the Kibbo Kift and Hargrave from 1924 to 1928, that Lawrence's opinion of the movement and its leader had sharply declined. While this may reflect Gardiner's own opinion of the Kibbo Kift, as he had left in 1925, it was also reflective of shifts in the Kibbo Kift's public political and social face, which was changing both due to members' interests and a financially-driven desire to increase membership numbers overall.

Based on financial records from May 1926 to April 1927, the number of paying members remained modest.¹¹³ Annual membership at this point cost five shillings and six pence per adult member, and the yearly account showed an income total that would suggest approximately 120 people. Membership expanded following the 1927 publication of *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* and a series of informational pamphlets describing the aims, ideology, and place of the Kibbo Kift in British politics and culture. Numbers for May 1927 to April 1928 denote an increase in membership payments equal to forty more members than the previous year, bringing adult membership up to around 160.¹¹⁴ This was an increase of a third over the previous period's membership. It is likely that this drastic increase was temporary, although it would be reasonable to estimate that up to half of the new members stayed on in some capacity as two new schemes were put in place: the Teacher's Guild in 1927 and the Totem House in 1928.

Membership was further augmented by the formation and expansion of the Teacher's Guild, which was active from 1927-29 and ran the summer youth camp Dexter Fam in 1927 and 1928 aimed at children ages 7-12.¹¹⁵ Run by Arthur B. Allen and Cecil W. Paul Jones, the

¹¹³ YMA/KK/113.

¹¹⁴ YMA/KK/113.

¹¹⁵ YMA/KK/26.

Guild actively recruited teachers and established educational contacts throughout Britain. As in earlier years, members of the Teacher's Guild were encouraged to use their connections in teaching to draw in new members to the Kibbo Kift and the Guild. “Open-Air education for the Open-Air child” was the maxim, and the Teacher's Guild took full advantage of long-running Kibbo Kift connections to the Matlock Modern School and the Garden Schools in and around London. Tom C. Wycroft recruited his wife, Wendy Kendrick, who was a teacher at the Matlock Modern School. Kathleen Milnes and her sister, V. Marion Milnes, were also involved in the Guild, and they ran an all-girl's group, called a “tribe”, called the Cherry Tree Clan in Suffolk.

Sir Patrick Geddes was a notable contact of the Teacher's Guild, collecting issues of *The Flail* as well as communicating with Arthur B. Allen and Mabel Barker on ideas regarding the development of Kibbo Kift education policy.¹¹⁶ Geddes was a Scottish social scientist and urban planner who also contributed to education policy.¹¹⁷ While he himself was not a member of the Kibbo Kift, Geddes was aware of and purchased some of the published material of the Kibbo Kift, members of which in turn were interested in Geddes's ideas on education. Earlier in the decade, Geddes and Hargrave had corresponded about the Kibbo Kift, particularly about its earlier apolitical stance.¹¹⁸ While the Kibbo Kift was no longer apolitical, it does not seem that Geddes was turned off by the emerging social credit politics of the Kibbo Kift. Geddes reviewed Hargrave's *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* calling it “a

¹¹⁶ GB 249 T-GED/3/4/18/3, 10.

¹¹⁷ Helen Meller, “Geddes, Sir Patrick (1854–1932).” *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Jan 2008).

¹¹⁸ YMA/Hargrave/42-1.6.

movement of promise”.¹¹⁹ Unlike Lawrence, whose further exposure to Hargrave over the course of the 1920s gradually soured his opinion of the Kibbo Kift, Geddes remained very enthusiastic about the Kibbo Kift, even calling it “unusually clear [in] facing of the possibilities of national disaster before us”.¹²⁰

Muriel C. Gray joined the Kibbo Kift and was an active member and became heavily involved with adult hiking activities with the Hawkwood Hikers in Epping and co-founded the Company of Archers with George T. Gregory. George Gregory and his brother, V. Gregory, had been involved in the Kibbo Kift for a few years by 1927. George Gregory and Muriel Gray married in 1928 with other members of the Kibbo Kift including John Hargrave in attendance.¹²¹ The Gregory family contributed heavily to the physical life of the Kibbo Kift as well as the Teacher's Guild, helping to design the archery costume that had highly decorated arm guards.¹²² Youth outreach was a central part of the Teacher's Guild, and the Guild was the sole group within the Kibbo Kift that appears to have been relatively successful with reaching under 18s. While there was the Kin Press publication, *The Wikiup*, which was a monthly broadsheet featuring woodcraft and nature survival skills drawn and written by John Hargrave, the summer youth camps near Hastings were the biggest events the Kibbo Kift held for youth. The first Dexter Fam Camp, a “tribal training” overnight youth camp, was held on 5 August 1927 for four days.¹²³ It was attended by twenty-three children who signed and contributed to

¹¹⁹ Patrick Geddes, “Book Reviews – A Movement of Promise, *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift.*” *The Sociological Review* 20 (1928): p. 75.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 76.

¹²¹ YMA/Hargrave/28.

¹²² MOL/SWHC/L198/F.14.

¹²³ YMA/KK/170.

a logbook that chronicled their time and activities over the week.¹²⁴ This first camp acted as a test run of the Teacher's Guild's ability to organise and was headed by Cecil W. Paul Jones. The second Dexter Fam Camp, headed by George C. Morrish, was held again in August directly preceding the annual Althing and had thirty-three children attending.¹²⁵ This second Dexter Fam Camp lasted altogether two weeks and was the largest youth-oriented endeavour carried out by the Kibbo Kift, although there was discussion of attending a "Youth Fete" held by the Guild of the Citizens of Tomorrow.¹²⁶ That year, the camp attracted the constant involvement of Hargrave in contrast to the previous year when he only sent a letter of greeting, and he and Ruth Clark also sent their son, Ivan Hargrave, to participate.

Along with the expansion of educational endeavours, the Kibbo Kift also implemented more arts activities including two public folk festivals in the autumn of each year, Watlingthing and Gleemote. Featuring plays, songs, puppet shows, and dances written, designed, and performed by members of the Kindred, these proved to be popular based on the amount of material produced for these events and evidenced by the photography by Angus McBean (1904-1990), known in the group as "Angus Og".¹²⁷ While he later became known for his portrait photography, he photographed as well as participated in a number of the theatrical productions at these festivals and at Kibbo Kift gatherings as official Kin Photographer.¹²⁸ He regularly offered assistance in fabric selection and design for both

¹²⁴ YMA/KK/24.

¹²⁵ YMA/KK/25.

¹²⁶ YMA/KK/3, minutes report for 17/10/1928.

¹²⁷ Val Williams, "McBean, Angus Rowland (1904–1990)," rev. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., Sept 2012).

¹²⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/F, multiple files.

ceremonial costumes and the regular Kin habit, a forest green hiking ensemble that was worn by all adult members like a uniform, due to his job during the 1920s at the Liberty department store in London.¹²⁹ His sister, Beatrice, was also an active member of the Kibbo Kift along with Helen Wood to whom Angus McBean was briefly married.

Due to the still small but gradually increasing membership, an organisational change was necessary. It was no longer feasible to keep track of people by woodcraft name only and still be able to communicate effectively with every member. The establishment of the Totem House in 1928 marked an organisational turning point for the Kibbo Kift. Proper and woodcraft names were collected and linked to numbers, except the case of “Silent Beaver” whose proper name is not listed but noted as “name protected”.¹³⁰ This was the first time in the Kibbo Kift's history that this information was maintained and rules, such as no two members being allowed the same woodcraft name, imposed. Membership for the Totem House had to be applied for by all members, no matter how long they had been involved. The list of registered names numbered 130 before the Totem House was replaced by the membership lists of the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit. This number corroborates the previous two years financial records which allowed for an estimate of 120-160 paying members.¹³¹ The Totem House register, while not complete, provides important demographic information about the Kibbo Kift's gender and age distribution as well as some information about geographic area of residence. As *Table 2.5.2* reveals, the primary issue with this information is that the number of listed members of uncertain sex is significant.¹³²

¹²⁹ YMA/KK/10.

¹³⁰ YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list; see appendix for full list.

¹³¹ YMA/KK/113.

¹³² YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list.

Table 2.5.1: Totem House Demographics

Male	Female	Uncertain Gender	Over 18	Under 18	Uncertain Age
30	43	47	114	6	10

Male members are also harder to identify than female members as none were recorded with titles. Female members were recorded occasionally with titles of Miss or Mrs., which makes them more readily identifiable. Of the 130 individual people listed in the Totem House who make up the table above, geographic location was recorded for 30. Of these, thirteen were from districts in and around London, six were from Leeds, three from Manchester, and one from Belgium. The other seven members with geographic locations noted were distributed individually in different parts of the south and south-east of England.

Paying members below the age of eighteen offer some insight into the changing face of the Kibbo Kift and its membership. Charles A. Tracey joined the Kibbo Kift in 1927 at the age of sixteen from the Boy Scouts and is one of the six names listed in the Totem House registry as under the age of eighteen.¹³³ He won the Baldr belt in 1929, which was designed by Roland Berrill and awarded alongside the Eostre belt for women to the fittest man in the Kibbo Kift at the annual Althing.¹³⁴ Tracey's involvement in the Kibbo Kift was a formative experience, and he spent the rest of his youth and early adulthood involved in it and continued to be heavily involved through the Green Shirts and Social Credit Party. Similarly, Eric Samuel de Maré, who would become known as an architectural photographer and writer, was a youth joiner of the Kibbo Kift who remained involved through its life as the Green Shirts

¹³³ de Abaitau, *The Art of Camping*, p. 117.

¹³⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/B1.11.

and the Social Credit Party.¹³⁵ He appears to have joined for the political philosophy of social credit rather than the mythical and woodcraft aesthetic and ideals that were gradually being phased out at this point. He wrote a number of tracts on social credit, one entitled “The Captain” in which he reviewed Hargrave's 1940 book *Professor Skinner, alias Montagu Norman*, calling it a “vitally important work”.¹³⁶

Table 2.5.3: Paid Dues at Easter, 1927-1930

Year	Male	Female	Belgium	Total
1927	56	46	3	105
1928	66	59	6	131
1929	77	71	7	155
1930	79	74	11	164

There was also a Tallykeeper summary in made in April 1930 of the Kibbo Kift's membership distribution both in Britain and abroad, particularly in Belgium with the Antwerp-based Lawrence Lodge.¹³⁷ Figures, as shown in *Table 2.5.3* above, included in this document were membership numbers based upon those members who had paid their dues by the Easter 1930. These figures for 1928 match those of the Totem House registry and also reveal that the male to female membership ratio remained fairly steady during a four-year span. The Belgium membership does not include a gender breakdown, but it also reflects a steady rise in paying membership over the period. This document also included locations of members in 1930 and

¹³⁵ Alan Powers, "Maré, Eric Samuel de (1910–2002)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2006; online ed., Jan 2009).

¹³⁶ YMA/KK/105.

¹³⁷ YMA/KK/2, Report of Chief Tallykeeper presented to Kin Council, 30 April 1930.

the approximate number of members who lived there (see *Table 2.5.4*). There was also a single member in each of the following locations: Cumberland, Devon, Norfolk, Gloucester, Suffolk, Bucks, North Wales, Hampshire, Coventry, Worcestershire, Belfast, Straits Settlements, India, Australia, and South Africa. Some of the members who were outwith the British Isles were noted to have initially joined while resident and had recently taken up positions abroad.

*Table 2.5.4: Locations with approximately more than one member, April 1930*¹³⁸

Location	Members
London	61
Yorkshire	16
Lancashire	13
Derbyshire	7
Surrey	7
Somerset	6
Middlesex	5
Hertfordshire	5
Essex	5
Cheshire	4
Sussex	4
Dorset	3
Oxfordshire	2
Leicester	2
Belgium	11

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

The report noted, too, that, while membership numbers were increasing, retaining members was an issue as “of the 105 who were with us” in 1927 “only 55 remain today”.¹³⁹ Although not explicitly stated, the issue with maintaining membership was likely to have been linked to the growing focus on social credit. From late 1929 onwards, the face and ideology of the Kibbo Kift changed with the adoption of the Green Shirts and a more stringent social credit agenda. By the last two years of the 1920s, Hargrave's personality and the push for more social credit was becoming increasingly divisive. While Chapman, Milnes, and Evans remained steadfast to the Kibbo Kift and Hargrave throughout the 1920s, the previous scouting and woodcraft-orientated members began to leave as social credit increasingly politicised the group's philosophy and aesthetic.

The next two years, 1930 to 1931, would see the departure of the members of the organisation who were dedicated to woodcraft but not to the growing political agenda. These included Ruth Clark, Vera Chapman, and both Angus and Beatrice McBean, who voluntarily left. Chapman and Angus McBean both expressed the feeling that the shift in agenda meant the movement no longer resonated with them. McBean reiterated his sentiment that while he sympathised with the moral overtones of social credit, he did not really get social credit in the first place.¹⁴⁰ Ruth Clark desired a return to the old focus on the outdoors and camping, and her and John Hargrave's marriage also cooled over the course of the 1930s; they were living apart by the late 1930s and would eventually divorce.¹⁴¹ Roland Berrill was excommunicated

¹³⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 179.

¹⁴¹ YMA/Hargrave/42, box 2.

on grounds of dissent over the increase in social credit ideology; despite attempts to contact the Kibbo Kift in 1930 and an attempt to re-join in 1931, he was not let back in.¹⁴²

It does not appear that expulsions from the Kibbo Kift were commonplace; the two instances of it were the Brockley Thing in which only Eric Peake and an F. Hales appear to have specifically been expelled, and Roland Berrill's unusual excommunication in 1930. While nothing could be done to stop members from leaving, it was very rare that a member who had left would be allowed to re-join or that there was much of an impetus for most members to attempt to re-join. There is no record of members joining, leaving, and then joining again. While members who left did not always cut ties with individual members within the Kibbo Kift, they did permanently cut organisational ties. Members who were active in Labour politics and co-operative societies were likely to have felt unwelcome following the Brockley Thing, and this would account for the turnover of members from 1925-26, which also necessitated a new target audience.

Over the second half of the 1920s and through the 1930s, the Kibbo Kift focused increasingly upon attracting members who were to be the politically-minded and who were concerned with wages and unemployment. Social credit-orientated advertisements promoted the idea of creating a national dividend, which would change wage work to task work with employees being paid based on how much they completed rather than hours put in.¹⁴³ The audiences reading Hargrave's books were also a target. While his first fictional book in 1924, *Harbottle*, was aimed at the popular fiction market first and foremost, the sequels released

¹⁴² YMA/KK/3, 24/09/30; YMA/KK/115.

¹⁴³ YMA/KK/106.

over the second half of the 1920s were increasingly coloured by social credit ideology.¹⁴⁴ The 1927 publication of *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* presented Kibbo Kift philosophy alongside social credit and had an advertisement campaign with book plates and leaflets.¹⁴⁵ The leaflets specifically targeted businessmen, parsons, scoutmasters, spiritualists, and those “interested in children” as well as encouraging figures like G. K. Chesterton and Lord Robert Cecil to read the book.¹⁴⁶ This targeting method did not appear to have had much appeal or success.

The founding of the Teacher's Guild meant that there needed to be more qualified teachers recruited into the Kibbo Kift. Attempts to reach this new target audience also were intensified through distribution and posting of pamphlets and flyers; both of these paper publications were often issued in series. Several of these serial advertisements were also subscription items, including the Teacher's Guild publications, the *Bearn-run* flyer series and the four-issue *Educational Pamphlet*.¹⁴⁷ Unlike the magazines produced by members, these items did not cost the receiver anything and were meant to be informational and promotional material. Like the use of the Advisory Council to advertise and lend legitimacy to Kibbo Kift publications and activities earlier in the decade, these promotional materials referenced prominent figures whose views aligned with the Kibbo Kift, such as Patrick Geddes. They were designed to be quick reads and were usually illustrated with attractive typography. There are a few exceptions to the general brevity of these materials, mainly with the larger

¹⁴⁴ John Hargrave, *Harbottle: A Modern Pilgrim's Progress From This World to That Which Is to Come* (London: Duckworth, 1924).

¹⁴⁵ YMA/KK/105.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ YMA/KK/27.

pamphlets. The fourth *Educational Pamphlet*, for example, distributed a treatise on mummery by Arthur B. Allen that had been reprinted from an earlier publication in *The Amateur Stage* in August 1923.¹⁴⁸

The Teacher's Guild organised and hosted the 1929 Kibbo Kift Educational Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery.¹⁴⁹ This was the largest public exhibition put on by the Kibbo Kift during its organisational lifetime. The exhibition was opened by Dr. William Henry Denham Rouse, who was a lecturer in Sanskrit and had recently retired from the position of headmaster of The Perse School in Cambridge.¹⁵⁰ Lady Emily Lutyens, poet and editor of the theosophist journal *Herald of the Star*, chaired the opening ceremony.¹⁵¹ It featured examples of Kibbo Kift art, symbolism, theatre, and music, essentially advertising not only the educational aspect of the organisation but also its lifestyle. It is, however, uncertain if the exhibition was at all successful in recruiting new members. Despite the exhibition's favourable press coverage, the Teacher's Guild as well as the Kibbo Kift itself was drawing to a close as independent organisations.¹⁵² The Teacher's Guild, while one of the more profitable parts of the Kibbo Kift aside from the Kin Press, was not profitable enough to employ any

¹⁴⁸ YMA/KK/26.

¹⁴⁹ "Kibbo Kift Exhibition: The Arts and Crafts in Education." *The Observer (1901-2003)*, 21 April 1929.

¹⁵⁰ "Rouse, William Henry Denham." Cambridge Alumni Database.

¹⁵¹ Jane Ridley, "Lutyens, Lady Emily (1874–1964)," *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁵² "The Kibbo Kift Exhibition: The Arts and Crafts in Education." *The Observer*. 21 April 1929. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Guardian* (1821-2003) and *The Observer* (1791-2003).

teachers full-time nor to start up a permanent school. It was phased out as the Kibbo Kift transformed into the Green Shirts Party for Social Credit in January 1932.

There were, however, a number of dedicated members who stayed through the transformation from the Kibbo Kift into the Green Shirts. Brothers Raymond J. Dixon, Deputy Head Man from 1928, and Stanley Paul Dixon, who was responsible for much of the music and lyrics used by the Kibbo Kift in songbooks and mumming plays, remained. They gained the positions of Deputy Leader and Director of Music respectively in the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party.¹⁵³ Carole S. Griffiths, who married Raymond, maintained records of the Kibbo Kift and its political successors after their dissolution. She would also take over the completion and maintenance of the Kinlog after Kathleen Milnes' death in 1942. Her father, Frank Griffiths, also served as a reserve officer for the Social Credit Party in the late 1930s.¹⁵⁴ The Dixon family remained members into the 1950s when the Social Credit Party was formally dissolved due to rapidly declining membership as well as increasing recruitment and monetary issues.¹⁵⁵

2.6 Conclusions

The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift made attempts to recruit from within scouting and woodcraft movements in its earliest days in the immediate years following the end of the First World War. Once Hargrave was barred from the Boy Scouts in January 1921, the Kibbo Kift recruited utilising their remaining scouting connections and in association with the eminent early twentieth century political and cultural figures on the Advisory Council. After the

¹⁵³ YMA/Hargrave/42-2.6, loose paper.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ YMA/KK/26.

Brockley Thing broke away in 1924, the Kibbo Kift then attempted to appeal towards a wider occupational base, most notably with the Teacher's Guild, and began to actively cater to a youth contingent with the summer Dexter Fam Camps. Despite these recruitment attempts, the most active members of the Kibbo Kift at the end of the 1920s—Hargrave, Milnes, Wycroft, the Dixons, the Rosses, the Gregorys, and Charles A. Tracey—remained a small, socially close-knit nucleus of people. Even the membership of this core group had suffered from the large membership turnover in 1924-25 and from issues with maintaining long-term membership throughout 1927-30. The only member of the original Lodge Ndembo that preceded the Kibbo Kift who was still involved was Hargrave. The core group lost highly active early members such as Mary Neal following the Brockley Thing and Ruth Clark at the transformation into the Green Shirts.

Hargrave's influence on members and membership attracted much commentary both during the 1920s and by political historians over the years. While his personality and leadership did influence how contemporary commentators like D. H. Lawrence and Patrick Geddes viewed the Kibbo Kift, he was not the only reason that they became members and why they chose to stay or leave the organisation. Due to the great changes in the central ideology and aims of the group, members who had been highly active for a few years left at the transition points, taking with them their particular skills. As the Kibbo Kift was small, the loss of skill sets often made the positions held by former members defunct and the projects they had started ended with their departure. Members, who had joined for specific reasons, such as for the Teacher's Guild, would have had little incentive to stay on after its dissolution unless they were particularly interested in social credit.

By the early 1930s, recruitment was aimed internationally at socialist movements and nationally at the lower middle and working classes, particularly attempting to appeal to the unemployed through social credit ideology and Green Shirt rallies. The mystical and mythic

aspects of the movement were downplayed, although there were some plans to reinstate some of it after the social credit movement became successful.¹⁵⁶ Milnes continued her work on the *Kinlog*, chronicling the transformation and life of the Green Shirts and Social Credit Party within its pages. The large totems and complex and colourful kin costumes were gradually exchanged for the paramilitary uniform of the Green Shirts. The only obvious remnant of the Kibbo Kift was in the new logo, green double Ks that mirrored each other like twin staves and a large K banner carried at the front of Green Shirt marches.¹⁵⁷ The majority of symbols and rituals of the Kibbo Kift were reduced to heritage throwbacks as if to another era.

Membership numbers were never to the scale of contemporary groups like the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Boy's Brigade, or the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry. This is partly to do with the efforts of the Boy Scouts in the early 1920s to disabuse members and associates from joining the Kibbo Kift, and partly because the Kibbo Kift itself was never able to articulate a cohesive set of aims outside of the Covenant. Throughout the Kibbo Kift's lifetime, the often meagre state of finances was linked to its membership and became a point of increasing concern for the leadership. Issues of *The Mark*, the first Kibbo Kift-specific monthly publication, while featuring occasional enthusiasm over increases in circulation numbers, contained regular reminders to subscribers to renew or pay their subscriptions promptly. In financial records from later years, the multiple projects the Kibbo Kift attempted to undertake put further financial strain on the Kin Garth, the treasury of the Kibbo Kift, as well as the personal finances of some individual members. This would cause some tension between members in the later 1920s and ultimately lead to the dissolution of the Teacher's Guild in early 1930 despite the relative success of the public Educational Exhibition in 1929.

¹⁵⁶ YMA/KK/217.

¹⁵⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/I.7.

The multiple projects undertaken by the Kibbo Kift reflected the varied intellectual preoccupations and interests of its membership again which precluded the group from achieving lasting coherence. It is to these intellectual interests that we now turn.

Chapter 3

Intellectual Thought of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

3.1 Degeneration, Regeneration, and the Intellectual Thought of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

In the autumn of 1926, the first issue of *The Flail*, “an independent Kibbo Kift magazine” published quarterly and edited by Tom C. Wycroft, was printed and issued. Wycroft, a former member of the Boy Scouts who had joined the Kibbo Kift in the early 1920s, set out *The Flail*’s goal:

This is a pressing need in the kin for a magazine which will aid intellectual development and therefore increase efficiency and strengthen Unity: a magazine that will review and discuss the past, present and future forces and conditions of the world; modern knowledge; the various schools of thought in Politics, Education, Science, Art, Religion, Philosophy; the policy, methods and state of the Kin; and other matters of importance.¹

In this editorial, Wycroft identified not only the breadth of what *The Flail* hoped to accomplish but also reflected the large-scale reach of the Kibbo Kift’s interests as an

¹ YMA/KK/167, *The Flail*, Autumn 1926.

organisation. There was at once awareness of time and history of the world, new trains of thought, and scholarly study. These all related to the “methods and state of the Kin” and still left room for other topics to be cited and discussed. It was ambitious and grandiose except for the self-aware final comment wherein Wycroft added that “the Editor is no superman: not with a pen anyway”.² A seemingly humble comment on the surface, it also was an implicit call to others to contribute to the magazine and its debates. Active participation and debate was a hallmark of the Kibbo Kift’s intellectual life, and *The Flail* was no different.

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the intellectual influences behind the Kibbo Kift. It examines social, cultural, and philosophical preoccupations of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation as well as specific preoccupations of prominent individual members. The first section examines Scouting influences and John Hargrave's founding ideology for the Kibbo Kift, including the philosophical influences behind the 1919 book, *The Great War Brings It Home: A Natural Reconstruction of an Unnatural Existence*. The second section looks at a selection of reading materials popular within the Kibbo Kift, including novels and non-fiction books that were culturally and philosophically relevant to both the organisation as a whole and to prominent individual members. The reading materials offer insight into the shifts in intellectual preoccupations of the members as well as in the organisation as a whole. The third section examines gender issues within the Kibbo Kift and how the themes present in the previous sections are iterated and contested through ideas of gender within the Kibbo Kift. This section deals with the feminist tensions within the Kibbo Kift; while suffragettes joined the Kibbo Kift directly post-war and some remained through the first half of the 1920s, they left thereafter and feminist values were phased out over the second half.

² YMA/KK/167, *The Flail*, Autumn 1926.

These sections follow a fairly straightforward chronological progression. Hargrave's influences include his intellectual background prior to his service in the First World War to just after the end of the war. The recommended reading material was utilised from late 1918 onwards and includes novels and non-fiction books which covered subjects from the early modern period to the contemporary period. This section is followed by the influences and causes of the suffragettes who were involved in the first half of the 1920s and the tension between feminism and changing cultural values within the Kibbo Kift throughout the 1920s in their internal publications.

The Kibbo Kift and its members were firmly rooted in the transition from late Victorian and Edwardian social anxieties to post-First World War cultural unease. The central question of how to prevent another world war was moderated by social and intellectual debates around the interlocked concepts of degeneration and regeneration. Degeneration, as used here, meant a combination of both the philosophical definition that appeared in English at the beginning of the early modern period as “the falling off from ancestral or earlier excellence” and the biological definition that gained prominence throughout the nineteenth century, which was “change of structure by which an organism, or some particular organ, becomes less elaborately developed and assumes the form of a lower type”.³ Discussion of degeneration within the Kibbo Kift maintained *fin-de-siècle* linguistic tendencies by utilising popular eugenic theory and medical diagnostics. As Tammy Proctor notes, “the language of national degeneration reflected fears that Britain was becoming effeminate and 'soft' in an age of increased national posturing in Europe”.⁴ With Hargrave's *The Great War Brings It Home*,

³ “Degeneration, n.” OED Online (Oxford University Press, September 2014).

⁴ Tammy M. Proctor, *On My Honour: Guides and Scouts in Interwar Britain* (American Philosophical Society: Philadelphia, 2002), p. 13.

degeneration was used to place post-First World War Britain in a period of continued crisis that would eventually lead to the downfall of Britain through another war or gradual eugenic decline. It was, therefore, one that needed a drastic but not wholly unfamiliar solution to prevent the advent of a Second World War and halt and reverse the eugenic decline.

Regeneration, as used here, was both an oppositional and transitional concept. It, too, combines the philosophical and biological definitions as “the action of coming or bringing into renewed existence; recreation; rebirth; restoration” and “the natural replacement or repair of a lost or damaged part, organ, etc.” respectively.⁵ The concept of regeneration in English, however, originated in the mid-to-late medieval period and has a longer connection to spiritual matters than degeneration. Regeneration encapsulated Edwardian character building and physical culture, but it also remained intimately connected to an older aesthetic of spiritual renewal or rebirth. Ana Carden-Coyne examined “why post-war recovery in Anglophone societies was accompanied by an unrelenting drive to reconstruct, perfect, and beautify the human body,” comparing and contrasting “modernism and classicism” in the aesthetics and ideals applied to the body.⁶ Within the Kibbo Kift, the modern and the classic were interwoven through conceptualisation of the primitive, which I defined in my MA dissertation as “an umbrella term for physical, moral, and intellectual qualities that were different from European sensibilities”.⁷ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska pointed out that “in the wake of the carnage and mutilation of the First World War, the physical culture movement provided a site

⁵ “Regeneration, n.” OED Online (Oxford University Press, September 2014).

⁶ Ana Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism, and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 4.

⁷ Rachel Kau Cheng, “‘I Went Alone’: John Hargrave and the Origins of the Kibbo Kift” (M.A. History dissertation, University College London, 2012), p. 9.

for the reconstruction of the male body”.⁸ The primitive was the lack of mechanical technology and mass production as well as an idealisation of a physically active and fit human body. I would further qualify this definition as not just European in conceptualisation but regulated by English sensibilities; this was because the membership of the Kibbo Kift who actively discussed the primitive, John Hargrave, Kathleen M. Milnes, and Vera Chapman were all English-born.

The Kibbo Kift’s ideology of the primitive required further explanation and expansion in order to become applicable to society. The manner by which the primitive was conceptualised was unique to the movement. The primitive was the central topic of Hargrave's *The Great War Brings It Home*, as the agent of how civilisation could be moved from its weakened degenerative state to become a stronger regenerated entity. It was the movement away from primitive roots in nature and physical activity that had brought about social degeneration, and the return to a more primitive and therefore natural state constituted the regenerative impetus. Degeneration and regeneration were, to a certain extent, dualistic terms, and the Kibbo Kift utilised multiple definitions of degeneration and regeneration. This asymmetry within the group gave insight as to individual intellectual preoccupations of members and offered agency to members' participation in the development and performance of Kibbo Kift philosophy. Degeneration and regeneration were concepts individual members utilised to give voice to their social and cultural concerns.

For the Kibbo Kift, class was the primary divide in the human condition. Race came secondary. Application of eugenic ideology as envisioned by the Kibbo Kift as whole aimed at perceived physical and mental differences in class caused by lower educational and income

⁸ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, “Building a British Superman: Physical Culture in Interwar Britain.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 4 (2006): 595-610, p. 601.

levels. The explicit idea that other, non-white races were “primitive” carried largely positive connotations regarding these race’s physical condition. Other races were implicitly not considered mentally equal. Their physical condition was explicitly considered better than the current white British condition because they had not been industrialised and weakened by urban, indoors living. The purpose of other races was to serve as a physical measure that could be surpassed.

The intellectual thought behind the Kibbo Kift as a movement has been preserved in a variety of published tracts, especially by the movement's leader, John Hargrave, non-fiction books, and the Kibbo Kift's internal and external newsletters which featured philosophical and artistic contributions by many active members. This chapter utilises the memoirs and papers of John Hargrave, Kathleen M. Milnes, and Vera Chapman, and it discusses how their philosophical interests influenced and were in turn influenced by the Kibbo Kift. This chapter also examines the reading materials of the Kibbo Kift recommended through *The Great War Brings It Home*, internal publications, and *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*. The materials as well as the philosophies of individual members were bound together by continuing and evolving concerns about the degeneration and regeneration of Britain. As such, this chapter deals with the public literature of the Kibbo Kift as well as private memoirs of individual members to reconstruct what the intellectual life of the Kibbo Kift looked like both in concept and in practise. The solution proposed to prevent Britain's decline and another world war was the unique Kibbo Kift ideology of the primitive, which was a central idea and agent of change.

3.2 John Hargrave’s War and His Influences

Disillusionment in the industrialised and increasingly urban-dwelling British landscape was a common thread in literature long before the First World War. The back to nature movement began with the English and American Romantics in literature and art in the mid-1850s. Back

to nature was closely related to the philosophical tension between the natural, which related to wildlife and the rural landscape, and the modern, which related to industrialisation and urban landscapes of the late Victorian and Edwardian period. Art commentators, such as John Ruskin, connected aesthetic and social issues in the fine arts and theatre to the environment through “natural, social, and psychological” elements.⁹ George Bernard Shaw, who began his career known for literary and music criticism, also dealt with interconnected social issues to examine the natural and the modern, particularly in his five stage-play series, *Back to Methuselah*.¹⁰ These five science fiction plays were centred around Shaw's ideas of how humanity must progress and his conclusion that the arts rather than politics should be the avenue of evolution, especially following the First World War. The war itself had brought about philosophical and aesthetic upheaval as well as altering British citizens' expectations of class and gender roles. Proctor noted that “the postwar citizen was no longer defined by his outspoken love for empire and nation or by occupation, but by his private life, his role in the family, and his cheerfulness in the face of adversity”.¹¹ Graham Dawson also argued that “idealised, wish-fulfilling forms of masculinity” that were present in nineteenth-century British adventure literature reflected and offered men a way to cope with cultural anxieties in a world constantly changing and under threat.¹²

⁹ Michael Wheeler, ed. *Ruskin and the Environment: The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 3-4.

¹⁰ George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*. 1921. Project Gutenberg, 2004.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13084/13084.txt>

¹¹ Proctor, *On My Honour*, p. 85.

¹² Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imaginings of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 282.

The natural and modern were not completely oppositional terms, and their use as concepts varied somewhat depending on whom, when, and how they were used. With the Fabian literary magazine, *The New Age*, edited by Alfred Richard Orange and active from 1907 to 1922, social and cultural issues of modern art, women's suffrage, and psychology were examined to find what was working for Britain and what was not.¹³ While advancement in science and medicine were met with interest, possible changes to the social structure of Britain due to the influence of suffrage and modern art were treated with greater and more opaque scrutiny. The First World War, to commentators in *The New Age*, demonstrated all of the negative effects of industrialisation, and the wartime utilisation of new technology gave *fin-de-siècle* pessimism and disillusionment a contemporary face. John Hargrave read *The New Age* and referenced it in *The Great War Brings It Home* and the Kibbo Kift magazine *The Mark* until *The New Age's* dissolution in 1922.¹⁴ *The New Age's* liberal attitude towards scientific developments but generally socially conservative stance reflects Hargrave's own outlook, which would influence and shape the Kibbo Kift from the outset.

Informed by his experience of the Great War, a movement away from militarism and industrialisation and towards a peaceful, outdoors-based lifestyle was Hargrave's original impetus for the formation of the Kibbo Kift. Hargrave's involvement in the early days of scouting and his return to the organisation following his service in the Battle of Gallipoli presented him with two very different versions of scouting. Hargrave's incomplete 1920 attempt at an autobiography reflected this tone that the First World War had interrupted Hargrave's life as a scout. "Twelve Years in the Scouting Movement" was his unpublished

¹³ Wallace Martin, *The New Age Under Orange: Chapters in English Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967).

¹⁴ YMA/Hargrave/33.

scouting memoir that had been interrupted and then briefly continued following the First World War wherein he attempted to reconcile his life as scout before the war with his life postwar.¹⁵ It reads very differently from his published 1916 war memoir, *At Suvla Bay*, which focused entirely on the period that he spent in army training and then in Gallipoli.¹⁶ “Twelve Years in the Scouting Movement” covered from Hargrave's birth in 1894 until 1920. It ended with the Hargrave's formal split from the Boy Scouts and the founding of the Kibbo Kift. At the end of the First World War, the Boy Scouts faced a “leakage of the older boys from the movement”, which Hargrave argues had to do with the increasing institutionalisation of the Boy Scouts by the Church and government influence.¹⁷ This contemporary criticism of scouting has been a source of historical debate. Gerald J. De Groot viewed the Scouting movement as “an evangelical response to the problems associated with urban poverty, and as such, typical of the tendency to blame those problems on character deficiencies rather than destitution”.¹⁸ John Springhall offered a somewhat more balanced stance that, while there was an element of social control behind and within the Scouting movement, it also was broadly meant to facilitate the education of the future citizen.¹⁹ Proctor further asserted that scouting as a whole “tried to synthesize conservative concerns with order and a post-war need to 'look

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*.

¹⁷ YMA/Hargrave/33.

¹⁸ De Groot, *Back in Blighty*, p. 52.

¹⁹ John Springhall, “Baden-Powell and the Scout Movement before 1920: Citizen Training or Soldiers of the Future?” *The English Historical Review* 104, no. 405 (1987): p. 934.

back' with a growing identification of masculinity with healthy mind and body and the ability to 'look wide' beyond the differences of class, party and nation".²⁰

While Hargrave took issue with many of the same problems as the Scouts, he was quick to point out that it was poverty and poor health standards that were exacerbating the problems of physical and mental deficiencies. Hargrave asserted within the first two paragraphs of *The Great War Brings It Home* that the book was a reflection on thoughts on society that he has long held as well as reaction to the First World War. It was the product of research that he began prior to the war and continued through it, and he stated that "in spite of the title, the work was compiled long before the outbreak of war" and further asserted that "since his return to civil life he has re-written a good deal and endeavoured to straighten the rest".²¹ Thus, his social commentary addressed not just the war but the late Victorian and Edwardian anxieties that led to and exacerbated Hargrave's personal views.

His break and excommunication from the Scouts was part of a growing trend of boys and adults dissatisfied with the organisation. Hargrave's view was translated into his involvement in the woodcraft arm of the Kibbo Kift, which had originally been led by Ernest Thompson Seton. Seton "was a writer, artist, and naturalist" who gained popularity for his fictional and moralistic stories that usually featured Native Americans, which he termed "Red Indians."²² It was from them that Seton claimed to have been taught woodcraft skills for surviving in the outdoors, and this fact/fiction blur of Native American teachings marketed for popular consumption in Seton's books on nature and the outdoors formed the basis for

²⁰ Proctor, *On My Honour*, p. 86.

²¹ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. viii.

²² Brian Morris, "Ernest Thompson Seton and the Origins of the Woodcraft Movement."

woodcraft ideology. Seton was a heavily influential figure in the early days of the Boy Scouts, writing the first edition of *The Boy Scout Handbook* utilised by the Boy Scouts of America in 1910.²³ This handbook adapted *Scouting for Boys* for an American audience with the addition of woodcraft ideas from Seton's woodcraft books, *The Birch Bark Rolls* and *The Book of Woodcraft*. *The Boy Scout Handbook* separated and defined the concepts and basic practises of scouting, woodcraft, and life-craft. Scoutcraft was the physical training necessary to live a healthy outdoors life and was also meant to develop good citizenship; woodcraft was the practise of activities that were “about enjoying, understanding, and protecting the natural world”; and life-craft was about the practise and necessary skills for surviving out of doors.²⁴ These definitions overlapped and continue to do so to a certain extent; the separate terminology, however, indicated that Seton's woodcraft ideology maintained a set of values separate from scouting.

Seton also introduced the concept of woodcraft names, which Hargrave adopted in his youth. These were second names that were somehow representative of the person who adopted them and could either be chosen by that person or be given to the person by others in recognition for qualities or deeds. These names often invoked emblematic animals, plants, and mythological and fictional figures. In Hargrave's case, the woodcraft name “White Fox” came from an incident as a youth where, at a meeting with fellow local scouts, the boys in attendance decided to give each other “scouts names same as you reads about”.²⁵ They were loosely defined as different from “ordinary names what everyone knows” and implied a

²³ *Boy Scout Handbook: The First Edition, 1911*. Digital edition. Project Gutenberg, 2009.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/29558/29558-h/29558-h.htm>

²⁴ Boy Scout Handbook Homepage. Boy Scouts of America. <http://bsahandbook.org/>

²⁵ YMA/KK/33.

certain amount of special meaning to them both individually and communally.²⁶ These names also made supporters of woodcraft readily identifiable to each other as woodcraft names were used in some social documentation within the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in the 1910s through the early 1920s.²⁷ This woodcraft arm of the Boy Scouts believed that the organisation had gradually pulled further away from the freedom of exploring nature and the outdoors and turned more and more towards organised, militaristic drills and classroom lessons.²⁸ This was what many of the older boys who had chosen to become involved in the Scouts prior to the war had sought to escape: indoors educational instruction and dry moral lectures. The militarism was of great concern to a number of adults, including Hargrave, who had served in the First World War and had seen its effects. Hargrave saw Baden-Powell's military background and continued military connections as demonstrative of what had gone integrally wrong with scouting as a movement. The question of whether or not the Scouts themselves were truly militaristic will be returned to later in this chapter.

Ernest Thompson Seton's ideas about woodcraft were philosophically paired with Henry David Thoreau in Hargrave's writing. A 1989 article for *The Thoreau Society* noted the influence of Thoreau and his 1854 book *Walden, a Life in the Woods* in particular on Hargrave's philosophy of self-sufficiency in the outdoors.²⁹ Much like Thoreau in *Walden*, Hargrave did not want to remove people from civilisation. Rather, he desired for humanity to reconnect with its origins within nature. He stated that even “the hardest, poorest, wretchedest

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ YMA/KK/115.

²⁸ YMA/Hargrave/33.

²⁹ Lonnie L. Willis, “Thoreau and John Hargrave, English Founder of the Kibbo Kift,” *The Thoreau Society Bulletin* 189 (1989): 1-3, p. 1.

condition of life is not sufficient to stamp out a people living wild in a state of nature”.³⁰

Humanity had a natural tenacity, but “no amount of sheltering civilisation can ward off the fate which must overtake a diseased and degenerate race.”³¹ Hargrave's stance of the primitive as a possibility for the forwarding of modern humanity was also framed specifically around Thoreau's ideas of backwoodsmanship that were demonstrated in Thoreau's descriptions of day to day life in his cabin in *Walden*. Referencing the Great Exhibition of 1851, which was the first international exhibition of manufactured products to be held in Hyde Park, Hargrave claimed that “it was said to be impossible to return to a primitive existence even if one was so absurd as to want to”.³² Thoreau, however, had “showed the possibility” that humanity could and should return to its primitive roots when he published *Walden* three years following the exhibition.³³ What Hargrave wished to offer was a way to broaden the process beyond Thoreau’s experience and to make outdoors living accessible to all men and boys.

Boys could begin to access Hargrave's primitive regeneration process through Hargrave's scouting and woodcraft handbook, *Lonecraft: The Official Handbook of the Lonecraft Boys of the Woodcraft Kindred*. It was first published in 1913 and was reissued for a third edition in 1921. In the third edition's forward, Hargrave clarified the book's audience, stating that “those who are unable to join a Woodcraft Tribe because they live away in the heart of the country, in out-of-the-way hamlets, and outlying farms and cottages”.³⁴ *Lonecraft*

³⁰ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 24.

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 24.

³² *ibid.*, p. 25.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ John Hargrave, *Lonecraft: The Official Handbook of the Lonecraft Boys of the Woodcraft Kindred*. 1913. Third ed. (London: Contable and Company, Ltd., 1921), p. 4.

covered basic outdoors survival activities such as animal drawing and trail marking, each with pictorial examples to make the written instructions easier to replicate. The appeal was to boys specifically, although Hargrave kept in mind that girls, too, would be interested, stating: “Let us, in our woodcraft camps, train a body of boys and girls who, as they grow up, will work actively for peace and world co-operation.”³⁵ The inclusiveness of this appeal will be returned to later in this chapter.

Activeness fed into the postwar preoccupation with fitness in a society that had been bodily affected and changed by the First World War. Ana Carden-Coyne pointed out that “the war amplified the vulnerability of the mind and body; yet this made classical ideals and images more appealing”.³⁶ Hargrave was mainly concerned with the state of men and therefore saw the male British citizenry as the most problematic aspect of modern society. The men who had not served in the war were “the weaklings, the unfit, the slackers, and the feeble-minded loafers of the land” who had been left following the First World War because they had been “weeded out” from the fit due to medical examinations of military fitness.³⁷ These men were Hargrave's mass, the general populace that needed to be directed to avoid their further degeneration. In order to direct the mass, there needed to be a body of physically and mentally fit people to lead them. It was from this idea, heavily influenced by Baden-Powell's goal with scouting, that the “thought-seed” of what would become the Kibbo Kift was planted.³⁸

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ Ana Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism, and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 6.

³⁷ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 51.

³⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 24.

The concept of a mass populace had emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and grown in popularity in literature and popular science. John Carey described the mass as primarily a rhetorical device, an “imaginary construct, displacing the unknowable multiplicity of human life, it can be reshaped at will, in accordance with the wishes of the imaginer. Alternatively, it can be replaced by images, equally arbitrary of 'typical' men or women.”³⁹ As a construct, the mass had class divisions; often the mass represented the working class and the poor with the implication that the middle and upper classes would reshape them. The mass was a sweeping generalisation that Hargrave used to represent those who had not yet begun an outdoors and woodcraft lifestyle. Hargrave hypothesised that “if the Great War was the work of an old and degenerate civilization, regeneration required youthful vigour, honed in wild camps and on long hikes”.⁴⁰ The mass that had created and driven the war had to be guided and trained back to health by outdoors living and activity.

Hargrave’s criticism of the previous generations reflected a continuation of pessimism in regard to the past but also a desire to throw it off. The “philosophical pessimism” present in late nineteenth-century English sociocultural discourse had given away to the disillusionment of the Great War.⁴¹ The *fin-de-siècle* concern with degeneration originated in general Western cultural anxieties in the late nineteenth-century and was encapsulated in 1892 by Max Nordau's *Entartung (Degeneration)*. Nordau examined examples of modern art and literature to diagnose where Western civilisation had begun to degenerate, “[applying] quasi-medical

³⁹ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1992), p. 23.

⁴⁰ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 101.

⁴¹ Nicholas Shrimpton, “'Lane, You're a Perfect Pessimist': Pessimism and the English 'Fin de siècle',” *The Yearbook of English Studies* 37, no. 1 (2007): 41-57, p. 49.

categories to artistic and philosophical matters”.⁴² This pessimist view of human progress was prominent throughout Hargrave's early work, coexisting with the scouting and woodcraft instructions and camping layouts. Hargrave was, however, a primarily optimistic commentator, focused upon regeneration for the future rather than predicting a protracted decline. Although the most prominent influences on Hargrave's intellectual thought and philosophical preoccupations were those directly connected to the undercurrents of the times he lived in with influence from Charles Darwin and John Hershel, he also drew from a number of Enlightenment and Ancient Greek philosophers including John Locke, Benedict de Spinoza, and Aristotle.⁴³ He also drew spiritual and moral inspiration from religious figures and philosophers such as Confucius, Buddha, and Jesus Christ as well as lessons drawn from Ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman mythology. Hargrave's ambition to make his ideas applicable beyond British borders and the world over is readily apparent in his breadth of sources, although how well he himself understood the work and philosophy of all the names he listed was debatable. The references to so many well-known names were an attempt to demonstrate a knowledgeable, broadly reaching, and philosophical prowess with as wide an audience appeal as possible.

Evoking classical religious and philosophical alongside mythological figures was important for Hargrave's argument that there was something better and vital further back in the human history that had degenerated in modern times. As “classicism offered a holistic account of the mind and body,” regeneration became possible with knowledge of the figures

⁴² Steven E. Aschheim, “Max Nordau, Friedrich Nietzsche and Degeneration.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 4 (1993): 643-657, p. 645.

⁴³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 333.

that Hargrave referenced.⁴⁴ The body, as Joanna Bourke and Ana Carden-Coyne have pointed out, was a vulnerable battleground in the wake of the First World War. The First World War mutilated the male body and put the female body in crisis. The female body was faced with the demand to perform a larger variety of traditionally masculine roles in the labour force along with additional pressures to maintain a feminine rhetoric and function. “Beautiful bodies” in the manner of Ancient Greek epics were considered exemplary, and the culture of physical fitness that included body-building, sport, and outdoors activities fed into this imagery of beauty.⁴⁵ “War placed beauty on the reconstruction agenda” just as much as it had destroyed the aesthetic body in reality.⁴⁶ Additionally, physical culture offered some contrast to popular eugenics, placing “great emphasis on the remedial or curative potential of their respective systems and, in contrast with eugenicists, saw a regimen of bodily discipline rather than selective breeding as the principal response to physical degeneration”.⁴⁷ This tension between physical culture and eugenics had grown over the course of the war, addressing a broader audience than its original, who were part of the Edwardian emphasis on the “cult of games and Christian manliness”.⁴⁸

The spiritual aesthetic of Hargrave's early philosophy was at once modern in its broad and critical outlook, but it was classical in the language that was used to express it. Throughout Hargrave's early work, the conceptual “return” to nature and holistic health was

⁴⁴ Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*, p. 7.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 263.

⁴⁷ Zweiniger-Bargielowska, “Building a British Superman,” p. 599

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 600.

directly related to embracing the lifestyle and habits of primitive man.⁴⁹ Many of the habits were drawn from literature, particularly Seton's mixture of fiction and non-fiction stories, on Native American and African tribes. This created an idealised and ultimately artificial image of what the primitive should be. This idealised primitivism was the central theme of Hargrave's regenerative rhetoric during the first half of the 1920s, characterised by Springhall as mere “romantic tribalism” but in reality far more central and nuanced to the early Kibbo Kift than that.⁵⁰

The Kindred aimed to return to the idealised primitive state from which the degenerating aspects of society could be shed and the body and mind regenerated into a healthier state in tune with nature. The basis for this process was readily accessible in all boys because:

the boy represents in himself exactly that stage of human evolution at large which is represented by the wild, primitive, uneducated tribes which we call savages. The transitional processes of embryology continue until the man's brain reaches the limit of his capacity at about forty. You might as well take a free-born savage and shut him up in a cage as imprison a child within the narrow limit of four walls and the street.

No single organism is absolutely necessary to the world at large. But the world at large—the whole large living world as far as the horizon and beyond—is absolutely necessary to the living organism. All the forces of the whole living universe have gone to the making of him.

⁴⁹ Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*, p. 158.

⁵⁰ John Springhall, *Youth, Empire, and Society: British Youth Movements, 1883-1940* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1977), p. 114.

Detach him—and he can never be what he was born to be.⁵¹

This passage, which came between long quotations from *A History of Politics* by Edward Jenks and Dr. William A. Brend's 1917 *Health and the State*, encapsulated the basic form of Hargrave's philosophy: human beings could not be entirely disconnected from nature lest they give up something vital to their health and humanity. Hargrave described and advocated an idealised primitive potential, which existed in youths who were in tune with the wild, basic aspects of the human self and how damaging physical and mental detachment from the natural world was to fostering full and fruitful human development. Hargrave's conceptualisation of the savage and the primitive were not only prehistoric but based on contemporary non-white races, which Annabella Pollen rightfully called "problematic".⁵² Hargrave's perception of the savage was not only "wild, primitive, uneducated" but also childish, and it was from this that his ideal boy was based.⁵³ His argument was that the qualities of the savage were essential to fostering the full potential in a boy through regular contact with nature.

Applying the primitive to developmental science, Hargrave believed that people began as primitive beings and were only shaped into civilised persons by external forces. He asserted that each and every baby was "a little savage speaking the primitive voice-sounds of primitive man".⁵⁴ All the potential for health and strength existed at birth, and, if enhanced by fresh air and outdoors life through adolescence, the child would grow into a healthy, happy adult. This natural process had been disturbed, though, by modern civilisation, specifically through the environmental pollution of urban and factory life and moral degeneration due to

⁵¹ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 82.

⁵² Pollen, *The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift*, p. 100.

⁵³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 82.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 141.

consumer materialism. Having come “face to face with bare Nature”, Hargrave asserted in his war memoirs that he and his fellow soldiers “had to return to the methods of primitive man” to survive in the hotter and more humid climate.⁵⁵ This return, which directly rejects rationalist and materialist notions of civilisation in order to navigate a harsh natural landscape, was in the fashion of many late Victorian and Edwardian adventure narratives. Modern civilisation was not sustainable either physically or spiritually as it did not produce people who were capable of living to their mental or physical optimum. Those who had lived without modern conveniences were able to achieve physical and spiritual completeness. In the end, both because and despite of all modern and technological trappings for “primitive man will out; and the mind of man still harks back to the natural and the free, even though the body be confined and crippled by the unnatural servitude of our civilisation.”⁵⁶ There was hope that by going back to nature from current civilisation the so-called servitude could be broken; the healing would start with the mind and eventually translate to the body.

Hargrave's goal with the early Kibbo Kift was to regenerate the fantastic elements of these writers and achieve a world order that would allow adventures in these imagined landscapes to flourish. To do so, Hargrave utilised a broad range of naturalist and humanitarian intellectual thought and philosophy that he had at his disposal to facilitate his regenerated natural world. Hargrave hoped to attract the attention and support of the Eugenics Education Society, the Hampstead Council of Social Welfare, and the Fabian Society with his philosophy of primitive love.⁵⁷ The aspects of his philosophy that ended up attracting attention were those that addressed the body and mind, the holistic idea that a return to the

⁵⁵ Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*, p. 158.

⁵⁶ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 305.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 327.

primitive would regenerate the British and European mind and body. As the First World War “had brought cross-cultural influence between European and Anglophone culture, a transfer of ideas and reinforcement of the sporting body”, it had also brought the fragility of the body to the forefront of cultural concerns.⁵⁸ A new approach to society and culture was needed to preserve the mind and body from the ill-effects of the degenerative modern, and Hargrave's ideas about the primitive and a return to it for regeneration might have been the solution.

3.3 Recommended Reading Materials of the Kibbo Kift

Hargrave's idea of the primitive as a regenerative solution had not occurred in an intellectual or philosophical vacuum. The literature that was produced and read by the people Hargrave established contact with through his published work, and those who became members of the Kibbo Kift maintained the common thread of anxiety around the modern and the fear of social and cultural decline. To understand the philosophical concerns not just of Hargrave but the broader membership of the Kibbo Kift, examining what was read by members and talked about in Kibbo Kift publications offers insight. From its onset, the members of the Kibbo Kift drew from works of literature, philosophy, and popular science to inspire and shape their ideas. These works were recommended in the various literature of the organisation to be read by other members. This created a collective lexicon among the members that further shaped the Kibbo Kift's constantly evolving ideology. Recommended works were clearly labelled for members and interested readers under headings, often at the end of publications or chapters of books, akin to “What to Read”.⁵⁹ These recommendation sections usually included

⁵⁸ Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body*, p. 199.

⁵⁹ YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 14 (capitalisation as in original text).

Hargrave's most recent writings and, from 1927 onwards, almost always noted *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* as the core text of the organisation.

This collective lexicon of texts aimed to “produce the ‘Barbarian’ stock” within the membership of the organisation themselves.⁶⁰ This barbarian quality would allow them to “sweep across the frontier” of modern civilisation and replace it.⁶¹ The barbarian had to be brought forth in the Kindred because the ills of modern civilisation had already altered the entire world and upset the balance that had existed before to naturally overturn a declining civilisation. Annebella Pollen, in her exhibition in 2015, therefore rightfully termed the Kibbo Kift an organisation of “intellectual barbarians”.⁶² This intellectual aspect to the Kibbo Kift's barbarian was, however, heavily varied. Hargrave favoured extensive references in his writing and expressed his understanding and opinions of these references with long quotations sometimes entirely separate from the rest of the text and without further explanation of their meaning. This meant the reader was expected to be familiar with the material that Hargrave was referencing and to be able to follow his argument at the same time. Therefore, the intellectual appeal of the group was limited to those who had a pre-existing background in at least some of the wide range of topics Hargrave covered; it also attracted only particular people who were able to follow Hargrave's style of argument and agreed with the majority of his opinions.

Overall, the members of the Kibbo Kift would have had to grow used to Hargrave's argumentative style and therefore would have become increasingly familiar with the recurring

⁶⁰ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 21.

⁶¹ *ibid.*

⁶² Entrance placard. “Intellectual Barbarians: The Kibbo Kift Kindred.” 10 October 2015 – 13 March 2016. Whitechapel Galleries, London. Visited 13 November 2015.

work that was referenced. This collective lexicon was vital to the formation and maturation of the core membership, and, as the organisation evolved, members contributed to the lexicon through recommendations in Kibbo Kift magazines, pamphlets, and flyers. While Hargrave's writings and intellectual thought formed the foundation to the organisation, members increasingly influenced the custom and practise of intellectual exchange through the collective lexicon of recommended work. This section examines some of the material recommended in these Kibbo Kift publications.

Joseph Craven's 1998 thesis discussed at length the literary influences of Seton, Rudyard Kipling, and Robert Lewis Stevenson on John Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift's founding philosophies. His focus was on how the imagery of Native American and Indian characters in these author's stories influenced the "strict ritual" that characterised Kibbo Kift gatherings and camping activities.⁶³ Seton, Kipling, and Stevenson were part of naturalist and adventure literature, capturing the imaginations of young boys and girls in both urban and rural settings with imagined wild landscapes and animal tales. What Craven mainly underplayed was the complex dichotomy between these naturalist themes and the images and undertones of empire and imperial expansion expressed in the moralistic themes to these tales. Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *Kim* (1901) were particularly popular with the Kibbo Kift and the general scouting and woodcraft community in the early twentieth century.⁶⁴ The African setting of *The Jungle Book* along with its exotic animal characters was appealing to all ages, and the moral lessons that nature itself had certain universal laws of behaviour and values were considered valuable by Baden-Powell and Hargrave in their

⁶³ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 2.

⁶⁴ Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*. 1908. Reprint. Edited by Elleke Boehmer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. xviii.

writing.⁶⁵ *Kim*'s images and lessons on empire were paired with the adventures of the semi-autobiographical elements of the novel.⁶⁶ Both Baden-Powell in *Scouting for Boys* and Hargrave in his woodcraft handbooks reference the spy games that the main character plays in the story.⁶⁷ The utilisation of Kipling's novels was mainly inspirational as the activities in these books led to the creation of scouting games and terminology, but Kipling's settings in Africa and India and his characters were also inspirational to individual members in choosing their woodcraft and group names within the Kibbo Kift. When Robert Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scouts in 1907, he took full advantage of the medium of popular adventure literature to advertise and popularise the new scouting movement as both something that was fun for boys and that would teach them imperial British values.

Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*, was first published in 1908 and amalgamated the ideas of previous publications by himself. It utilised quotations by other writers such as Alexandre Dumas's *The Three Musketeers* and James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pathfinder*. This original handbook's structure and ideas remained influential in the Kibbo Kift's development of camp and youth activities, and Hargrave himself seems to have consciously used the mixed, heterogeneous structure as a model in *The Great War Brings It Home*. Elleke Boehmer calls it a “modernist Edwardian text” and observes that Baden-Powell “espoused cultural stereotypes yet embedded diverse

⁶⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*. 1894. Project Gutenberg (30 August 2009).

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/236/236-h/236-h.htm> (accessed 20 November 2014).

⁶⁶ Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*. 1901. Project Gutenberg (January 2009).

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2226/2226-h/2226-h.htm> (accessed 24 November 2014).

⁶⁷ Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, p. 48.

cultural influences in the structures of Scouting”.⁶⁸ The language of the book was clear and direct in teaching the scouting and citizenry lessons to the British youth who read it but provided a sense of adventure into the unknown to whet and keep their interest. Tapping into the sense of adventure allowed for the moral and imperial lessons of scouting to be disseminated into the youth consuming the literature, such when Baden-Powell presents the case of a sailor of the H.M.S. *Andromeda* who saved two woman and six children from a burning house, adding that “his act was an example to you of how to do your duty AT ONCE without thinking of dangers or difficulties”.⁶⁹ The collected writings in *Playing the Game*, a compendium of Baden-Powell's other writings on scouting, further demonstrates Baden-Powell's intention that scouting should shape a particular type of British citizen out of the boys involved in the movement.⁷⁰ He was concerned “with a perceived moral and physical degeneration of Britain” and sought various solutions through scouting's various physical activities in outdoors camping, physical fitness, and group activities to foster camaraderie between fellow scouts.⁷¹

Within the literature of scouting and subsequently the Kibbo Kift, the moral and the physical remained interlinked around degeneration and regeneration as concepts. Outdoors fitness training was the solution to moral and physical degeneration; here, the intention was clearly philosophically different along the lines of what to do with the regenerated body. Baden-Powell lent his support to the National Service League, which “called for compulsory

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. xxxv-xxxix.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 225.

⁷⁰ Robert Baden-Powell, *Playing the Game: A Baden-Powell Compendium*. Edited by Mario Sica (London: Pan Macmillan Ltd., 2007).

⁷¹ Proctor, *On My Honour*, p. 13.

military training for all able-bodied male citizens”.⁷² While the connection of Baden-Powell to the military was both obvious and explicit, the connection of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides was not. The Boy Scouts from its onset was primarily British-focused and did not immediately seek to be an international organisation. The language of *Scouting for Boys* with its explicit discussion of the British Empire and what sort of citizen it needed boys to be placed it as a specifically imperial organisation. Another question that gained further prominence during and following the First World War was the overall purpose of the organisation. As it explicitly intended to produce a particular type of citizen, an enduring question has been whether or not the Boy Scouts were inherently militarist?

The most obvious militarist connection is Baden-Powell himself. His fame as the victorious commander in the Siege of Mafeking in the Second Boer War and his continued use of a military title throughout his life appeared to bind the Boy Scouts to the military all but explicitly. This is, however, somewhat superficial. Baden-Powell was aware that a youth organisation training cadets for military service presented a very different image from boys and girls camping outdoors and learning various crafts. The Scouting Defence Corps was a short-lived group within the Boy Scouts that was to be “prepared to defend their country if called upon to do so,” but, despite reported membership numbers of 3,000, it never manifested as a developed scheme.⁷³ While the ideas behind scouting had come from a military environment and man, “the militarist explanation [was] valid but unbalanced”.⁷⁴ Even so, the

⁷² De Groot, *Back in Blighty*, p. 39.

⁷³ Rosie Kennedy, *The Children's War: Britain, 1914-1918* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 105.

⁷⁴ Scott Johnson, “Courting Public Favour: The Boy Scout Movement and the Accident of Internationalism, 1907-29.” *Historical Research* 2014: 1-22, p. 2.

image of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides as militarist organisations persisted. Members were not discouraged from joining the armed forces prior, during, or after the First World War. With the leader of the scouting movement so closely connected to the military, it was obviously not a peaceful organisation, nor did it visually appear to be one especially as the uniforms of scouts and guides standardised. The Boy Scout's khaki uniform was worn by Hargrave temporarily during training due to the lack of Army uniforms, much to his fellow troops' amusement and with his own acknowledgement of the irony.⁷⁵ The uniform itself attracted criticism from pacifist movements as well as from Baden-Powell during the war.⁷⁶ The scouting movement had an image problem for those who were seeking a wholly non-militaristic movement.

Following the First World War, there were a number of members of the Scouts and Guides who did find the militaristic overtones in the organisation increasingly contentious, often dividing along scouting and woodcraft philosophical lines. These members included Cecil Mumford and Ruth Clark. Along with them, Hargrave sought a solution in returning to nature, stating that “there is not a boy in England who is not for the great green woods, who does not crave the life of a backwoodsman”.⁷⁷ English Romanticism had great influence; this was apparent through references to William Wordsworth's poetry and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1866 epic poem “The Song of Hiawatha” in Hargrave's writings both public and personal.⁷⁸ The spiritual expression of both Wordsworth and Longfellow heavily influenced

⁷⁵ Hargrave, *At Suvla Bay*, p. 13.

⁷⁶ Rosie Kennedy, *The Children's War: Britain, 1914-1918* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 106.

⁷⁷ Hargrave, *Lonecraft*, p. 156.

⁷⁸ YMA/Hargrave/33.

the early spiritual life and philosophy of the Kibbo Kift. The idea of the Great Spirit comes from “The Song of Hiawatha” in the passage:

Gitche Manito the Mighty,
 He, the Master of Life, was painted
 As an egg, with points projecting
 To the four winds of the heavens.
 Everywhere is the Great Spirit,
 Was the meaning of this symbol.⁷⁹

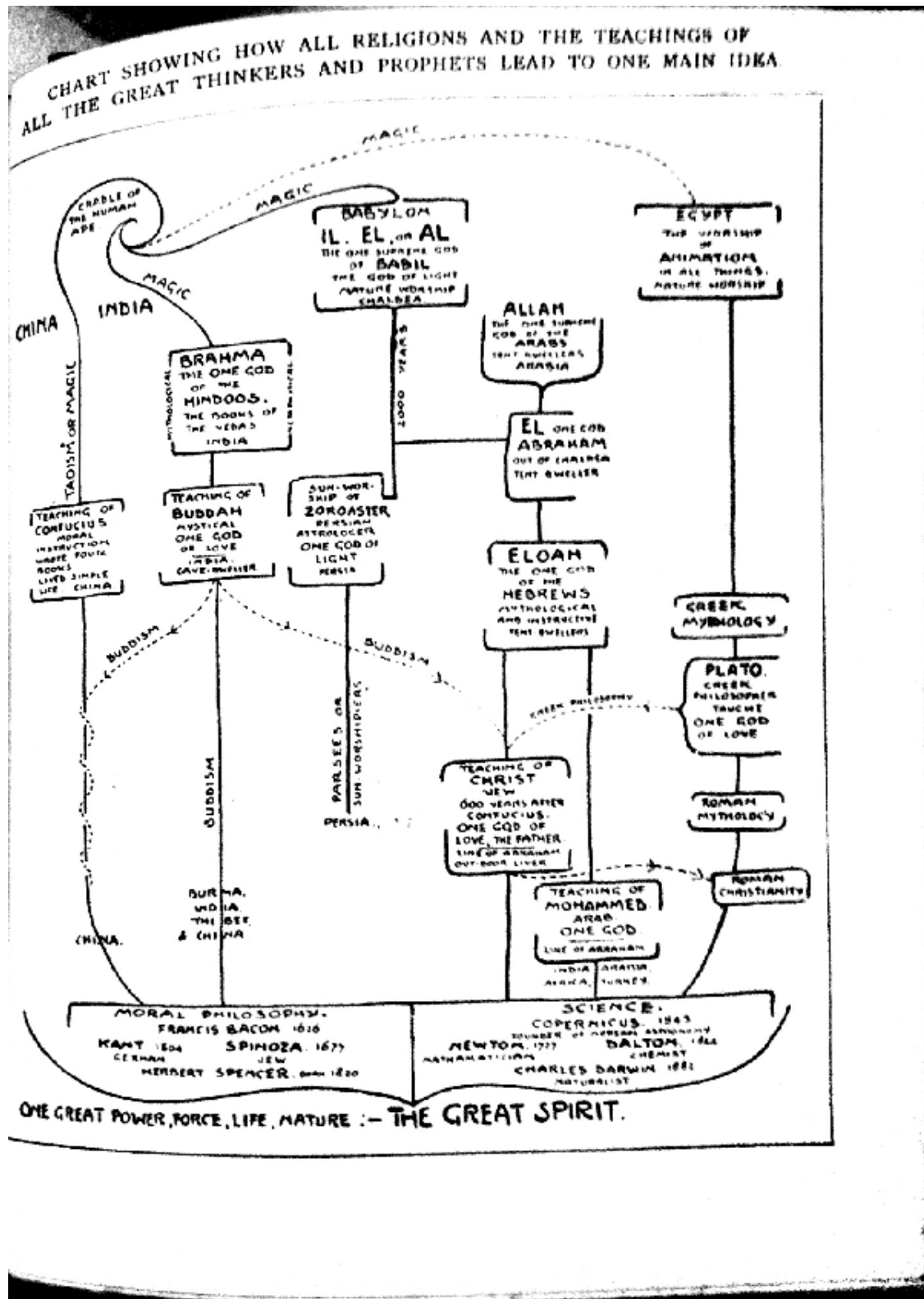
This short passage of Longfellow's poem had a profound influence on the early ideas and theoretical camping structures of the Kibbo Kift. A diagram in *The Great War Brings It Home* chapter entitled “The Formation of a 'Tribe'” features a circle with four upwards extending prongs much like what is described in the passage above and refers to it as the “simple form of tribal organisation [found] the world over”.⁸⁰ The Kibbo Kift camp at official gatherings such as the annual Althing would take on this form for the main activities, tents pitched in a half circle around the main lectern upon which the Kinlog would rest. Gitche Manito the Mighty was also referenced in the December 1922 issue of *The Mark* as an entity to be hailed like God for bread.⁸¹ Thoreau's influence, as discussed previously, remained strong throughout the early 1920s in the Kibbo Kift, acting as a symbolic reference and jumping off point for the expression of spirituality within the Kibbo Kift.

⁷⁹ YMA/Hargrave/33.

⁸⁰ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, pp. 164-5.

⁸¹ YMA/KK/165, December 1922.

Figure 3.3.1: Chart Showing How All Religions and the Teachings of All the Great Thinkers and Prophets Lead to One Main Idea⁸²



⁸² *ibid.*, p. 333.

The Great Spirit of the Kibbo Kift was a transcendental concept in Hargrave's 1919 book, *The Great War Brings It Home*. The chapter entitled "The Great Mystery" defined the Great Mystery behind life as the Great Spirit itself as "the Great Spirit is Everything; Everything is the Great Spirit".⁸³ This established a Cartesian parallelism within the Great Spirit as a concept, that the Great Spirit both was itself and everything else at the same time. While Longfellow's Great Spirit was explicitly the belief system of the fictional Native American and existed separately from other organised religions, Hargrave and the Kibbo Kift's Great Spirit encompassed all religions and spirituality, organised or otherwise, and were meant to be already known to all people, just subconsciously. In a diagram (see *Figure 3.3.1*) entitled, "Chart Showing How All Religions and the Teachings of All the Great Thinkers and Prophets Lead to One Main Idea," Hargrave attempted to demonstrate how current and historical major world religions, their prophets, and famous philosophers and scientists were driven by the same force of "magic" originating from "the cradle of the human ape".⁸⁴ Connecting all of this together was the binding force of the Great Spirit, found at the base of the diagram as the foundational rather than the motivating force.

Called "one great power, force, life, nature," the Great Spirit was envisioned by Hargrave as a figure that transcended the limits of organised religion by leaving behind the monetary concerns of accommodation in settled and immovable buildings.⁸⁵ Because the Great Spirit was its own foundation, worship and religious activity that acknowledged and triumphed the Great Spirit could be done outside, anywhere, and for free. Contemplation of and interaction with the Great Spirit may take place anywhere as a person could camp and

⁸³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 346.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 333.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

build a fire in various locations in nature at their own leisure. Therefore, camp fire acted as a mobile space of worship and meditation, and it also replaced classrooms of Sunday school for teaching young boys and girls hands-on scouting and woodcraft skills.

The Mark's eight part series written by Margaret A. Ormrod on the Great Spirit expanded upon its introduction in *The Great War Brings It Home* and directly addressed how it could be found in and therefore transcended the major world religions of Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (referred to as "Mohammedanism").⁸⁶ This series expanded upon the views espoused by Hargrave in *The Great War Brings It Home* and connected to those visited in Hargrave's tract on primitive man where he stated that "Man, at this time in his Evolution, was worshipping One Great Force".⁸⁷ The Great Spirit was explicitly connected to peace among all peoples, the abandonment of divisions of organised religion central to the acceptance of the Great Spirit, and the peaceful unification of all of humanity under the acceptance of the Great Spirit. Beginning with the concept of "unity [which] is born of sympathy and understanding, of patience and tolerance, and the whole world is being moved by a great desire for this unity," Ormrod argued that communication, transportation, beauty, education, and religion were all unifying forces in the modern world.⁸⁸ The concept of beauty as "universal" fit into Schiller and Kant's concepts of beauty and the sublime, combining art, music, and theatre.⁸⁹ The foremost of the forces that unite humanity, however, was religion, and all people were to a certain extent religious, acknowledging the existence of a spiritual being. The series sought to demonstrate how the

⁸⁶ YMA/KK/165, September 1922.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, July 1922.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, September 1922.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

religions of the world were developed to triumph knowledge and universality of human experience but had, though time, changed in performance. Modernity had drawn religions further astray.

Modern sedentary, indoors worship practises and the expenses of the religious administrative bodies led to the original intentions of these religious systems to degrade, and the only way to stop the overwhelming spiritual “deterioration” was to acknowledge that all beings and beliefs were in fact unified by the greater spiritual force of the Great Spirit.⁹⁰ Ormrod provided basic background in each entry of the series to the religions discussed. She discussed where the religions were geographically dominant and what made each structure of belief unique. She cited for example Hinduism's influence on the Indian caste system and Zoroastrianism's adherence to strict ritual and ceremony. While the sixth entry to the series on Christianity was less detailed in background explanations, clearly assuming that the readership was familiar with Christian teaching, it was also the most critical of the entries. It addressed the exclusivity of modern preaching and argued that the Church has moved away from the basic all-inclusiveness of Christ’s word, stating:

Those who condemn all teaching that is not suitable for the most undeveloped and childish mind will hardly keep their hold on the intellectual and scientific. Surely the Master meant *all* men to find satisfaction in His word, and those are His real disciples who, knowing that there can be unity even in diversity, show His divine light streaming over many paths to the one goal.⁹¹

This singular goal denied the existence of neither the Christian God nor any of the gods or belief systems of the other major religions discussed in this series. Rather, the

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, December 1922.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, February 1923.

problems within the major world religions had to do with modern sensibilities that had been built up around religion. In discussing Judaism and the historical and modern discrimination Jews faced, Ormrod argued that when not at risk of persecution, the Jew “gladly joins with his fellow men of all religions in promoting the welfare of humanity”.⁹² It was only the barriers imposed on religious beliefs by historical strife and misinterpretation of scripture and teachings that kept all humanity from becoming united for the good of all. The series concluded that “knowledge is the only thing that satisfies. When Religion and Science, never apart in the early days, again become one, then indeed there may be born Peace—not the peace which passeth understanding, but that which comes from understanding.”⁹³ Religion here acted as the binding agent for humanity and peace, and thus the Great Spirit lay in all major religions.

Uniting people across national borders and cultures through the peaceful distribution of knowledge was the Great Spirit's purpose in the first half of the 1920s. Connections to the Soviet Union in 1922 to 1923 were triumphed in *The Mark* as illustrative of the Great Spirit found in all of mankind. The September 1922 issue, which also featured the first instalment of Ormrod's series on the Great Spirit, was dedicated to the growing connections between the main branch of the Kibbo Kift and a group that had been established in Soviet Russia.⁹⁴ The cover illustration for the September 1922 issue was by far the most complex for *The Mark* during its publishing life cycle. Featuring a large head wearing a hat with the mark of the Kibbo Kift descending from the heavens over a billboard bearing the words “Russia” and “K.K.”, the scene on the ground had a kinsman pointing towards *The Mark's* title and two half-

⁹² *ibid.*, January 1923.

⁹³ *ibid.*, April 1923.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, September 1922.

dressed people running towards a camp fire. To the back of the kinsman and half-dressed people, there was a scene of cranes and factory smoke in front of which stood a corpulent man holding a bag of money. A fashionable man and woman head off the cover towards an exit sign. The fashionable man held onto the leash of a small dog who lingered behind him and the woman, looking towards the camp fire. Much of this scene took inspiration from Soviet Linearism and the avant-garde, meshing sharp, linear lines with clear pictorial hierarchy. Political and organisational connection of the Kibbo Kift to the Soviet Union was not, however, so clearly cut. In the news section of the issue, Hargrave wrote, “We send out a message of 'Peace and Good Hunting' to our Russian brothers—let their motto be 'MANKIND UNITE!'”⁹⁵ Later issues included notices of communication with woodcraft groups in Belgium and Czechoslovakia, and several Kindred including Hargrave would take trips abroad to these destinations during the publishing run of *The Mark*. While connections to Belgium were warm in the late 1920s, the explicit connection of the Kibbo Kift to the Soviet groups that were given such attention in the 1922-23 issues of *The Mark* appeared to cool off over the course of the 1920s.⁹⁶ These connections, however, do not appear to have been viewed seriously by authorities based upon Special Branch files from 1925 discussed at length in the sixth chapter of this thesis on legacy.

By the publishing of *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* in 1927, the Great Spirit had been renamed simply the Spirit.⁹⁷ While it was still important in the Kibbo Kift's world view, its purpose had been altered. In prior iterations, the Great Spirit was a united, peaceful, and

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁹⁶ YMA/KK/117.

⁹⁷ John Hargrave, *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*. 1927. 2nd ed. (London: The Kin Press, 1931), p. 265.

omnipresent spiritual force. In *The Confession*, the Spirit was introduced as something discoverable:

Stand at the point of conflict, for there is the fountain of life. Where Form enters Chaos, where Good faces Evil, where Life contacts Death, where the Red Digger penetrates the Green Field, there is the point of conflict, there is the creative instant, there is the pivot of stability.⁹⁸

While the Spirit was not actively combative, it was tied to conflict in a new manner that it was not before. The foundation of the Spirit is at “the point of conflict” and “creative instant” rather than the Great Spirit's embodiment of life and nature.⁹⁹ This reflected the overall intellectual shift in the Kibbo Kift's philosophical concerns and focus from scouting and woodcraft to Social Credit. The Spirit was directly tied to Social Credit rather than to an innate magical force as the Great Spirit had been, as demonstrated in this passage:

The Great Spiritual Struggle of our day is the release of Essential Supplies from invisible bondage.

Of old pronounced the seers the spiritual elements: *Earth, Air, Fire, Water*, and it is by these things things that man, and the spirit of man, exist.

Therefore, when The Kindred proclaims Food, Warmth, and Shelter as the spiritual elements and declares Economic Values to be sacred, it maintains the ancient tradition and is truly and scientifically catholic; for there is the foundation of all life.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 275.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

It is with the Spirit of Man (of the individual) here on Earth that The Kindred has to deal, asking no unanswerable questions and giving no impossible answers.¹⁰⁰

Food, warmth, shelter, and economic values were made to parallel the spiritual ideology of the elements. They were the foundational forces to life, which came into conflict with the Spirit and needed to be helped along by the Kibbo Kift. Rather than being the spiritual elements or attempting to be the force behind both the ancient and the modern, the Spirit was the primary spiritual tool of conflict. It had become the “Spirit of Man (of the individual)” and offered “Food, Warmth, and Shelter” to those who followed. Social credit’s “Economic Values” would be brought about not only in the earthly realm but also understood as sacred, becoming as natural to the universe as the basic elements of life.

This transition of the Kibbo Kift from a non-combative entity into one that put itself in the middle of conflict was not limited to the evolution of its spiritual ideology. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, first published in 1883, was influential not only as an adventure story but for the method of governance embodied by the pirates in the book.¹⁰¹ The pirate government, confined to the ship, was akin to an absolute monarchy with the captain as the governing authority. In *Treasure Island*, the Black Spot was a circular black mark presented on a piece of paper that indicated the recipient was guilty of an unforgivable offence and, if received by the captain, he was no longer viewed fit to lead. In the first several years of the movement, the Black Spot was used first symbolically and later officially by Hargrave to indicate who was considered to be adversaries of the Kibbo Kift. It first appeared as a feature in the monthly publications *The Mark* and *The Nomad* to identify those worthy of ridicule for

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p. 297.

¹⁰¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*. 1883. Illustrated ed. by N. C. Wyeth (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911). <https://archive.org/details/treasureisland00stev>

their actions and world views, and it was later applied as the mark of official expulsion of members from the Kibbo Kift itself. Most notably, the Black Spot was given to Eric C. Peake, a former scoutmaster who had followed Hargrave from the Boy Scouts to the Kibbo Kift in 1921.¹⁰² The receipt of the Black Spot meant that Peake could no longer camp with members of the Kibbo Kift or attend functions, and members were discouraged from individually associating with Peake.

The Black Spotting of Peake began the Brockley Thing, the first philosophical split within the Kibbo Kift down political and social lines. In a 1924 resolution expressing dissatisfaction with Hargrave's leadership, a contingent of members directly contested the Black Spotting, especially the undemocratic nature of it and the fact that Peake was not allowed to speak for himself before the verdict was publicly given.¹⁰³ Such “expulsion” was seen as “attacks of calumny” that all now had reason to fear.¹⁰⁴ Those who were part of the Brockley Thing were also protesting against an additional questionnaire that had been distributed to members who had signed the Kin Covenant, asking for more personal information. Thirty-two members including Leslie Paul signed and stated that Hargrave “in public commits the Kindred to views and theories that have never been discussed at the Althing, and of which many of the Kindred may not approve”.¹⁰⁵ While this may have been a reference to Hargrave's interest in Social Credit, it could also have been a criticism of Hargrave's attitude towards the Kibbo Kift overall. He was viewed as authoritarian and presumptuous, and his abrasive and “cold” manner both in person and on paper was often

¹⁰² YMA/KK/2, 1924 pamphlet.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

derided by his critics.¹⁰⁶ This style of governance was not, however, without precedent or adherents, but it did not help the Kibbo Kift's public image, especially as time wore on. Hargrave's authoritarian image came to dominate the outside knowledge of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation, which discounted the many other voices that contributed to the organisation. This was particularly noticeable in the internal publication, *The Nomad*, which had come to feature Hargrave's pronouncements for the Kibbo Kift regarding Black Spotting and official declarations regarding costume as blanket fact.¹⁰⁷

Internally produced publications like *The Mark* and *The Nomad* were supposed to give members aside from Hargrave a platform to express their ideas and ideology within the Kibbo Kift. Although they contained Hargrave's announcements and decrees increasingly during their years in publishing and would, by the time *The Nomad* became *Broadsheets*, primarily be written by Hargrave, not all articles were in Hargrave's voice, especially in *The Mark* issues. *The Mark* was originally run by J. E. Williams, an arts school student, before Hargrave assumed the editor position in mid-1923. The publications regularly offered a section that suggested and reviewed books called "Book Here," much in the fashion of scouting publications like *The Trail* that also offered regular book recommendations that fit into the movement's ideological stance.¹⁰⁸ *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative* by Robert Lansing was reviewed in the September 1922 issue of *The Mark*. Giving its insight into the 1919 Paris treaty and Lansing's role in it, the Kibbo Kift's criticism of the League of Nations

¹⁰⁶ D. H. Lawrence. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 6, 1927-28*. Edited by James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton with Gerald M. Lacy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 267.

¹⁰⁷ YMA/KK/2, 1924 pamphlet.

¹⁰⁸ YMA/KK/165, October 1922.

was reflected in this particular book recommendation and the view that it was appropriate for “all kinsfolk who are interested in international relationships”.¹⁰⁹

Another book reviewed was *Camp Craft: Modern Practice and Equipment* by Warren Hastings Miller in the October 1922 issue.¹¹⁰ This book contained an introduction by Seton in which he stated that “Woodcraft, in its broad entirety, more than any other activity, is calculated to save our species from decay” and was suited to the scientific method and experiment through camping.¹¹¹ The short historical overview of Britain, *The Development of British Civilisation: From the Beginning until 1603* by A. B. Allen, was recommended in the May 1923 issue.¹¹² Allen was also a member of the Kibbo Kift and produced this book charting “the development of these Islands from Palaeolithic to comparatively modern times”.¹¹³ It followed a post-First World War trend in attempts to map the history of humanity in search of where the contemporary civilisation might have been headed.

The most notable example of such a book was H. G. Wells' two volume, *An Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind*. It was first published in two volumes in 1920, and the majority of the book was written from 1918-1919 for publication in newspaper

¹⁰⁹ YMA/KK/165, September 1922.

¹¹⁰ Warren Hastings Miller, *Camp Craft: Modern Practice and Equipment* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1915). American Libraries.

<https://archive.org/details/campcraftmodern01millgoog>

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, p. vii.

¹¹² Arthur B. Allen, *The Development of British Civilisation: From the Beginning until 1603* (London: A. H. Stockwell, 1923).

¹¹³ YMA/KK/165, May 1923.

instalments.¹¹⁴ Charting history from prehistory until the First World War, Wells attempted to create an overarching narrative to explain how human political and social progress had occurred and where it might be going. As one recent commentator observed, H. G. Wells himself was deeply concerned with “how to combine that mission, his furious devotion to human progress, with a cool certainty that the end of all progress would be entropy, devolution, nullity”.¹¹⁵ Wells' concern was how to put off that ultimate end for as long as possible, and the question of how to stop devolution and reverse entropy was central to the Kibbo Kift as an organisation and to individual members who brought not only Darwin's theory of evolution forward but also Henri Bergson's.

Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* theory, first published in French in 1907 and translated to English in 1911, was of particular influence to Kathleen M. Milnes, who joined the Kibbo Kift in 1923 and became further involved following the Brockley Thing.¹¹⁶ After the Brockley thing and the loss of around twenty percent of the Kibbo Kift's active membership, there was an intellectual vacuum that needed to be filled. Milnes' interest in Bergson and his evolutionary theory was one of the philosophical possibilities to fill that space. Bergson was popular in the late nineteenth to the early part of the twentieth century for

¹¹⁴ H. G. Wells, *An Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind*. 1920. Project Gutenberg. 14 April 2014. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45368/45368-h/45368-h.htm>

¹¹⁵ Adam Kirsh, “Utopian Pessimist.” *The New Yorker*. 17 October 2011. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/10/17/utopian-pessimist>

¹¹⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook.

his ideas on the multiplicity of consciousness and perception of space and time.¹¹⁷ Bergson explained Darwin's theory of evolution as driven by *élan vital*, translated as “vital impetus,” and hypothesised that human creative impulse and consciousness could affect evolution over time.¹¹⁸ This was not an approach to evolution that Julian Huxley, who was on the Advisory Council of the Kibbo Kift, supported.¹¹⁹ Milnes' interest in it first clashed with Darwinian evolutionary theory in the Kibbo Kift with conversation and debate from Hargrave and others at the annual Lodge of Instruction in 1924.¹²⁰ She felt strongly about the theory, further reiterating her stance in an essay the next year about love and marriage. From Milnes' point of view, creative evolution allowed for the individual to maintain autonomy in a group. There is also a specifically gendered aspect to her belief in creative evolution. The agency of the female was preserved through creative evolution because it avoided the tendency for men to group together and become a “sentimental” hive mind.¹²¹

While creative evolution was ultimately not taken on by the Kibbo Kift as its official stance on evolution, the discussion of creative evolution was part of the philosophical transition of the Kibbo Kift away from its earlier influences. During the second half of the

¹¹⁷ Leonard Lawlor and Valentine Moulard Leonard, "Henri Bergson", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta (Winter 2013).

¹¹⁸ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution: An Alternate Explanation for Darwin's Mechanism of Evolution*. 1907. Translated by Arthur Mitchell, 1911 (Amazon CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014).

¹¹⁹ Mary Ann Gillies, *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), p. 31.

¹²⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook.

¹²¹ *ibid.*, p. 7.

1920s, the reading materials of the Kibbo Kift shifted towards Social Credit and political commentary rather than the fictional, philosophical, and scientific texts that had preoccupied members prior to the Brockley Thing. This change was gradual and did not wholly do away with the fictional texts; instead, it reflected the growing prominence of social credit alongside existing Kibbo Kift interests. Social credit and political aims eventually would overtake the previous Advisory Council, which was compiled in 1922 for advertisement in Kibbo Kift publications before being phased out by the end of 1926 from both publications and letterheads. By 1927, when *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*, was published, a sure shift away from admiration of British members of the Advisory Council had occurred. Flyers distributed by Kibbo Kift members to advertise the book featured caricatures drawn by Hargrave of G. K. Chesterson, George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Julian Huxley among others, and these flyers directed them to read the book with such lines as “H. G. Wells should read *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* [and] so should you”.¹²² In Shaw's case, the flyer featuring his caricature featured an additional sentence referencing *The Confession* that specifically mentioned him.¹²³ None of these flyers reference suffragettes who were on the Advisory Council or had previously been directly involved in the Kibbo Kift, such as Emmeline Pethnick-Lawrence or Maud Beaty. The only flyer to explicitly feature a female caricature is one entitled “Interested in children?” that shows a frowning mother holding a baby in one arm and the hand of an older child pulling a cart with the other.¹²⁴

This is not to say that figures previously admired by the Kibbo Kift were no longer intellectually influential to the group. One Advisory Council member whose influence did not

¹²² YMA/KK/105.

¹²³ *ibid.*

¹²⁴ *ibid.*

decline over the course of the 1920s was H. G. Wells. Wells' concern with the progress of humanity was shared by the Kibbo Kift, and they continued to reference Wells throughout the 1920s in flyers, pamphlets, and subscription publications.¹²⁵ The Kibbo Kift's attempts to produce a systematic solution from the various works of literature that they were reading lay at the core of the organisation's development philosophically as well as intellectually. How effectively they were able to address what part of civilisation they wanted to change, however, was where and when the Kibbo Kift's regenerative ambitions began to fragment. One of the most noticeable areas was concerning gender and the involvement of women in the Kibbo Kift.

3.4 Debating Feminism in the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

Involvement of girls and women had been controversial in the early days of the scouting movement.¹²⁶ Scouting, designed for boys and taking its roots from Baden-Powell's military service and Seton's boy adventurer stories, did not have an obvious female counterpart. Girls read themselves into the roles of the male protagonists and wanted originally to do the same scouting activities as boys, such as camping outdoors and going on patrols.¹²⁷ The constant question over scouting's history had been “who could, should, and would belong to this uniformed youth organisation”.¹²⁸ The question of inclusion extended and continues to be

¹²⁵ YMA/KK/26.

¹²⁶ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2002), p. 49.

¹²⁷ Anne Summers, “Scouts, Guides and VADs: A Note in Reply to Allen Warren.” *The English Historical Review* 102, no. 405 (October 1988): 943-947, p. 945.

¹²⁸ Proctor, *On My Honour*, p. 11.

contested regarding gender, race, and income level. This section will examine the involvement of girls and women from 1907 through the 1920s in the Scouts and Guides as well as how pacifist and feminist groups and individuals were often in contention with the organisation. This contention led a number of women to join the Kibbo Kift in its first few years. These women were from a mixture of political backgrounds, including suffragists and feminists.

The relationship between suffragists and the Kibbo Kift was very strong in the early part of the 1920s when a number of suffragists joined the Kibbo Kift from the woodcraft arm of the Scouts and Guides. Mary Neal and Baroness Emmeline Pethnick-Lawrence, who had cofounded the *Espérance Club* and *Maison Espérance*, a folk dance club and dress-making cooperative respectively, were involved during the early 1920s. They were both members of the Women's Social and Political Union, and their interest in the folk art revival connected them to Evelyn Sharp, whose brother, Cecil Sharp, was a collector of folk art.¹²⁹ Interest in reviving folk arts was closely related to suffragette causes, especially for those who were attracted to the back to the land ideology. While the folk arts and the preservation of them had gendered tensions, they facilitated transnational exchange and also offered women the opportunity to reconstruct society and culture. There was also a pre-existing “connection between the suffrage campaign and life reform practices,” and suffragettes in Britain, America, and Canada were involved in the scouting movement from its beginnings in 1907.¹³⁰

The scouting movement at its inception appeared to have room within it for girls and women to perform outside of traditional expectations of an indoor and non-physically active

¹²⁹ Lucy Delap, *The Feminist Avant-Garde: Transatlantic Encounters in the Early Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 225.

¹³⁰ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health, and Fitness in Britain, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

femininity. While American “women and girls involved in the program cast their lot with a twentieth-century vision of expanded roles and opportunities for women” by joining the Girl Scouts, British women and girls joining the Girl Guides were faced with a less optimistic outlook by the middle of the First World War.¹³¹ Discussing 1920s *Women's Liberal Federation Journal* discourse on flappers, Richard A. Voeltz stated that references in Guides literature from this period to “race, breeding, home and family [hark] back to the pre-war fashion for eugenics and racial theory”.¹³² These preoccupations additionally “[acted] as a reminder that the upper- and middle-class preoccupation with motherhood and race rejuvenation”.¹³³ The Girl Guides offered both a system and a solution to achieve this gendered rejuvenation. Just as the male body had to be regenerated and made healthy again, so did the female body. The aesthetic of the female body was defined differently than the male, the focus not on athleticism and physical hardiness but on the ability for the female body to carry children. Motherhood and eugenics was intimately intertwined with the female body as the carrier and producer of the next generation. Hargrave agreed with this stance; in his view, “not merely the sense of self-preservation, but the ancient instinct of *racial* preservation” ran through humanity, and women carried the philosophical as well as the

¹³¹ Mary Aickin Rothschild, “To Scout or To Guide? The Girl Scout-Boy Scout Controversy, 1912-1941.” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1981): 115-121, p. 120.

¹³² Richard A. Voeltz, “The Antidote to 'Khaki Fever'? The Expansion of the British Girl Guides during the First World War.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 27, no. 4 (October 1992): 627-638, p. 632.

¹³³ *ibid.*

physical burden.¹³⁴ Voeltz additionally pointed out that the “prospect of liberation” through outdoors organisations like the Girl Guides was important not only during but after the war as women's sexuality came under scrutiny and first-wave feminism increasingly fragmented.¹³⁵ Women had to be active and had to be for their own livelihood, and the Guides during the interwar period became a socially acceptable organisation for girls to join.

Controlling sexual urges was one of the greatest concerns of character-building organizations. The Boy Scouts sought to address concerns of male sexuality and bonding by promoting male friendship and camaraderie through “emphasizing co-operation and community”.¹³⁶ There was a clear hierarchy of authority in the Boy Scouts from the onset. Baden-Powell was the leader, the Chief Scout, followed by scoutmasters who led their individual troops, which were made up of the youth scouts themselves. The role of these scoutmasters was to teach boys scouting skills as well as to instil moral character-building lessons, and “manliness and preparedness was further emphasised in the boys' literature of the time”.¹³⁷ Adventure stories centred on self-sufficiency and mental tenaciousness just as much as the grand, outdoors adventures and the colourful characters that populated the novels. Boys had a cultural background of role models, images, and behaviours to draw from. Girls, who wished to join in on the scouting movement, had to negotiate a gendered space.

Tammy Proctor made the case that uniform and bodily cleanliness as well as different types of physical activities between the Scouts and Guides was meant to teach the young

¹³⁴ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 99.

¹³⁵ Voeltz, “The Antidote to 'Khaki Fever'?” p. 635.

¹³⁶ Joanna Bourke. *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1996), p. 138.

¹³⁷ De Groot, *Back in Blighty*, p. 53.

involved control over their bodies and minds in order to create socially exemplary characters.¹³⁸ Girls and boys were kept separate within the scouting movement, and girls were expected to conform to the period norm of preparing to become a mother. At the same time, while the Guides' rhetoric supported motherhood, girls involved were also allowed more freedom in physical and outdoor activities than in general society due to the blanket rhetoric creating "a public moral ground [between] fierce anti-suffrage sentiment and militant suffragism in the years before the war".¹³⁹ Proctor demonstrates that the early years of the Girl Guides struck a careful balance between traditional rhetoric of motherhood and allowing girls to participate in physical, outdoor activities that were previously socially unacceptable. If "commemoration and male community" was the great accomplishment of the early Boy Scout, then the Guides' main accomplishment during the early twentieth century was the establishment of a physical, outdoor organization geared towards girls.¹⁴⁰

The Scouts and the Guides were not, however, identical in their philosophical development. While the Scouts had their primary handbook, *Scouting for Boys*, from 1908 onwards, the first handbook for Girl Guides was published in 1912 by Agnes Baden-Powell as *The Handbook for Girl Guides or How Girls Can Help to Build Up the Empire*.¹⁴¹ As the male and female gendered spheres remained separate, the scouting movement often came into conflict with the guiding movement, especially along the lines of how much similarity between the activities of the Scouts and Guides should be allowed. The movement in the late

¹³⁸ Proctor, *On My Honour*.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁴¹ Agnes Baden-Powell and Robert Baden-Powell, *The Handbook for Girl Guides or How Girls Can Help to Build Up the Empire* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1912).

nineteenth and early twentieth-century towards coeducation was one that the Kibbo Kift took advantage of to establish themselves as a viable alternative to the Scouts and Guides. As Matthew de Abaitau pointed out, from the onset, the Kibbo Kift “was a camping movement for fit young men and women.”¹⁴² It was coeducational from the beginning, but that did not mean that the gender roles within the Kibbo Kift were equal. Internally, there were tensions concerning how much of the philosophy, administration, and practise should be the same or divided between men and women and boys and girls. This seemed contradictory, but it was not necessarily so. Lucy Delap points out that, through the terminology of superwoman, superman, and genius, “ideals of character, will, and personality” were central to Edwardian feminist debates.¹⁴³ These terms related to the idea that “society should be organised around 'greatness', and how genius could be harnessed to the needs of a race or nation”.¹⁴⁴ By the Edwardian period, these terms had shifted from a romantic “spiritual or poetic ideal towards an empirical, measurable one”.¹⁴⁵ This notion that the qualities of the superwoman, superman, and genius could be measured and therefore duplicated lay at the heart of early Kibbo Kift philosophy. Additionally, Havelock Ellis, who wrote extensively on genius in relation to the sex drive in the Edwardian period, was listed as part of the Kibbo Kift's Advisory Council in the first half of the 1920s. Ellis saw the female sex drive as “complementary” to the male's and claimed it “operated in the spheres men could not access”.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² de Abaitau, *The Art of Camping*, p. 112.

¹⁴³ Lucy Delap, “The Superwoman: Theories of Gender and Genius in Edwardian Britain.” *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 1 (March 2003): 101-126, p. 103.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 105.

What it meant to be a Kinsman was more readily definable than what it was to be a Kinswoman. As the movement had grown out of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, it maintained the same problem of having a defined sense of what a boy was and would be. It was less concrete regarding what a girl could be and could do. The Kibbo Kift had a system of “Manhood Training,” which built upon youth training and would continue throughout adulthood; this training was male-codified and did not consider gendered variances.¹⁴⁷ In this early conceptualisation of Kibbo Kift life, men appeared to be expected to stay in all-male camps until they married. Upon marriage, they would leave to form a roof tree with their wife, which would be the basis for a new family unit tribe. The rigorous physical and mental training that the boy undertook through adulthood would form the necessary basis of physical skill and leadership abilities to lead his new roof tree. In practise, however, training of youth showed little distinction between male and female in the Kibbo Kift. The Dexter Fam camps, which ran in the summer of 1927 for five days and in 1928 for two weeks, attracted youth from the ages of seven to eleven to participate in outdoors activities. At these events, children were taught the same lessons by male and female instructors and were not separated by sex during activities.¹⁴⁸ The performance of gender in the Kibbo Kift often did not reflect Hargrave's idea of boys and men in charge of all social aspects; rather, it suggested that there was a considerable amount of variation of gender ideology and roles between members and within the organisation.

Kathleen Milnes became one of the most prominent members and a major female voice in the Kibbo Kift in the second half of the 1920s; we explore her influence and ideas in the following chapter on mythologies and the legacy of the Kibbo Kift. Drafting a speech to

¹⁴⁷ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 315.

¹⁴⁸ YMA/KK/26.

be presented at a council meeting in late 1927, she wrote that “we feel there is becoming a too masculine” atmosphere to the Kibbo Kift overall.¹⁴⁹ The concern over the “position of women in the Kindred and their future” was one shared by Joyce Reason, who requested that Milnes give this speech as her input on philosophy and art in the Kibbo Kift was respected.¹⁵⁰ Milnes had a considerable expanse of topics as well as personal interest to consider with this speech, including the lack of women in Kin Council positions. The date of this draft speech places it at about a year since the only woman to sit on the Kin Council, Maud Beaty, left the Kindred. Beaty had been involved in suffragette movements and she left the Kibbo Kift in 1926, at least partly due to the growing focus on Social Credit. Milnes' speech states outright that “there is not enough of the feminine element in the K. K.” and “anti-feminist feeling is a sort of public opinion against having women on the Kin Council or as head as anything”.¹⁵¹ Reference to the “anti-feminist feeling” was therefore a particularly barbed comment. Milnes herself supported and was actively interested in Social Credit, attending public lectures from 1925 onwards by C.H. Douglas on the subject.¹⁵² The inclusion of the “anti-feminist feeling” comment therefore implied that Milnes viewed the current proceedings as driving away the formerly strong suffragette contingent, but she was careful not to make this an explicit criticism.¹⁵³

The gradual decline of feminism within the Kibbo Kift over the course of the 1920s was not an unusual phenomenon. Former suffragette involvement in pacifist campaigns,

¹⁴⁹ YMA/KK/101, Milnes' 1927 speech draft.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*

¹⁵² MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook.

¹⁵³ YMA/KK/101, Milnes 1927 speech draft.

association with conscientious objectors, and general disillusionment due to the rising unemployment of the Great Depression contributed to lukewarm and negative responses to feminism. During the First World War, “pacifist women frequently drew on notions of love and peacefulness rooted in maternity to oppose nationalist agendas”.¹⁵⁴ At the same time, women who supported the war effort also drew from images of maternity, arguing that maternity itself was necessary for the continued survival of Britain and its racial preservation.¹⁵⁵ Reflecting this, there was active tension between pacifist women and those who supported the war effort within the suffragette movement, and this contributed to the interwar fragmentation of the first-wave feminist movement.

Milnes’ speech is replete with references to feminist backlash and focuses on a dialogue of compromise. She stated that she “[did] think there ought to be at least one woman on K.C. but not to represent women as though they were only a department of their activities”.¹⁵⁶ A woman would sit on the Kin Council as an equal to the male members, and women's activities would be dealt with in tandem with regular and male activities. The speech itself took a firm stance that the role for women that she was suggesting would work alongside and equal to men; she summed this idea up in the statement “Superwoman is with Superman”.¹⁵⁷ Milnes' idea of a superwoman also related back to pre-First World War

¹⁵⁴ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2002), p. 38.

¹⁵⁵ Susan R. Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood, and Politics in Britain and France during the First World War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p. 87.

¹⁵⁶ YMA/KK/101, Milnes 1927 speech draft (emphasis as in text).

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*

concepts of genius and the exceptional.¹⁵⁸ She made it clear that she was not trying to challenge Hargrave's authority, stating that the issues that she was raising were “different with the question of [Head Man]”.¹⁵⁹ This speech was constructed and extensively edited by Milnes to strike a very careful balance in its attempt to negotiate the possibility of women's voices on the Kin Council while not undermining the existing patriarchal authority. The final lines in the draft reassured her likely male audience that:

We shall not push women only forward for these places so much as proper. A good many of the best women are too busy with children for part of their lives/the time being, but they are given to all rights. Everyone will be better able to find their right place and right work.¹⁶⁰

Milnes maintained the central role of motherhood for women, but she used it to remind her intended audience of the 1927 Kin Council that women, too, have the same rights as men and that motherhood was not the only role women held. Having equal rights would additionally aid in the “right work”.¹⁶¹ The focus on work as a right also supports the Kibbo Kift's philosophical shift at this point to the work of implementing and spreading social credit as the main force behind the organisation.

Milnes' speech would have been given at the end of the annual Althing's Mote, which was the annual general meeting of the Kin Council and adult membership. While it did not ask for any changes to Kinlaw or to overall Kibbo Kift policy, it clearly suggested that change

¹⁵⁸ Lucy Delap, “The Superwoman: Theories of Gender and Genius in Edwardian Britain.”

The Historical Journal 41, no. 1 (March 2003), p. 102.

¹⁵⁹ YMA/KK/101, Milnes 1927 speech draft.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

in attitudes was necessary. As Kin Council positions were not for the rest of the Kibbo Kift's existence held by women, either Milnes' speech had no effect or was never given. The existence of the draft, which was completed and heavily edited, suggested that Milnes at least intended to give the speech and very much desired to make her points clearly understood. It was most likely, however, that Milnes ultimately did not give her speech. Its contents ran against the Kibbo Kift's explicit views on women as mothers and her discussion of rights would have run against other opinions as well. Milnes, despite her friendship with Joyce Reason and her own convictions, likely valued her good standing in the Kibbo Kift more than the speech.

Milnes remained a major voice on the role of women as the Kibbo Kift began to transition from an outdoors youth group with a primitive regenerative philosophy into a political party for the promotion of Social Credit. Her commentary piece entitled "Art in the Social Credit State" provided some insight to where she saw herself and other women as authorities as the Kibbo Kift transitioned the Green Shirts.¹⁶² As it had been for Nordau, art was "the barometer, the great indicator of health and soundness of civilisation".¹⁶³ The place of art in the emerging Social Credit state could be enriching or it could be detrimental to the state overall. Art was not only political in its physical manifestation but also affected the producing artist biologically and spiritually. "The artist," Milnes argued, "throws more away than anyone else – not just brain and sinew, but soul as well."¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, "art would register the change-over from disease to health in the community," and it could be a visual

¹⁶² YMA/KK/102, Art in the Social Credit State.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

measure of how far society had regenerated itself under the new political agenda.¹⁶⁵

Implementation of Social Credit would lead to “the right conditions for new culture to grow,” and art would act as a measurement of how far along or how far astray the new culture was growing.¹⁶⁶ This built upon the regenerative ideology of the Kibbo Kift, replacing the primitive with Social Credit as the impetus for change.

Milnes' philosophical view on art was applied in her work on the Kinlog, the internal history of the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent movements. The Kinlog was an artistic, mythological, and philosophical endeavour.¹⁶⁷ This thesis will be returning to Milnes and the Kinlog as an artistic and mythological endeavour in the fourth chapter. As a philosophical text, the Kinlog offered Milnes a unique avenue to assert her views of the Kibbo Kift. She controlled the Kinlog linguistically and graphically, composing the language that recorded the history of the Kindred and selecting, drawing, and colouring the various illustrations and decorative motifs within the text. Modelled explicitly after the Book of Kells, the Kinlog as a philosophical text was also meant to be a spiritual text, recording through language, presentation, and graphic design the livelihood of the Kibbo Kift as a whole.¹⁶⁸ From the first page, Milnes made a point of balancing the representation of women to men graphically, featuring an equal number of male and female archers to frame the opening of the Kinlog. Muriel C. Gray founded the Company of Archers, an archery group within the Kibbo Kift that had both male and female members from its inception in late 1926. The prominence of archers throughout the Kinlog's imagery reflected both Gray and Milnes' friendship and the

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog.

¹⁶⁸ YMA/KK/103, practise sketches.

conscious gender balance of the Company of Archers as reflective of the Kibbo Kift as Milnes' would have liked it although the reality was different.

This focus on balance was not an entirely universal point of view. *Hearthfire* and *Distaff*, which ran in 1926 for two issues and 1928 for four issues respectively, were women-orientated publications edited by Vera Chapman and featuring contributions from Winifred Tuckfield and a member called "Ronin" that addressed kinswomen on food and fitness as well as reproductive issues. The stance of these publications was clearly that "the vital polarity of the sexes may not be destroyed".¹⁶⁹ Men acted as men and had specific roles such as hunting and exploring. Women acted as women and were expected to fulfil domestic roles in the camp setting. Criticising the uselessness of the voting process, Chapman declared that "it shall be seen that Adam and Eve building a bivvy together are worth all the bi-sexual ballot boxes in the country".¹⁷⁰ This further denoted the sharp break from the suffragette movement that had once been so influential within the Kibbo Kift. Instead, the Kibbo Kift would be closer to the primitive state of humanity and would be able to realise women's natural roles as in tune with nature. As "Ronin" wrote:

It is the mother who is responsible for the life of the Tribe; compared to her work of child-bearing and child rearing, the work of the hunter and protector is quite subsidiary. She is the Creator and the Life of the Race, and, but for that one thing, man would be of no account beside her. Yet in order to perform her productive function she is utterly dependent on man and useless without him; and that dependence, brief as

¹⁶⁹ YMA/KK/173B, *The Distaff* no. 2.

¹⁷⁰ YMA/KK/173B, *The Distaff* no. 1; the reference here to a "bivy" likely means a bivouac, which is a simple camp.

it appears, is sufficient to destroy the whole feminist utopia and to concentrate attention not on the creative Woman but on the fertilising Man.¹⁷¹

Despite the emphasis on the importance of women in tribal society, this passage ultimately reinforced the patriarchal structure. Women, in order to continue the human race, were ultimately dependent on men and defined by their maternal function. Man's contribution of sperm in reproduction therefore made him irreplaceable and “[destroyed] the whole feminist utopia”.¹⁷² “Ronin” therefore advocated the dissolution of feminist structures and ideology within the Kibbo Kift and the philosophy of the primitive. She instead argued for a concentration on the creative qualities of women, directly tied to motherhood. This built upon Hargrave’s view that “all primitive nature-worship and nature-philosophy is based upon the miracle of motherhood” and ultimately narrowed the possible roles of women in the Kibbo Kift.¹⁷³ This direction would be complementary to masculine duties and therefore would not conflict with patriarchal authority. It was at this time that the female habit of the Kibbo Kift was under development. Prior to 1927, there was no formal Kin habit that was specifically designed for women. This changed over the next year and a half as Chapman, Milnes, and Winifred Tuckfield entered into a long communication and design process to produce a female Kin habit. As the Kibbo Kift was a heavily visual organisation, the gendering of the Kin habit gave women an obvious presence in its art, literature, and photographs. The symbolic nature and importance of the female Kin habit will be returned to in the next chapter on the Kibbo Kift's mythology, its symbols, art, and costume. This uniquely Kibbo Kift mythology took the intellectual thought of members and generated a rich internal narrative of the group’s history.

¹⁷¹ YMA/KK/173B, *The Distaff* no. 5.

¹⁷² *ibid.*

¹⁷³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 127.

3.5 Conclusions

Drawing from a plethora of nineteenth to early twentieth century sources including naturalist and woodcraft literature, scouting texts and personal experience, popular science including Darwinism and eugenics, and French, German, and Russian philosophy, the Kibbo Kift sought to give and promote regenerative solutions to the numerous social and philosophical troubles of post-First World War Britain's ideological space. It aimed to regenerate the over-civilised and industrialised British people physically and spiritually through reconnecting to nature and the more basic, primitive, and universal human experience. Within the movement, the concepts of degeneration and regeneration were used by members to develop and shape the Kibbo Kift as an organisation as well as to push their own agendas. John Hargrave's dominance of the leadership of the Kibbo Kift was not contestable in the political atmosphere of the group, but his ideas were challenged by internal debates, most notably concerning issues of gender within the Kibbo Kift. There were three philosophical networks. One was led by Hargrave and consisted of his network of scouts and scoutmasters from late 1918 through the early 1920s. The second were the suffragettes who joined the Kibbo Kift in the early days of the group and had mostly left by the mid-1920s as the leadership of the Kibbo Kift shifted away from suffragette and feminist causes. The third was the group of Kinswomen, Kathleen Milnes, Vera Chapman, and Muriel C. Gray who shaped the philosophy of the Kibbo Kift in the latter half of the 1920s explicitly in relation to women roles and implicitly about those of men as well.

At the core of the Kibbo Kift was the belief that “inborn intuition, or instinct, clearly defined in uncivilised man” needed to be made part of British society and culture once more.¹⁷⁴ The primitive invoked the ancient aesthetics in the modern and tied the modern back

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p. 99.

to nature. The Kibbo Kift's theory of primitivism attracted attention from people of varied backgrounds, including suffragists, scientists, novelists, and folk revivalists. By the end of the 1920s, however, the primitive had moved out of fashion within the Kibbo Kift. The organisation and its members were expected to accept and adapt to organisational changes as the Kibbo Kift transformed into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit. This did not mean, however, that the overarching philosophical preoccupations with social degeneration and regeneration had ceased. Rather, the language changed to address these concepts in political and economic terms with social credit replacing the primitive as the solution to degeneration and the impetus of regeneration. The Kibbo Kift's conceptualisation and idealisation of the primitive was rooted in Late Victorian and Edwardian ideas and sentiments that were quickly going out of fashion by the 1930s. The transformation of the Kibbo Kift into the Green Shirts and Social Credit Party mirrored the trend of Edwardian protests of physical and moral degeneration transitioning and transforming into political and social movements. As the Kibbo Kift stated in its internal chronology reproduced on the Kibbo Kift Foundation's website, it aimed "to fashion the human instrument" and therefore the organisation and its members had to "return to the people" to better influence and shape them.¹⁷⁵

The Kibbo Kift had also suffered from membership loss due to intellectual disagreement over the course of the 1920s. The Brockley Thing was the first and most obvious incident, and it began a socialist and feminist split within the Kibbo Kift that lasted from 1924 to 1926. The overarching stance of the Kibbo Kift was to support and promote

¹⁷⁵ "Kibbo Kift Chronology." The Kibbo Kift Foundation.

social credit and was, as Milnes wrote, “anti-feminist” in feeling.¹⁷⁶ While members continued to debate in personal letters and internal publications, there was a certain amount of self-censorship; this was particularly striking in Milnes’ draft speech. Kinswomen after 1926 focused on developing a dialogue of outdoors strength and motherhood, which matched both earlier roles of women in outdoors organisations and built a narrative of Kinswomen as complementary to the Kinsman. Hargrave ultimately remained in control of the organisation and its direction, and social credit and economic reform on a lofty scale overtook the equally lofty scouting and woodcraft mythology in the public sphere.

It would be, however, overly simplistic to say that the Kibbo Kift rose with Edwardian protest and fell with political and social trends of radicalisation in the 1930s. While the physical form of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation had changed irrevocably, the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party remained concerned with how to save British civilisation from decline and still wished up until the eve of the Second World War to prevent the next war. Members kept much of their papers and regalia even after the SCP was dissolved in 1961, but the organisation itself no longer maintained a public presence. The next chapter will focus on the mythical terminology and intricate mythology that the Kibbo Kift built for and around itself, including an in depth examination of how it conceived its chronological timeline.

¹⁷⁶ YMA/KK/101, Milnes’ 1927 speech draft.

Chapter 4

Mythology of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

4.1 From “Thought-Seed” to Kinlog

Still slumbered
Kibbo Kift
In thought-seed,
Not yet
To life wakened.¹

Imagine, as the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift would have, this scene:

The sun rose early. It was height of summer, and it had already begun to warm. That great orange eye cast golden rays over field and fen. In a lush clearing, over sloping hill, near to a lazy river and softly rustling forest, the sun found a sight that surprised it. For the sun, immortal and timeless, even it had thought that, in this green land, such a scene had long passed away.

Beneath the morning sun, numerous tents in a broad semi-circle dotted the ground. They were made of sturdy, tanned canvas and were painted bright colours of the rainbow. In

¹MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 24.

front of the tents were pitched sturdy staves topped with painted animals and symbols of old religions. Behind these lovingly arranged domiciles, hearths had been dug, ready to make feasts of hearty stews and heavy bread over open fire as in times of old.

From within the tents, the sun could feel its warmth begin to stir these ancient Kindred called the Kibbo Kift. Golden rays awakened these roofless families of able men and women and their cherubic children. They were fit and easy to waking, rubbing sleep from their eyes and stretching long and strong. As they emerged, their glad faces turned upwards like flowers in bloom. They breathed deep, filling their lungs with the fresh open air.

Such a scene, the sun did think, had been so sorely missed.

The scene above did not actually happen, at least not in this exact manner. Rather, it reflects the ideal world that the Kibbo Kift envisioned. The Kibbo Kift imagined itself as an earthly and a mythological entity. It was, to a certain extent, a living thing. It was not a human being or a singular organisation but rather a mythical concept, a spiritual being that woke, existed, and passed away.

Its form was mutable. It was a human male-shaped plume of smoke rising from a camp fire, taking shape with both human and animal heads. It was a medieval knight, clothed in mail and carrying a sword. It was a man in the green Kin habit, a belted tunic, shorts, and hiking socks and shoes. And it was a tall evergreen tree, framed by the sun and its golden rays, growing from a fertile earth.

The mythology developed by the Kibbo Kift conceptualised its existence not only as a youth movement and an outdoors education organisation but also as a community of people with particular hopes and beliefs. These hopes and beliefs, both coinciding and clashing, formed the spiritual and mythical narrative. This overarching narrative was tied together through the Kinlog, Kinlaw, and four seasonal celebrations: the Althing, the summer annual

general meeting, Glee Mote, the autumn arts festival, Kin Feast, the Yuletide feast, and the Spring Festival Hike. In the mythic canon, the spirit of the Kibbo Kift had existed long before the 1920s. As a “thought-seed”, the idea of the Kibbo Kift lurked under the surface of world societies, religions, and human imagination as discussed in the preceding chapter.² It was rooted in the magic that lay at the basis of human evolution and religious thought.³ Rooting the Kibbo Kift and its philosophy and activities to existing mythologies and practises was central to the organisation in the early half of the 1920s. Following the breakaway from the Boy Scouts, the legitimacy and direction of the Kibbo Kift required redefinition. A major way that the Kibbo Kift attempted to give itself legitimacy and direction was through the creation of new yearly traditions and ceremonies. These were tied back to supposed festivals and spiritual gatherings in Anglo-Saxon and Norse mythology.

The Kibbo Kift created a rich mythology unique to itself and the twentieth century. This new mythology drew conceptually and symbolically from Anglo-Saxon, Egyptian, Native American, and Norse mythological figures and stories. It combined these and occasionally other mythologies together to create a new creation story for how the Kibbo Kift fitted into and sought to reform the spiritual and earthly worlds. The spiritual world was the religious ideology of the Kibbo Kift. It was often iterated in Biblical terms and sensibilities, drawing from the Bible structurally as well as for stories and symbolism, such as in the song about the creation of Adam and Eve.⁴ The earthly ideology sought to unite humanity and society through the spread of Kibbo Kift educational ideals and mythology. In the outdoor setting, both in individual hikes and in group camps, the Kindred “[worshipped] life for ever by means

² *ibid.*

³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 333.

⁴ YMA/KK/177, Kibbo Kift Song Sheet I, p. 4.

of knowledge” and sought to combine modern science and philosophy with “the unknown energy of all creation”.⁵ The mythology of the Kibbo Kift was the most ambitious aspect of the organisation. It not only iterated the extent to which the Kibbo Kift sought to reform British society and eventually the world at large, but also constantly evolved within the organisation as its membership grew and changed.

In the creation myth of the Kibbo Kift, art and science went hand in hand. The two complemented each other and could not be divorced. Art was an expression of science, and science reflected art and its aesthetics. It was what was to be defined as art and science that varied between different members. The mythology of the Kibbo Kift took into account members' interests in folk revival, medievalism, eugenics, and political and economic reform. Examining the main mythological text of the Kibbo Kift, the Kinlog, reveals not only that the Kinlog reflects these varying interests but that they were also put into practise through production and performance in song and celebration. The Kinlog constructed a mythological narrative for events within the organisation as well as connecting it narratively and visually to the contemporary world. The Kibbo Kift's mythology drew from many pre-existing ideas and created a new aesthetic, imagining a present and a future both unique and different from what had come before.

This chapter will discuss four facets of how Kibbo Kift mythology was conceived and evolved. The first will identify the place of mythology and mythological ideas in Britain during the Victorian and Edwardian period, dealing with the connection between natural history, folklore, and the spiritual and supernatural. The second section will concentrate on the Kinlog, the main mythological text created and communally managed by the Kibbo Kift. It will examine how Kathleen Milnes, in her artistic and scribe role of Kinlog Scriptor, and John

⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Script of the Lodge of Instruction, Folio XII, Script II.

Hargrave, as the central figure and hero of the Kinlog's narrative, created a unique mythic and communal narrative of the history of the organisation. Thirdly, it will be examined how the Kinlog reflected cultural performance of Kibbo Kift mythology and spiritualism through examples of music used both in the text and as part of visual elements in the Kinlog. The fourth section will discuss the season celebrations that were the heart of the Kibbo Kift's performativity: the summer Althing, fall Gleemote, and the winter Kin Feast. These gatherings served as the major annual meetings for Kibbo Kift members, and the Althing was mandatory for all adult members.

4.2 Mythology and Spiritualism in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

The Kibbo Kift's mythology was both spiritual and earthly in its conceptualisation and philosophy. The spiritual and mythological have always been interlinked with human and earthly concerns. Mythology and myth reflected the society, culture, and people that created them. As David Leeming pointed out, all mythologies “seem to lead inevitably to that very strangest and most mystical expression of the human imagination, the concept of union”.⁶ The Kibbo Kift aimed to combine the spiritual life that they envisioned in nature with the lifestyle of modern British society. The mythology was corrective as much as it was uniting of older ideas. As “myths provide direct insight to the collective psyche of the collective soul”, the mythology of the Kibbo Kift reflected the organisation's preoccupation with physical and spiritual evolution as much as it provides a template for their beliefs and practises.⁷ It was an

⁶ David Leeming, *Myth: A Biography of Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 7.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 10.

continuous process, informed by multiple members' ideas, aesthetic preferences, and contemporary social and cultural sensibilities. The Kibbo Kift therefore offers insight into the history of mythology and spiritualism in Britain both as a reaction to the trends of the time and to changing ideologies.

The Kibbo Kift's mythology was informed by late-Victorian and Edwardian ideas and fashionable interest in natural history and folklore. Natural history combined biology, chemistry, and physics to understand the processes that maintained and changed the natural world. In this, science, the spiritual, and the supernatural often intersected in Victorian and Edwardian conceptualisation and understanding of the natural world. For the Victorians, as Lawrence Talairach-Vielmas noted “natural history was a fashionable activity that significantly participated in the construction of a bourgeois ethic: practising natural history implied healthy outdoor activity combined with intellectual engagement”.⁸ Approaching the natural world was a science that allowed Victorians and Edwardians to impose social and cultural structures around it. It placed human agency at the centre of the world around them and offered better control over how the world was interpreted and could be changed. The Kibbo Kift, by returning to nature to better the physical and mental self as discussed in the previous chapter, was directly interacting with natural history and folklore as characteristic of the period.

The Kibbo Kift also contended that evolution was still up for debate spiritually. Darwin's theory of evolution was a source of fascination as well as anxiety to Victorians as it

⁸ Laurence Talairach-Vielmas, *Fairy Tales, Natural History and Victorian Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 1.

addressed both the possibility of transformation as well as “the limits of metamorphosis”.⁹

Metamorphosis was central to the process of mythological creation. Metamorphosis was the development of a human or animal character or figure that occurred after its conception, allowing for the possibility of change as well as serving as the impetus for change. In the nineteenth century, metamorphosis became increasingly related to Darwin's theory of evolution, building on earlier medieval connections of metamorphosis as part of “nature's autonomous ecology” in alchemical science.¹⁰ Tim Young pointed out that “metamorphoses may be connected across the centuries, but the nature of the crises and contacts differs from case to case and from place to place”.¹¹ The latter part of the nineteenth century was characterised by a resurgence and expansion of popular mythologies from local urban legends to the import of stories from outside of Britain and Europe, especially Native American and Egyptian myths. These mythologies mixed multiple aesthetics, stories, and rituals to create new myths that were relevant to the modern age. The Kibbo Kift deliberately mixed these aspects to create its own mythology and spiritual concepts.

This process was closely related to the anxieties of the organisation and the period around degeneration and regeneration. The mythologies developed in the late nineteenth to twentieth century were further influenced by the concept of the survival of the fittest. In his examination of the role of fairy tales in Victorian culture, Talairach-Vielmas noted that “the

⁹ Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1983), p. 141.

¹⁰ Marina Warner, *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds: Ways of Telling the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 59.

¹¹ Tim Young, *Beastly Journeys: Travel and Transformation at the Fin de Siècle* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), p. 3.

theory of evolution spurred anxieties related to humans' place within the ecosystem” because, while humans currently occupied the top of the food chain, their place could conceivably be usurped if a fitter specimen was to evolve from humanity.¹² As humanity had evolved from apes, it followed the same evolutionary rules as the rest of the living world. Humans were no longer wholly unique in comparison to animals and plants and “human nature had to be envisaged as belonging to the animal kingdom, endowing the term 'nature' with new meaning and ambiguities”.¹³ Simply being human did not mean that humans were unique on Earth or under the Heavens. Rather, a need to identify, define, and develop the aspects that made humanity unique from the rest of the living world in order to prevent a decline in humanity's place at the top of the animal hierarchy ain took centre stage.

For the Kibbo Kift as well as other organisations concerned with degeneration and regeneration, imagination was the unique quality of the human mind. Applying the question of evolution to mythology and spirituality rooted it more firmly. Young noted that “Darwin [conceived] of the imagination as bringing together the past and present to shape something new”.¹⁴ Imagination's evolutionary role was both physical and mental, and humanity's ability to imagine was one of the key aspects that separated them from animal ancestors. It would become of particular interest to Sigmund Freud, who explained imagination as a “corporal” manifestation of “unconscious intentionality”.¹⁵ As an avenue for unconscious expression,

¹² Talairach-Vielmas, *Fairy Tales, Natural History and Victorian Culture*, p. 7.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Young, *Beastly Journeys*, p. 22.

¹⁵ Arnold H. Modell, *Imagination and the Meaningful Brain* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), p. 87.

imagination connected intimately to human perception of the spiritual both from a biological and an aesthetic point of view.

Interest in spiritualism that began in the mid-nineteenth century continued through the First World War and into the interwar period. The number of registered spiritualist societies almost doubled during the years of and directly after the First World War, although the focus of some of these societies on mediums and séance fell out of fashion from the 1930s onwards.

¹⁶ Janet Oppenheim also noted that “spiritualism and psychical research were never monopolised by one class of British society,” attracting well-known figures like Arthur Conan Doyle as well as appealing through séances and magic lantern shows to the working class.¹⁷

Advances in technology went hand in hand with spiritualism throughout this period. The new technology of photography was utilised heavily in spiritualism with a broad popular market for spirit photography to capture apparitions that could not be seen with the human eye.¹⁸

Gendered discussions within spiritualism were usually centred on anxieties concerning women’s spiritual abilities as mediums and as followers. The ideology of “the 'womanly woman' and her moral mission” as either “gentle maidens or loving wives and mothers” remained the dominant dialogue.¹⁹ At the same time, the power of women's interpretation of

¹⁶ Geoffrey K. Nelson, *Spiritualism and Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 265.

¹⁷ Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England: 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 28.

¹⁸ Arthur Conan Doyle, *The History of Spiritualism*. Vol. 1 (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1926), p. 71. Archive.org. <https://archive.org/details/historyofspiritu015638mbp>

¹⁹ Alex Own, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 8.

the spiritual realm offered them some opportunities to subvert and transverse the social expectations. Women who became well-known and respected as mediums could receive their own income by turning their services into a business, allowing for economic and a level of social autonomy. Spiritualist societies were often at odds over the “ambiguity of femininity” in Victorian society but often did not explicitly attempt to combat it by associating with feminist groups and movements.²⁰ This tension reflected in the Kibbo Kift’s difficulty of defining the Kinswoman’s role as members developed the organisation’s mythology and spiritual landscape.

Mythology and spiritualism were, especially during and following the First World War, political landscapes as well, which the Kibbo Kift increasingly reflected in its criticism of the mechanical in the first part of the Kinlog and as social credit gained prominence over the course of the 1920s. The war heralded a resurgence in spiritualism “for many seeking to come to terms with their bereavement,” including the popular scientist Oliver Lodge who published a best-selling book about his son, *Raymond*, and Lodge's attempts to communicate with him through mediums.²¹ Spiritualism became an immediate way for some survivors to memorialise the war, and spiritualism in the first half of the interwar period played an important role in how the war was conceptualised and remembered in British society. In Jay Winter’s discussion of Rudyard Kipling's stories about the spiritualist world, he pointed out that while spiritualism was treated positively and negatively, “it was a traditional, even

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 206.

²¹ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 210-11.

archaic, kind of memory that came out of the conflict”.²² Spiritualism offered a familiar approach to the rapid changes of the world during and directly following the war when it was necessary socially and culturally to rethink not just the war but the world itself both on a spiritual and earthly level.

Creating new mythologies that addressed modern needs for new beliefs and sensibilities was one way people sought to deal with the First World War and the changes it had brought. There were attempts throughout the Western world to create new mythologies during the early half of the twentieth century. Of particular influence was the woodcraft lore of Ernest Thompson Seton. Hiking and camping on the east coast of the United States, Seton utilised experiences with Native Americans and their folklore to construct a fictional tribe that he named the Red Indians.²³ Seton wrote a number of handbooks and novels about the Red Indians and their practises, which he termed woodcraft. Early connections between Seton and Robert Baden-Powell caused scouting and woodcraft literature and practises to cross over between Seton's Woodcraft Indian youth organisation and the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Scouting and woodcraft were, however, a source of tension before the First World War as they had “[originated] in two such different outlooks, stamped by different cultural backgrounds”.²⁴ *The Birchbark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians*, first printed in 1906, as well as *Two Little Savages* (1903) and *The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore* (1912) served as main texts for scouts interested in woodcraft in America and in Britain. These stories became a mythology

²² Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 73.

²³ Brian Morris, “Ernest Thompson Seton and the Origins of the Woodcraft Movement.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 2 (1970): 183-194, p. 183

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 184.

of their own as they influenced the outdoors ideology of many of the readers, and the adoption of woodcraft names and practises in the Boy Scouts and the Kibbo Kift furthered the mythology of Seton's Red Indian tribe. The Kibbo Kift explicitly utilised Seton's woodcraft names and terminology in its governing body, the Kin Council, with titles such as “Chief Tallykeeper” for the council position in charge of keeping attendance at meetings.²⁵

This outdoors and woodcraft mythology may be starkly contrasted with other attempts to build new mythologies in the twentieth century, particularly those that created a racial and eugenic hierarchy. *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* by Alfred Rosenberg, for example, attempted to build a new concept of the contemporary world, conceptualising Nordic and Aryan racial ideology as historical canon.²⁶ Unlike Rosenberg's use of myth, the Kibbo Kift did not engage in anti-realism against modern science, nor did it advocate within its mythology one race over another. Science, especially modern approaches to biology, was central to how the Kibbo Kift conceptualised and situated itself in the cosmopolitan world. While Craven opined that “it is widely accepted by the Kin that their 'scientific' development was woefully inadequate in comparison to their artistic side,” this was not so.²⁷ While the Kibbo Kift did not conduct much in the way of original scientific research, members regularly discussed new findings in anthropology, biology, and medicine from the British Museum Library and by popular figures such as Julian Huxley and Wilfred Thomason Grenfell.²⁸ The

²⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 5.

²⁶ Alfred Rosenberg, trans. John Whisker, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century: An Evaluation of the Spiritual-Intellectual Confrontation of Our Age*. 1930. Digital copy from Archive.org. <http://www.archive.org/details/TheMythOfThe20thCentury>

²⁷ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 179.

²⁸ YMA/KK/165, March 1923.

presence of these figures on the Advisory Council indicated that their ideas on science were respected within the Kibbo Kift and also implied that the Kibbo Kift wished to have famous supporters of their growing mythology. The mythological and spiritual in the Kibbo Kift was therefore both influenced by and hoped to influence contemporary society and culture.

4.3 The Kinlog

The best example of the Kibbo Kift mythology and its aesthetics is the Kinlog. It acted as a living, illuminated manuscript of the Kibbo Kift as a movement as well as a historical document of its major accomplishments and activities. It was a community text that created a legend around the organisation's members and activities as well as commemorated the important events, such as the First World War and annual gatherings, which occurred throughout the organisation's lifetime. Through the Kinlog, the Kibbo Kift became part of existing mythology and spiritual ideas, and it also created its own narrative of the events of its time.

Therefore, the Kinlog's main purpose was to provide those who had access to it with a comprehensive history of the Kibbo Kift which chronicled major events within and directly around the organisation. The opening text of the Kinlog made the importance of the volume clear by specifying its physical components and dimensions as unique. It was a pigskin-bound "volume, six-hundred pages in number, each page twenty-one and a half by sixteen inches sewn by hand" with "full gilt edges" to emphasise its specific make and construction even within the Kibbo Kift itself.²⁹ It began with a brief introductory section that chronicled where the book came from and supplied a brief guide to the symbols embossed and painted onto the cover. These symbols recurred throughout the Kinlog as well as in other published materials

²⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 1.

of the Kibbo Kift, and this introductory section served as a guide to the symbolic aesthetic of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation.

Of most prominence on the cover is the Great Right Hand of Kinship, a raised open right palm with the double, mirrored “K” on the forearm. Over the tip of the hand's middle finger sat the Great Mark of the Kindred, a circular seal that featured a camp fire with smoke rising and framed on the left by a stylised “K” and on the right with an evergreen tree. Both the Great Hand and the Mark were symbols readily recognisable in the Kibbo Kift, the Great Hand used in greeting and salutations and the Mark used on letterhead, carvings, and most official documents. The Great Right Hand and Mark were centred on and divided the cover down the middle. There were four panels meant to be read from the bottom to the top, creating a pictorial history of the world which ascended towards the influence of the Kibbo Kift. The bottom panel represented “Primitive Culture” and took inspiration from various cave paintings in Australia, Spain, and South Africa among other locations. The panel directly above it depicted the European Middle Ages, focusing on a depiction of a thirteenth-century knight and a fleet of wooden ships, of which inspiration was drawn from objects on display at the British Museum in the 1920s. The third panel represented the contemporary “Mechanical Civilisation of to-day”. It featured an electric train, factories emitting smoke through smokestacks, bankers carrying briefcases, and slouching, identical figures waiting in a crowded line for a double-decker bus as a Royal Air Force aeroplane flies by overhead. All of these characters and emblems appear in similar forms in Hargrave’s cartoons and illustrations for newspapers and magazines and would have been readily identifiable to members of the Kibbo Kift.

The Great Mark acts as the centrepiece to the top panel, which heralds “The Coming of the Kibbo Kift” and represents the ideal world of the Kibbo Kift. The Great Mark emitted bright gold, sun-like rays over a crowded camp site with three overlapping rows of tents that

took up the top quarter of the cover. An additional orange circle framed by spirals emphasised the Mark's importance. In the foreground, there are several totems erected on poles, including John Hargrave's White Fox head. This panel was the most heavily coloured and balanced in detail of the four, indicating harmony that did not exist in the preceding historical periods would be achieved in this vision of the future. It was additionally the only panel to feature an obvious light source. Utilising the Great Mark as an illuminating sun, it demonstrated visual enlightenment by the Kibbo Kift in comparison in particular to the darkness due to lack of colour in the section of the third panel with the factories and bankers.

In reflection of the cover of the Kinlog, the contents followed a chronological narrative divided into distinct eras of the Kibbo Kift's history. There were five distinct sections to the chronological narrative. The first part, 1894-1919, served as the pre-history of the Kibbo Kift, starting with John Hargrave's birth, his upbringing in the Scouts, his experience of the First World War, and his 1919 marriage to Ruth Clark. The second, 1920-September 1924, concerned the events leading to the formation and the early years of the Kibbo Kift up until the integration of Social Credit into Kibbo Kift philosophy. The third section, December 1924-January 1931, narrated the events that eventually led to the transformation of the Kibbo Kift into the Green Shirts upon discovery of C.H.Douglas's theory of Social Credit. The fourth section, 1931-1940, deals with the activities of the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party up until the beginning of the Second World War. The fifth and final section chronicles the decline and disbanding of the Social Credit Party and the final activities of the Kindred until Hargrave's death in 1982. Of the six-hundred pages, only a quarter of them are used, and most that concern events after 1934 contain text but are visually incomplete. This was most likely due to the death of the primary Kinlog Scriptor, Kathleen M. Milnes', in 1942. The completion of the remaining pages of the Kinlog was passed to Carole S. Dixon (née Griffiths).

Kathleen Milnes started writing, designing, and arranging the Kinlog in May 1927.³⁰

Her work as the Kinlog Scriptor placed her in a unique position within the Kibbo Kift. While she never sat on the Kin Council, the main governing body of the Kibbo Kift, she had the most control over the art, lettering, and overall style and arrangement of the Kinlog. As Kinlog Scriptor, she was in charge of writing, illustrating, keeping, and maintaining the Kinlog as well as formally presenting finished pages and reading from it at public meetings.³¹ As the Kinlog was meant to be the living history of the Kibbo Kift as both a spiritual and earthly entity, Milnes consciously constructed the narrative and visual appearance not just of the Kinlog but sought to influence perception of the Kibbo Kift as a mythological body. Her agency in creating and maintaining the Kinlog gave her a distinct and important legacy in the organisation. She created a visual aesthetic that focused on balance over reality and occasionally the written narrative of the Kinlog itself. She consciously kept continuity in the presentation of panelling, usually dividing pages into four rows with three panels each to match the cover and inner cover page. She placed personal representations alongside woodcraft totems and consistently labelled new figures as they appeared; this reflected the function of the Kinlog to act as a historical document. The Kibbo Kift's membership was consciously represented as balanced with panels that feature group activities even if the written narrative gave no indication of the gender of the participants.

The inside title page immediately reflected Milnes' influence on the artistic representations of objects and people within the Kinlog. The Kinlog was described as “being the annuals of the Kibbo Kift,” indicating that the Kinlog was meant to be read as a collection

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 5.

³¹ YMA/KK/094B, Correspondence 1924-43, Section 4, Sketches for Illuminations.

of yearly events.³² The title page was divided into multiple panels by green and gold Gilding bordering various S-curves and interlinked with complex, spiralled Celtic knots.³³ The Kinlog itself reflects Milnes' interest in illuminated manuscripts and medieval texts. It directly drew stylistic inspiration from the Book of Kells and was claimed to be “the successor” to that illuminated text.³⁴ The Kinlog contained extensive use of illuminated lettering, which “[worked] with the text to mark important passages, or to enhance or comment on the meaning of the text”.³⁵ Illuminated manuscripts reflected not only the religious texts that they embellished but the political and social mores of their creators and time. England had a well-developed tradition of illuminated bibles produced for kings, one notable example being Henry VIII's Great Bible. This text used visual and textual messages to depict Henry VIII “as disseminator of the Word of God to the English people, illustrating for the benefit of his subjects the sovereign's newly expanded role as Supreme Head of the English Church”.³⁶ While the tradition of illuminated manuscripts declined following the fifteenth century, the nineteenth-century saw resurgent interest in the art form. This resurgence was connected to the market for antiquities, and copyists of manuscripts held at the British Library such as

³² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, inner cover page.

³³ John G. Merne, *A Handbook to Celtic Ornament* (Mineola: Dover Publications Inc., 1999), p. 16.

³⁴ YMA/KK/094B, Correspondence 1924-43, Section 4, Sketches for Illuminations.

³⁵ “An Introduction to Illuminated Manuscripts,” *Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts*. British Library Online.

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/TourIntroGen.asp>

³⁶ Tatiana C. String, “Henry VIII's Illuminated 'Great Bible.’” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 59 (1996): 315-324, p. 319.

Henry Shaw had regular employment.³⁷ These reproductions were of interest in Britain and in the United States, contributing to the conceptualisation of the medieval past. There are three fully illuminated pages in the Kinlog. The first is the inner title page and the two others are dispersed through the 1920s segment of the text.

The Great Mark reappeared at the centre of the three panels below the Kinlog title, poised on the tip of a longsword that divides the rest of the page, just as the Great Right Hand divided the cover.³⁸ Unlike on the cover, which had been designed primarily by Hargrave, there were two open panels on each side of the longsword that featured three women in each. The left hand panel showed women in hiking garb giving the sign of the Great Right Hand outwith the panel. The right hand panel showed women in the female Kin habit giving the sign of the Great Right Hand and each holding a baby to their breasts in their left. The only male figure on this page was the representation of primitive man holding a spear and a shield in the top left panel to the side of the Great Mark. This differed noticeably from the cover on which the only female figure depicted was a modern woman with a bobbed haircut and lipstick. Women were depicted throughout the Kinlog in group scenes in equal number to men, often participating in the same activities as their male counterparts. They are identifiable by Kinswoman garb, which included a hat that covered the ears, or by long skirts in comparison to the shorter male tunic. The visually equal gender ratio occasionally deviates from the content of the written narrative which often did not indicate genders if describing a group and rarely depicted women in positions of power or influence. The only woman to be specifically mentioned as integral to Kibbo Kift history was Ruth Clark, and that was

³⁷ Sandra Hindman, "Facsimilies as Originals: An Unknown Illuminated Manuscript by Henry Shaw." *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 54 (1996): 225-232, p. 226.

³⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, inner cover page.

primarily in relation to her marriage to Hargrave and her assistance to him at the founding of the Kibbo Kift and in publishing materials. The Kinlog's narrative firmly maintained Hargrave's leadership.

The written narrative immediately established Hargrave's place as undisputed and rightful leader. Hargrave himself filled the mythological role of hero and to a certain extent the role of creator in the Kinlog narrative. While the Kinlog was primarily meant to be read as a history of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation, it also could be read as John Hargrave's biography. Framed by his birth and death, the events that occur and the people introduced place Hargrave consistently at the centre of the narrative. It is Hargrave who was first named both by legal English name and then by woodcraft name. After Hargrave received his woodcraft name, the narrative consistently used woodcraft names to introduce those important enough to be named. Hargrave's life events guide the chronology and historical context of the Kinlog. The First World War was told entirely from the point of view of Hargrave's experience in the Royal Army Medical Corps:

Then suddenly came
 War the bitter,
 The Mechanical Killer,
 Bearing away
 The young men.
 Under cross red
 Of Knight Hospitaller
 To succour wounded
 By far Aegean

White Fox went.³⁹

“White Fox” was Hargrave's woodcraft name by which he was referred to within the Kibbo Kift. The use of the word “bearing” directly tied the broader experience of the “War the bitter” to Hargrave's role as a stretcher-bearer in the Dardanelles. The passage was framed on the right side by spinning wheels and machinery of industry with human bodies caught up in the sweeping production process. The second half of this page contained a red cross made of combined scythes that mimicked the circular motion of the wheels and machinery above. In the wheel, the centrepiece was a circular blade that had two-barrelled cannons firing while a medieval knight looked on with a frown. The knight had a dual meaning. He was to represent Hargrave, who was a stretcher-bearer for the Royal Army Medical Corps, his grim expression his opinion of the war. The knight was also a direct reference to the medieval Order of the Knights of Saint John, which was also known as the Knights Hospitaller, established to care for sick and injured pilgrims. Beneath the cannon was a body caught in a spiral that connects to a sea in which a black dog's head with red eyes lurked with its jaw open. The presence of the black dog referred to recurring popular legends in Britain of black dogs appearing at places of death, and the sea it lurked in was the Aegean which Hargrave crossed on his way to the Dardanelles. Hargrave's experience of service rather than the end of the Great War acted both narratively and visually as a major turning point, made clear in the focus on turning gears and machinery as well as the downwards spirals in the cross and framing pictorials.

The figure that evolved the most as the Kinlog narrative progressed was the Great Spirit, the uniting, spiritual force behind Kibbo Kift philosophy and spirituality. It first appeared as a mask-wearing spirit early in the narrative when Hargrave discovered woodcraft

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 9.

and earned his woodcraft name.⁴⁰ By the early 1920s, the Great Spirit was represented as a conglomeration of human and spirits, framed by a cosmopolitan array of religious and political philosophers. One large diagram shows these religious and political philosophers in gold circles framing a camp fire emitting smoke made of green Kindred bodies and various totems ascending through the fire.⁴¹ This diagram directly referenced an earlier chart from *The Great War Brings It Home* entitled “Character Showing How All Religions and the Teachings All the Great Thinkers and Prophets Lead to One Main Idea”.⁴² This chart, discussed in the previous chapter, was the philosophical and theological process that a person takes to answer the Great Mystery of life and find spiritual fulfilment in the Great Spirit. It was the initial blueprint of the spiritual life that the Kibbo Kift expounded. The idea of the Great Mystery and the Great Spirit was what attracted people from outside the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides to the Kibbo Kift as an organisation. This was what gained the attention of D.H. Lawrence, Rolf Gardiner, and Julian Huxley.

The top left-hand corner of this chart was the beginning of a hierarchy of celestial and earthly powers. From the “cradle of the human ape” arose magic, an eternal, mutable force, which leads to various world religions and mythologies.⁴³ The hypothesis here was that all of the major belief systems are interconnected through magic. At the heart of each system's teachings, the magic formed a core set of values central to all world religions. These values could be found in what Hargrave termed as nature worship in comparison to modern practises. What Hargrave was advocating, however, was not so much a new religion but the devolution

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴² Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 333.

⁴³ *ibid.*

of current systems in existence. He stated that “all these conventional expressions of conventional theology are now in a melting pot. They avail nothing—and the Great War brings it home.”⁴⁴ The repetition of the book's title reconnects this discussion of religion and belief to the overarching narrative of the Great War and the problems of militarism and industrial excess in society.

According to this chart, the reconnection of modern people with nature and peaceful, simple existence was the only way to regenerate humanity and bring universal balance. To show that this was possible, the chart lists philosophers from Enlightenment and onwards as well as scientists at its base. Hargrave assumed that these figures and concepts would be more familiar to its readership than the world religions and concepts listed up top. The correct way to read this chart for the modern viewer was actually not from the top but from the bottom. Modern society must start from the bottom with philosophy and science to retrace through modern religion to ancient religion in order to find the magic and cradle that connects all human belief in universal balance. What the magic was exactly was not specifically defined, and magic most closely meant the life energy of humanity, nature, and the universe at large. All of this together formed the three pillars of the Kibbo Kift's belief system: Art, Science, and moral Philosophy (often abbreviated as A.S.P. although not consistently). These three pillars made up the Great Spirit, the spiritual embodiment of the Kibbo Kift. Belief in the Great Spirit was supposed to be “a sane and equally simple faith” and free of “the fetters of dogmatic religion”.⁴⁵ This was neither anti-science nor anti-modernity. As Matthew Sterenberg pointed out, by the interwar period “some modernists saw myths as a source of spiritual meaning” and “this spiritual meaning was not human creation, but an independent

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 332.

reality that myth revealed”.⁴⁶ It was also a highly personal experience of faith, and Hargrave advocated “that the 'written word' can never override the unwritten” and personal conclusions about the Great Mystery and Spirit should be drawn on one's own.⁴⁷ Rather than using faith to justify spirituality, the magic inherent to the Great Spirit justified the personal experience of the Great Mystery.

Idrisyn Oliver Evans wrote in 1926 in the Kibbo Kift magazine, *Wandlelog*, on the interlinking of art, science, and religion in the Great Mystery. *Wandlelog* was a member-produced magazine publication, which, unlike the main newsletter magazines of the Kibbo Kift *The Mark*, *The Nomad*, and *Broadsheets*, was not edited or directly overseen by Hargrave.⁴⁸ Evans used *Wandlelog* to publish a three issue series entitled “Notes on the Evolution of Art, Science, and Religion” that ran through 1926.⁴⁹ The series aimed to distil how the Kibbo Kift fitted in with contemporary ideas about art, science, and philosophy, examining how the Kibbo Kift benefited from and could potentially influence contemporary society. He opined that the mythical, primitive magic that lay at the base of Kibbo Kift philosophy and spirituality eventually “evolves into Religion,” concluding:

The magic of the primitive savage with his bones and tokens, his incantations and dances, his mana and his tabus, seems to have very little in common with the Art, the Science, and the Religion of the present day. So, too, is it hard to connect the misty nebula of the world of man and the patch of the moving jelly with the human body. Yet

⁴⁶ Matthew Sterenberg, *Mythic Thinking in Twentieth-Century Britain: Meaning for Modernity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 46.

⁴⁷ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 334.

⁴⁸ YMA/KK/171.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, Spring, Summer, and Autumn 1926.

it would be absurd to deny the reality of the round world and they that dwell within because of their origin. Neither does our realisation of the lowly beginnings of human thought make our Art less inspiring, our Science less penetrating, or our Religion less efficient as a form of service and as a means of unity with that Great Mystery transcending our lives that we call GOD.⁵⁰

Evans references a Dr. Lammas (likely an alias; Lammas is also a harvest festival celebrated at the beginning of August) and H. G. Wells at the beginning of this instalment, using quotations by them to reference the idea that God and gods could be found among humanity should one know how to look. Knowledge of the primitive and primitive belief and practises did not make the Kibbo Kift primitive themselves. Rather, their acknowledgement “of the lowly beginnings of human thought” allowed them to connect with the Great Mystery and God himself. This differed somewhat from Hargrave's conceptualisation of the Great Spirit, which postulated that it was more than just the Christian God. Evans' religious focus had an implied hierarchy of existing world religions, with Christianity his point of reference. At the same time, the all-inclusiveness of the magic behind religion that led to the Great Spirit remained the same. Evans asserted that the science of the Kibbo Kift took into account the positive aspects in primitive practises. These, combined with the Kibbo Kift's artistic aesthetic, created a better, all-inclusive religion.

By the time that Evans published this series on art, science, and religion in *Wandlelog* in 1926, the Kibbo Kift had begun to move away from its earlier focus on the primitive. The years of 1925-27 were a big transition point for the Kibbo Kift as C.H.Douglas' theory of Social Credit came increasingly to the fore. Reflecting the increasing politicisation, the Kibbo Kift itself became more performative and outwardly focused and arguably developed less

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, Autumn 1926.

philosophically. In the preceding years, the main focus had been on “building itself surely on wisdom of old” and therefore creating something better than the past and present.⁵¹ The expression of Kibbo Kift ideas of art, science, and philosophy in tandem with social credit became increasingly important throughout the second half of the 1920s.

4.4 “This Unhappy World”: Music and Liturgy

The transition of the Kibbo Kift from being a philosophically inwardly focused movement during its first five years to eventually becoming a political party in 1931 was chronicled in the Kinlog through its narrative of Social Credit and documentation of music and performative art. At the end of 1924, following the split between the Kibbo Kift and the Brockley Thing:

the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift, still closely studying the state of this unhappy world, and specially the tragic absurdity of dearth amidst wealth untold which long had troubled all who were civic and not bemused by shadows, came to hear of Clifford Hugh Douglas, to read his writings on Social Credit.⁵²

This section of the Kinlog features a half-page illustration of Social Credit and how it brought balance to the Kibbo Kift. The top of the illustration was divided from the rest by a rainbow on which a knight with long, golden hair riding a white horse chased a long, spiralling grey wyrm, a serpent-like dragon, wearing a black top hat. A golden sun was imposed over the middle of the scene, with a right hand descending from the sun and over the rainbow to hold a set of golden scales over the scene inside the rainbow's arch. The scales are balanced by production on the left and consumption on the right, and the scales frame a scene that includes a tent with the Great Mark over the open flap and a series of green triangles arranged to

⁵¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 29.

⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

highlight the entrance of the tent and the Great Mark. The superimposed triangles create a sense of balance within the illustration as they guide the viewer to look at the important points. Beneath the rainbow was a scene of industry, with many cogs and pipes pumping white smoke out of a factory. Unlike previous panels featuring industrialised scenes, the colours used for the machines and the smoke are lighter, tans, greys, and white, and the blue sky can be seen. This indicated that there had been a shift in opinion regarding industry as production and consumption was now accepted as a necessity rather than held in opposition to the Kibbo Kift.

Social credit's influence on the Kibbo Kift was depicted as immediately apparent, and the narrative as well as the visual aspects of the Kinlog maintained that it was the natural progression of the movement. It also heralded a shift in the mythology of the Kibbo Kift, shifting the heroic role from Hargrave to C.H. Douglas. "He looked on life as a hero should" and Douglas' views on economy and society were able to give definition to the Kibbo Kift's outlook as Hargrave's could not.⁵³ Therefore, the singular prominence of Hargrave was shifted to Douglas, and the role of the hero in the Kibbo Kift mythology became shared between them. The capital "H" at the beginning of this sentence was rendered in red, gold, and blue calligraphy and was accompanied in the left-hand margin by an illustration of a spear. Two snakes entwined around the spear, probably in reference to the caduceus, which symbolised Hermes, the Greek messenger of the Gods. The passage was ended with the simplified equation for social credit, $\text{Just Price} = \text{Cost} \times \frac{\text{Total Consumption}}{\text{Total Production}}$, bordered in gold and orange Guilding previously reserved only for the Great Spirit on a green background, signifying its central importance in the Kibbo Kift in December 1924. According to the Kinlog, social credit "was cause worthy to fit their weapon—the sword even then taking shape

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 44.

on Wayland's anvil".⁵⁴ Wayland was an Anglo-Saxon and Norse god of blacksmithing and armoury whose forge was near to modern day Oxfordshire. With further references to swords and armour for a coming battle, the language of the Kinlog became more aggressive and militarised as the transition from woodcraft mythology to social credit progressed through the 1920s.

As social credit transformed the Kibbo Kift, the aesthetic and expression of its art, science, and philosophy evolved as well. Music had always been a central aspect of the Kibbo Kift. It was, perhaps, the most consistent aspect to the organisation as it built upon scouting and woodcraft practises, was utilised throughout the Kibbo Kift's existence, and continued to be used in the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party. Hiking songs that invoked Robin Hood as well as hymnals regarding nature populated the various songbooks published by the Kin Press throughout the 1920s and into the 30s.⁵⁵ Music was used as a unifying force by the Kibbo Kift and it integrated ideas about art, science, and philosophy. Many of the songs took inspiration from folk tunes and ballads, which had been of increasing popular and academic interest in the British folk revival of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. It was a mainly "bourgeois" movement as those who took interest in collecting folk music generally needed to have a basic level of musical education.⁵⁶ Mary Neal, who was involved with the Kibbo Kift until around 1926, was the publicist and organiser for the Revival and Practise of

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵⁵ YMA/KK/77.

⁵⁶ Michael Brocken, *The British Folk Revival, 1944-2002* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), p. 3.

Folk Music with Cecil Sharpe, who was known for his collection of folk song and dances.⁵⁷

The late Victorian and Edwardian period was characterised musically by nationalism through collection of folk songs throughout England as well as in Scotland with Frances Tolmie's work.⁵⁸ James Frances Child collected five volumes *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* in the 1860s, later updating the collection in 1892.⁵⁹ This collection standardised lyrics for folk songs in England and Scotland, and Child provided commentary on each with historical notations to the ballad's probable origins from around the thirteenth century to his contemporary period.⁶⁰ Folk music was added to English school repertoire in 1906 along with an update to the classical music curriculum.⁶¹ The pre-Second World War folk revival was both utopian and nationalistic, and aspects of it were integrated into many interwar movements that involved a youth contingent. Group music had a certain emotional impact that was used to express the idealism of communist and fascist movements in the early half of the 1920s. It fostered a scene of community as well as influenced the imagination of participating youth.

Imagination was a primary concern of the Kibbo Kift in its youth movement activities. By 1925, Hargrave opined when reflecting on "resolute imagination" in youth movements that

⁵⁷ Michael Heaney, "Sharp, Cecil James (1859–1924)." *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed, Oct 2008).

⁵⁸ Ethel Bassin, *The Old Songs of Skye: Frances Tomie and Her Circle* (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. xv.

⁵⁹ Bertrand Harris Bronson, *The Ballad as a Song* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 112.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ Michael Brocken, *The British Folk Revival, 1944-2002* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), p. 6.

they “went back, as they thought, to fundamental impulses—that is, they made a conscious attempt to merge the fractured individual ego into the unconscious, unindividualised Nature-throb—but they did not go back far enough”.⁶² These other youth movements lacked the proper direction to properly mature on “ethical and moral points”.⁶³ Due to their limits of imagination, they were unable to take into account all points and became themselves limited in nature. “Music and poetry, and indeed the whole cosmic structure, is mathematic,” and Hargrave argued that the other movements of the 1920s had got it all wrong.⁶⁴ Instead of focusing on the spiritual as part of the whole, other movements “exhibited a form of *dadaism*—life for life's sake—which is idiotic when the well-spring of physical existence is silted up”.⁶⁵ This criticism essentially called other youth movements nonsense as Dada as an art movement had been nonsensical on purpose. It also accused these other movements of ignoring the unstable reality. Hargrave perceived the music and poetry of the Kibbo Kift as logical, mathematical entities, scientific as well as artistic, that would be used to re-stabilise a currently unsteady existence.

This reflected how music and poetry were treated in the Kibbo Kift as an organisation and music was utilised and presented within the Kinlog. Music with lyrics and musical notation was written into the Celtic knot-style Guiding throughout the third section chronicling from December 1924 to January 1931. The prior two sections had focused on large illustrations that told the mythological creation story of the Kibbo Kift. In this section,

⁶² John Hargrave, *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift*. 1927. 2nd ed. (London: The Kin Press, 1931), pp. 38-39.

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 40.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

the visuals and narrative became more reflective of the performative aspects of the organisation. Music was therefore both of historical significance to the Kibbo Kift's recorded activities and used as a framing device for the visuals. As a historical indicator, the music lyrically connected the Kibbo Kift to mythological figures and stories from Anglo-Saxon and Norse myths, usually suggesting that the Kibbo Kift was the logical and rightful continuation of the wisdom and valour portrayed in those stories. As a framing device, the purpose of music in the Kinlog Guilding was two-fold. Each piece of music told a second story which took place around the Kinlog narrative. At the same time, the music physically framed the scenes that the Guilding encases, emphasising the importance of the scenes featured within the panels.

In a full page illumination for the year 1927, music was used as a visually unifying element, written onto the green Guilding that interlocked the various panels and framed by gold.⁶⁶ The Norse gods Tyr, Odin, and Frigga gathered behind the new double K emblem of the Kibbo Kift, around which a circle of tents and a camp fire also stood. They respectively were representative of war, knowledge and royalty, and divination and wisdom within the Kibbo Kift. Odin, throughout this section of the Kinlog, became a central figure, presiding over Kibbo Kift camping scenes and arising from the smoke of camp fires. This was a change from earlier representations of god-like figures used to represent the Great Spirit. Those figures tended to be masculine figures with totemic animal heads or formless, spiralling entities. A philosophical transition had occurred: the Great Spirit was becoming more explicitly linked to Anglo-Saxon and Norse mythology, which took increasing precedence over other mythological systems within the Kibbo Kift as the 1920s progressed. This reflected

⁶⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 55.

the “craze for Scandinavian and Celtic ‘ancient’ poetry” that began in the 18th century.⁶⁷ It coincided with “a taste for sublimity in literature, fuelled keen interest in Old Norse mythological poetry, though contemporary critics were slow to warm to what they regarded as its wildness”.⁶⁸ The popularity of Norse legends increased over the nineteenth century and became part of popular literary canon by the early twentieth century. Due to the influence of Norse mythology on Anglo-Saxon, there was a cultural closeness that eventually overwrote the wildness of the stories, and Norse mythological figures were perceived as closer to the English conception of the world. The previously all-inclusive primitive ideology and spiritualism became more focused upon the British and European condition.

Throughout the Kinlog, Milnes used runic lettering inspired by Elder Futhark, an ancient Germanic runic alphabet, to label figures and important symbols. Rather than attempting to use the runes to communicate in an older language, the runes corresponded with modern English, mimicking very loosely the twenty-six letter alphabet rather than attempting to build a new language. For those letters in the English alphabet that did not occur in Elder Futhark, the English alphabetic letter was used. For figures that were representative of people within the Kibbo Kift, their woodcraft names were rendered in runic lettering rather than their given names. Milnes was particularly enthusiastic about reviving Elder Futhark as a written language as she taught it to the all-girls youth group, the Cherry Tree Clan, that she ran in her own time.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Heather O’Donoghue, *English Poetry and Old Norse Myth: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 2.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Logbook of the Cherry Tree Clan.

Human figures who were members of the Kibbo Kift were no longer consistently represented with animal heads that referenced their woodcraft names. The left-most pane in the middle of the 1927 page features a Kinsman working on carving wooden totem sigils, which were personal pictorial emblems, for the proposed Totem House and a woman working at an easel in the background. The woman in the background may be a self-portrait of Milnes as it has a similar composition and pose to a later, larger self-portrait that will be discussed shortly. The man working in the foreground may be I. O. Evans as the figure was in the process of carving a blue bird sigil that resembles his woodcraft totem, Blue Swift. There may be a second self-portrait by Milnes directly underneath that panel in the bottom left that depicted a woman in a blue robe reading from the Kibbo Kift Lectern to a gathering of Kinsfolk.

The Kinlog had specific ceremonies and practises surrounding its presentation and keeping at Kibbo Kift gatherings like the Althing and Kin Feast. During these gatherings, it was displayed atop the Great Lectern.⁷⁰ The Great Lectern was “constructed of solid oak, carved and intricately picked out in gold and brilliant colours” of green and blue.⁷¹ The lectern stood at hip height to an average adult male, allowing the reader to handle the Kinlog at waist-height due to the Kinlog's thickness.⁷² It featured an evergreen tree connecting a river and sky scene to create the optical illusion of a face when assembled. The box that the Kinlog was stored in was specifically made for the Kinlog; it housed the Kinlog as if it was a living entity. When not in use, the Kinlog was stored in a specially made box fitted to its exact dimensions and usually kept at the Kibbo Kift headquarters in London. As Kinlog Scriptor,

⁷⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/I.1.

⁷¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/Kibbo Kift Lectern.

⁷² MOL/SWHC/L198/I.1.

Milnes was one of few people in the Kibbo Kift who was allowed to read from the Kinlog in public as well as generally handle the Kinlog.⁷³ Others were Hargrave, in his role as the Headman, and those holding positions as Deputy Headman. Milnes, as Kinlog Scriptor, was the only woman with direct and regular input and control over the Kinlog both in producing the book and its presentation and performance.

The music selected for use in the Kinlog reflected Hargrave's control as well as the influence of Stanley Paul Dixon, who became Deputy Headman towards the end of the 1920s. All songs used were partially authored by Hargrave, and Dixon provided the majority of the musical notations. One of the two songs written into the Celtic knot Guilding of the 1927 page is "I Chant for the Tree Spirits," words and music by John Hargrave.⁷⁴ It was a duet between a male and a female tree spirit meeting and uniting in marriage within a mystical greenwood. Beginning with the male tree spirit presenting himself to the female tree spirit, he convinced her of his worth as a husband and the song ended with her accepting his proposal. The man was "the keeper of the Green tree's life," and the woman was depicted as "the keeper of the Green life's seed". Thus, their marriage and the implied consummation of it allowed the continuation of the circle of natural life. The opening refrain followed a downwards and upwards perfect fourth chord progression, creating a harmonious tonality. It began with the phrase "Green Go the Ways of Sib Long Sith, / Weard and wold they still hold power by the runes that were cut of old". The phrase "Sib Long Sith" translated from a mixed usage of Old and Middle English to "Kin Long Since," which implies that the story the song told happened in the past, present, and would continue into the future.

⁷³ MOL/SWHC/L198/F.25.

⁷⁴ Also reprinted in songbook held in YMA/KK/77.

Continuity was also a major theme in the other song written in the Guilding on the 1927 illuminated page.⁷⁵ “Three Kinsmen Bold,” words by John Hargrave and music by Stanley Dixon, was an eight verse ballad that told the story of three men who attempted to court an immortal Greenwood Tree only to be distracted by a “mortal maid” that tripped out of the forest in the penultimate verse. This song was slightly humorous in tone until the final two verses, which turn the song into a lament by the tree, which, immortal and unable to compete with the charms of the mortal female, was left alone in the wood to await the next set of male suitors. The ending to this song was more melancholy than the previous, but it maintained both the idea that nature would continue to flourish as it was “immortal” as well as the centrality of men as the driving force of change. Women, as both the woman of the green and the Greenwood Tree, were receivers of male love and, while they had the chance to choose whether or not to accept the male advances, they were not ultimately in control of what the man chose to do once they accepted. The philosophical place of women in the Kibbo Kift maintained a patriarchal hierarchy in practise as well as in Hargrave's lyrical work. This was, however, not always the case in Milnes' illustrations representing both men and women, which could be seen in her illustrations concerning the Company of Archers.

The Company of Archers was of symbolic importance to the Kibbo Kift during the late 1920s and became a centrepiece within the Kinlog. It was founded as a coeducational body within the Kibbo Kift in 1926 by Stanley Dixon and Carole S. Griffiths, who married in 1929.⁷⁶ The Company of Archers' members and activities featured prominently in the Kinlog's visuals and narratives during the second half of the 1920s, and archers were featured prominently in public performances and photography of Kibbo Kift activities. Members wore

⁷⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 55.

⁷⁶ YMA/KK/15.

decorated arm guards with the symbol of the Company of Archers embroidered upon them along with their personal totem sigil.⁷⁷ The Company of Archers had two songs written explicitly for it in a collection of Kibbo Kift Song Sheets, the longest of which was the “The Forest Song of the Company of Archers” written by Stanley Dixon.⁷⁸ It directly connected the Guild to Robin Hood, prophesying that they would reawaken the mythical figure through their activities:

Laughter breaking into Sherwood
 Good ash staves that sweep
 Who's that calling like a curlew
 Is Robin Hood asleep?
 We will waken Robin Hood
 From every dene hole, dell and wood
 Hark! I hear the Kindred calling
 “We stand where the outlaw stood!”⁷⁹

The ash staves used for hiking combined with a curlew bird call acted as symbols of a call to action, instructing those who heard the call to join in the Company of Archers to awaken Robin Hood. The active language characterised the Company of Archers as a robust and joyful movement and reflected the ideal that the activities of the Kibbo Kift would penetrate “every dene hole, dell and wood” to return the current day to something legendary. Robin Hood himself was embodied by the Company of Archers as the song made the claim that they

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ YMA/KK/77.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

“stand where the outlaw stood!” The Company itself put on archery displays at major Kibbo Kift gatherings, members displaying their skills with the longbow especially.⁸⁰

The second full illuminated page in the Kinlog, which covered the years 1928 to '29, featured the activities of the Company of Archers in the top panels and in the Guilding with “The Archer's Song,” written by Hargrave with music by Dixon.⁸¹ “The Archer's Song” had a lot of similarity with another Kibbo Kift tune with lyrics and music by Dixon that was printed in songbooks from this period entitled, “The Spirit of Robin Hood”.⁸² Both versions of the song told the story of how “the spirit of Robin Hood came down / all clothed in Lincoln green” and how he encountered and observed the Kibbo Kift, seeing that “these few would lead the way when men should have time for work in play”. While women were not mentioned in either version of this song, Milnes' illustrations featured an even distribution between sexes with three male archers in the top left-hand panel and for female archers in the right-hand.⁸³

This illuminated page was also the sole instance within the Kinlog that illustrations of female figures outnumbered the male overall. It was on this illuminated page that Milnes herself again appeared.⁸⁴ This self-portrait, placed in the bottom right-hand panel, was readily definable as Milnes. She depicted herself wearing the full late 1920s female Kin habit, which she helped to design, and working on a large valley design in purple and orange. She sat in front of an easel with her personal totem of the Blue Falcon erected beside her. Across from

⁸⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/F.14.

⁸¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 65.

⁸² YMA/KK/77.

⁸³ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 65.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

her was a sewing machine. Two other Kinswomen take up the centre of the panel, working on a large amount of orange fabric for creating ceremonial Kin costumes. It was, however, clear that Hargrave remained in control of the character of these activities despite not being pictured on this illuminated page. The bottom right-hand corner of the panel featured a wooden staff head that symbolised the Head Man that was mirrored on the opposite left panel. The staff head contained the carved words “let not the mind be overmuch crossed” on the left and “by unwise men at thronged meetings of folk” on the right.⁸⁵ This staff head was a physical representation of the Head Man, which had always been Hargrave, and therefore maintained his presence over the illustrated even when he was not present.

The two illuminated pages celebrating 1927 and 1928-29 clearly indicated these years as the height of the Kibbo Kift as a mythological organisation. Hargrave remained a central figure as the leader of the movement, but his role as the overarching mythological hero was increasingly shared with C.H.Douglas and the cause of social credit. While the all-inclusiveness of the Great Spirit and Kibbo Kift spiritualism became more focused on a reworking of the Anglo-Saxon and Norse mythological tradition, the Kibbo Kift grew in its artistic expression with music and the Company of Archers. During these years, they also added mumming and puppetry to their annual celebrations of the Althing and the Kin Feast.

4.5 Seasonal Celebrations and Mythological Performance

Creating seasonal ceremonies allowed the Kibbo Kift to expand from its original meetings of the Ndembo, the core group of Scout and woodcraft members who had written the Kin Covenant. These ceremonies also replaced by the mid-1920s the adult-only Scouting and woodcraft Scalp Hunters Club that Hargrave and Cecil Mumford had run while participating

⁸⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/E6.7.

in the Scouts and contributing to scouting magazine, *The Trail*. As recorded in the Kinlog, by 1925, four seasonal celebrations had been created:

Firstly, Althing, at Whitsun, to which all the Kindred came, save those kept back by gravest illness, direst hindrance. Here took they rede one of another, made the laws of Kibbo Kift, its deeds resolved. (Wandlething and Watlingthing held also other motes and wapenshaws at different seasons, and so did the Things in the North and other places that later came into being.)⁸⁶

This passage, which established the seasonal celebration as Kibbo Kift traditions, utilised pseudo-medieval language, attempting to tie the events recorded to the past. Wandlething and Watlingthing were sub-groups of the Kibbo Kift based on geographical locations where there were enough individual members to require regional regulation and have their own deputy head. Wandlething was headed by Raymond J. Dixon, who became Deputy Headman on the Kin Council in 1928.⁸⁷ Watlingthing was headed by J. W. Leslie, who went by the woodcraft name, Green Flame.⁸⁸ The North Folk was headed by Joyce Reason, known as Sea Otter and Nomad Chief of the North.⁸⁹ As Nomad Chief of the North, “she was given a roving commission to gather together the scattered units of kinsfolk in the Midland and Northern counties of Britain”.⁹⁰ Britain here, however, refers exclusively to England, comprising of

⁸⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 48.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Great Log of the North Folk.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 1.

groups in Manchester, Matlock, and Leicester as well as various lone kinsman in other areas.⁹¹

All of these groups were supposed to travel to where the Althing was held that year.

Usually in September, the second yearly gathering of the Kibbo Kift was held. This one was called “Glee Mote” and was “the autumn festal camp, under the rule of the Chief Gleemaster”.⁹² There were two Chief Gleemasters during the late 1920s. The Chief Gleemaster in 1927 was a member whose woodcraft name was Mole, and the Chief Gleemaster from 1928 onwards was Stanley Paul Dixon, brother of Raymond, who went by the woodcraft name, Hawk.⁹³ At Glee Mote, “from the store of plays, were done the newest, lately written down, or those most favoured by the Kin, and Kin songs sung round the high heaped fire”.⁹⁴ These mumming plays as well as puppet shows were designed to have “fully exploited [forms] of Drama to expound the objects and philosophy that gave Kibbo Kift its special character and impetus”.⁹⁵ The Glee gave members a way to show off their artistic talents both visually and physically, and was also attended by some non-Kin members. Pictures were featured in fliers and scenes from these plays, particularly of the Kin Fools, Sib and Gee, were drawn into the Kinlog.

Kin Feast was the third celebration held “soon after Yule, and this was held in town beneath the mead-hall roof, with Wassail Bowl and old customs proper to the season”.⁹⁶ This feast had grown out of the end of the year feast held by the Ndembo and Scalp Hunters Club

⁹¹ *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁹² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 48.

⁹³ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 48.

⁹⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/G.38.

⁹⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 48.

and also replaced the Christmas dinner some members used to attend for the scouting publication *The Trail*.⁹⁷ The Wassail Bowl was a large carved bowl with the word WASSAIL carved on the side and blue knobs framing the word.⁹⁸ The inside of the bowl was carved with three wide indentations that taper into the bowl to intersect. An illustration in the Kinlog suggested it was filled with something to drink and passed around communally.⁹⁹

First held in 1925, the Spring Festival Hike (aside from the only yearly event not have a particular name) was a formal hiking experience that tied together the growing Kibbo Kift lore around folk tales in the spring.

And after that, at Easter, was the Spring Festival Hike. It was the custom then for all the Kindred who could get away to hike in the country, with gear in rucksack, sleeping on the ground in their little tents or under the open sky, and this they did at this season of the year in honour of Spring in keeping with the ancient customs of our land. With marching songs they went, and each evening sat around the gligfire in a fresh place in the countryside, the wide land.¹⁰⁰

Hikes were made to Sheffield Park where the Piltdown Man was supposedly discovered. The Piltdown Man was a 1912 palaeontological hoax. It was a set of bones that were supposedly the Anglo-Saxon link to pre-*homo sapien* evolution discovered by Charles Dawson and verified by Arthur Smith Woodward. At this point in time, however, the Piltdown Man was considered fact, and the Kibbo Kift was enthusiastic to include it in their mythological

⁹⁷ LSE/KK/125, *The Trail* dinner seating chart.

⁹⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/NN.

⁹⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 48.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

ceremonies. There were also pilgrimages to the Uffington White Horse and Stonehenge.¹⁰¹

The date for this hike was less fixed than the other events as it largely depended on the weather.

The only seasonal meeting that had an exact date was the Althing.

The Althing was an outdoor assembly and festival that was held once a year in August and lasted for several days and nights. It was the anniversary of the Kibbo Kift's founding on 18 August 1920 in Denison House, Vauxhall, London.¹⁰² The name “Althing” originated from what is now the Icelandic parliament, the oldest national assembly.¹⁰³ The Althing and the anniversary of the founding of the Kibbo Kift also marked the beginning of the Kibbo Kift year, which ran from the 18th of August until the 17th of August of the following year. The year was usually denoted as “K.K.” and followed by a Roman numeral. This calendar system persisted in internal document use until around 1934-36 when the Georgian calendar was readopted. There was an attempt to create a corresponding method of telling time headed by Roland Berrill that used a 36-hour timepiece, but this did not catch on in practise.

This summer gathering was the most formal event of the Kibbo Kift, requiring members to wear the Kin habit and appropriate costume for ceremonies. The Kin habit, originally called the “K.K. Costume,” was a green hiking uniform and was meant to be for both work and leisurewear.¹⁰⁴ It came in two styles, one for men and one for women with adjustments for seasonal weather. The men's habit originally took inspiration from the Boy Scouts uniform with its knee-length shorts, high socks, and sturdy shoes designed for camping

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁰³ “930: Establishment of the Althingi – Timeline.” Alþingi.is. althingi.is/kynningarefni/

¹⁰⁴ YMA/KK/165, May 1923.

and general outdoors wear.¹⁰⁵ It, however, had a hooded cloak or cowl worn over the main uniform made of green fabric in reference to Robin Hood.¹⁰⁶ This green hood sometimes had a short summer version that didn't include the long cape part of the cloak. This shorter cowl was often how the pictorial representation of the common Kinsman was rendered, likely for drawing ease.

The development of the female Kin habit came in the latter half of the 1920s between 1927 and 1928.¹⁰⁷ Previously, the general Kin habit was not explicitly gendered. Women were expected to wear the same uniform as the men, although it appears there was some attention paid to modesty as they tended to wear slightly longer skirts or leg coverings. Private pictures from members' photo albums, however, show women in more varied garb for during Kin-only activities.¹⁰⁸ A surviving costume that was worn by Kathleen Milnes consisted of an intricate breast plate with metal designs, which would have been secured on the body with brown leather strings.¹⁰⁹ It was worn in company with other Kinswomen as well as in mixed company without any additional coverings.¹¹⁰ Thus, the public uniform of the Kin habit was not always the same as the private wear of individual members.

Members of the Kin Council and those with specific roles within the Kibbo Kift wore their full ceremonial garb. The basic costume for ceremonial garb began with a special cloak and tunic in addition to the general Kin habit and camping gear. Both were in made of fabric

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ YMA/KK/98.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/H, Cecil Paul Jones' Photo Album.

¹⁰⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/B.13.1.

¹¹⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/H, Cecil Paul Jones' Photo Album.

in bright colours symbolic of their position and carried clearly the crest of their position, often on the front of the chest or facing outward on the upper arm. The colours and crests of the costume had to be pre-approved by members of the Kin Council and match the symbols recorded in Kinlaw.¹¹¹

Changes to who sat on the Kin Council and the written word of Kinlaw were made during the Althing's general meeting called the Mote. Major announcements regarding the progress of the group as well as members' marriages, births, and deaths were usually made public at this time. The general format of the Mote in the latter half of the 1920s was:

1. Report on The Kindred for the preceding year is read.
2. Audited Accounts are presented.
3. The Head Man (when necessary), Deputy Head Man, Chief Scribe and Chief Tallykeeper are appointed.
4. The Motemaster calls upon Kinsfolk to put before the Mote Matters which have been approved by Kin Council for discussion. Such matters must have been submitted to the Chief Scribe twenty-eight days before the Mote.¹¹²

The Report on The Kindred was the assembly minutes for the previous year, sometimes rendered in language and tone to make it seem more mythical.¹¹³ Audited accounts were the main treasury of the Kibbo Kift, called Kin Garth.¹¹⁴ The Head Man, John Hargrave remained the same throughout the Kibbo Kift's lifetime, acting as president and chair over the organisation. The Deputy Head Man fulfilled a role similar to a vice president and was a

¹¹¹ YMA/KK/1.

¹¹² *ibid.*, Booklet entitled *Kinlaw of the Kindred called the Kibbo Kift*, p.4.

¹¹³ YMA/KK/3.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

position that was introduced sometime between 1924-27.¹¹⁵ The Chief Scribe fulfilled a role similar to a secretary, and the Chief Tallykeeper was in charge of taking attendance as well as collecting attendance fees for the Althing.¹¹⁶

This was also the point in the year where members brought up grievances with the Kin Council. The most infamous of incidences was the Brockley Thing in 1924.¹¹⁷ Within the Kinlog, the incidence was recorded to have been connected to several events over the course of the 1924 Althing beginning with the “exile” of Eric C. Peake.¹¹⁸ Those involved with the Brockley Thing headed by Gordon S. M. Ellis and C. S. Cullen advocated a more democratic structure. “For mass rule they clamoured,” and the group split at the general meeting where Hargrave was ultimately chosen to remain as Head man for “yet held at least the Kindred to the way of English folk—their father—free men willingly by chosen chief led”.¹¹⁹ The Brockley Thing went on to become the Woodcraft Folk and the two groups generally kept officially separate from each other. Outside of official Kibbo Kift functions, some members maintained connections to members of the Woodcraft Folk. Muriel C. Gray recorded that in 1927 “we had a short visit from Meda, of the Woodcraft Folk” at a private camp that included Carole Griffiths and two other female Kibbo Kift members.¹²⁰

Records for attendance at the Althing of 1926 and 1927 recorded each attendee’s last name, woodcraft name, whether or not they were associated with other woodcraft groups, and

¹¹⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ YMA/KK/2.

¹¹⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 40.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 39.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 40.

¹²⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/Grey Squirrel's Logbook, Summer Term 1927.

if they paid the attendance fee.¹²¹ Prior to this, record-keeping was not quite as comprehensive. Attendance at the 1922 Althing was reportedly “around two hundred people”, and “most came from London, the Home Counties, and smaller pockets in the Midlands and North West”.¹²² This would reflect the development of later subgroups of the Kibbo Kift like Wandlething and Watlingthing and the need for Nomad Chiefs in the North and later the East. The Nomad Chief of the East from 1929 was Kathleen Milnes, who managed Kibbo Kift activities for Norfolk, Suffolk, Ilse of Ely, Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Bedford.¹²³

Throughout the year, adult members of the Kibbo Kift attended the Lodge of Instruction, which was a set of lectures held in and around London usually headed by the Head Man.¹²⁴ The Lodge of Instruction was run through 1924 until around 1928 and was the adult education course for Kibbo Kift members. The instruction was done in a lecture style called “scripts” and each script was recorded by a designated scribe in the Kibbo Kift Script of the Lodge of Instruction, a decorated leather-bound book.¹²⁵ Both male and female members were allowed to attend. It was not open to the public and only members who had passed the first grade of tests within the Kibbo Kift, which were a mixture of physical tests in the style of scouting and woodcraft and spiritual activities to do with meditation, and whom taken an oath to the Lodge could participate. Each Script was dedicated to teaching lessons in art, science, and philosophy. The early scripts had a distinctly spiritual overtone and were focused on the

¹²¹ YMA/KK/2.

¹²² Mark Drakeford, *Social Movements and Their Supporters: The Green Shirts in England* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), p. 50.

¹²³ YMA/KK/94, East Area Map.

¹²⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Script of the Lodge of Instruction.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

spiritual and philosophical development of participating members. In a two-part, brightly coloured diagram, the untrained mind was visually rendered as disorganised, its parts scattered in a hodgepodge manner.¹²⁶ An organised and trained mind, on the other hand, had clear boundaries in which all its activity takes place.¹²⁷ It was upward moving in its linear nature, both pointing and arching towards a philosophical and spiritual enlightenment. In order to reach that point, previous accepted boundaries had to be thrown off.

To remain relevant to the directional and philosophical changes in the Kibbo Kift over the 1920s, the scripts of the Lodge were reactive to the sensibilities and views of members. The first script established that the members didn't "believe in all that Genesis folklore" and that "they [wanted] to get at the root of Kibbo Kift philosophy".¹²⁸ That root was supposedly incredibly basic: it was magic, living and spiritual energy itself. Once this root had been acknowledged, the task of the members became to hone their knowledge with symbols of power and universality. This magic-based spiritual education led to both spiritual and worldly understanding which in turn led to initiation into the Kibbo Kift. At this point, "the Tree of Life and Knowledge" was accessible and would lead to individual "Scientific Revelation".¹²⁹ The theory was that as more people became initiated into the Kibbo Kift and achieved "Scientific Revelation," it would lead to the eventual regeneration of the British people. This regenerative language drew heavily from Norse, Egyptian, and Polynesian terms as well as references to Christianity, Buddhism, and other world religions. This huge breadth reflected

¹²⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Script of the Lodge of Instruction, Script IV, Diagram Symbolising Thought of Ordinary Untrained Mind.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, Script IV, Diagram Symbolising Thought of Trained Mind.

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, Script I, Folio 3.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, Script I, Folio 3.

the ideal that “education must be more than a mere gathering of Knowledge – it must be the liberation and stimulation of Intelligence”.¹³⁰

Efforts in educating youths took place during the second half of the 1920s. In 1927 and 1928, the Althing was preceded by Dexter Fam Camp. This camp was an annual summer camp and ran in the summer of 1927 for five days and in 1928 for two weeks, attracted youth from the ages of seven to eleven to participate in outdoors activities.¹³¹ The timing of the camp was made to coincide not only with the Althing but organised not to interfere with activities of the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry. In the entry in her logbook for August 1927, Muriel C. Gray recorded that:

After the Folkmoot of the O.W.C., which was attended by a number of Kinsfolk, I hiked from Guildford to Caterham, with Dormouse, Springbok and Sherran of O.W.C., to attend the Camp of the Dexter Fam.—the first tribal training camp of Kibbo Kift. We camped on Box Hill for one night, the wood behind Sun Patch Cottage.

I took on “dogsbody” on camp staff at Dexter Fam. It was a great camp, run under most difficult weather conditions, and an inspiration to those who work with children.¹³²

At these events, children were taught the same lessons by male and female instructors and were not separated by sex during activities.¹³³ The Guild also produced leaflets called *Bearn-Run*, which ran for 13 issues, and leaflets called *Educational Pamphlet. Educational*

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, Script XI, Folio 1.

¹³¹ YMA/KK/27.

¹³² MOL/SWHC/L198/Grey Squirrel's Logbook, August 1927.

¹³³ YMA/KK/26.

Pamphlet consisted of 4 issues, the first two of which concerned “The Child, Education and the Kibbo Kift”, the third a semi-fictionalised article on “Dexter Camp”, and fourth a reproduction of Allen's 1923 article on “The Cynstoke Mummers”.¹³⁴ These four pamphlets alongside *Bearn-Run* made explicit the education ideology of the Kibbo Kift.

The Althing was opened with a procession of the Kin Council and attending members. A herald headed the parade, dressed in the Kin habit and carrying the ceremonial mace.¹³⁵ The Great Mark was carried in on its stand, a large wooden pavilion, by four bearers. The Great Crest featured a Kinsman in the habit kneeling on bended knee with his head tilted back and hood down. His arms extended upwards. In his open hands, the Great Mark rested as if in offering to the heavens. Behind this followed the members of the Kin Council and then individual groups and kin members. Boldly painted banners carried by individual members followed after the Kin Council and Great Crest. Some of these were “the first four Banners of the People, of Wayland Smith, Merlin, Beowulf and Hereward the Wake. They were worked on both sides in silver, blue, white and red, and were three feet each way”.¹³⁶ These banners were displayed and used in a hike to Stonehenge the opening parade at the 1930 Althing.¹³⁷ All four of these figures had symbolic importance to the Kibbo Kift. Wayland Smith appeared multiple times throughout Kibbo Kift literature in the second half of the 1920s. Merlin rather than King Arthur himself was of interest to the Kibbo Kift due to his magical abilities, which lay at the root to Kibbo Kift spiritual philosophy. Beowulf was the subject of a play worked

¹³⁴ YMA/KK/27.

¹³⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/E.8.6.

¹³⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 68.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*

on by Hargrave throughout the latter half of the 1920s.¹³⁸ Hereward the Wake, a figure of resistance to the Norman Conquest, was likely influenced by Charles Kingsley's 1886 novel, *Hereward the Wake: Last of the English*, which characterised Hereward as “a forerunner of the greatest outlaw of English popular mythology”.¹³⁹ The image of the outlaw preoccupied the Kibbo Kift as an organisation as they characterised themselves as outsiders, camping and hiking in nature against the industrialised culture of their time. Protest continued to underpin Kibbo Kift rhetoric into the 1930s as it transformed into a political entity.

Tents were pitched in a semi-circle around a wide, half-circle space. The layout, like the costumes and symbolic imagery, of the Althing was regulated by the Kin Council and followed a pattern outlined for “tribal training ground and camp” in Hargrave's *The Great War Brings It Home*.¹⁴⁰ The tents were set up around a wide open space and were all faced inwards to the open space. The tents pitched closest to the wide open space tended to be those of the Kin Council and other position holding members. The open space contained a hearth during the day, the Great Lectern erected for speeches, and beyond that, just over the middle of the semi-circle, the place of Taboo, where only adult Kin members enter. This layout would continue even after the Althing was renamed the National Assembly in 1932.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ YMA/KK/67.

¹³⁹ Paul Dalton, "The Outlaw Hereward 'the Wake': His Companions and Enemies," in *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England: Crime, Government and Society, c. 1066-c. 1600*. Edited by John C. Appleby and Paul Dalton (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), p. 7.

¹⁴⁰ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 187.

¹⁴¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 87.

At the front of each tent, members erected wooden totems on carved and often painted wooden staves to identify their tent.¹⁴² The wooden totem would be in the shape of the animal, mythical being, or symbol related to the member's woodcraft name. These totems were painted and would occasionally have additional symbols carved into them. Kathleen Milnes' totem was a perching falcon painted royal blue in reference to her woodcraft name, Blue Falcon.¹⁴³ The falcon perched on a base with four sides. The falcon gazes forward, its eyes ringed with black, its hooked beak painted orange, and its talons extending slightly outward over the base. The front of the base featured the Great Mark, painted in blue, green, and orange with a white background. The left and right sides of the base featured the blue, green, and orange spiralling together to form a cochlea shell. The back of the base was covered as the blue falcon's tail feathers and wings extended down over it. The top of the staff also was carved and painted. It featured a white and blue sword that pointed upwards to the base of the totem, framed on each side with a posing ape beneath which a four-legged mammal prowled over a green background. Milnes' Blue Falcon totem and staff are one of the most detailed and would have been immediately identifiable pitched into the ground outside of her tent at the Althing.

John Hargrave had two different White Fox totems. One was not meant to be mounted and was instead set on the Great Lectern when he was presiding over Kin Council meetings.¹⁴⁴ This totem featured the white fox with its forelimbs raised upwards like human arms. It supported a painted carving of the Great Mark over its head in a similar manner as to how Atlas carried the world. Hargrave's other totem which was mounted on a staff was of the

¹⁴² MOL/SWHC/L198/H, Cecil Paul Jones' Photo Album.

¹⁴³ MOL/SWHC/L198/E.8.4.

¹⁴⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/E.5.1.

white fox sitting with its head raised and open-mouthed.¹⁴⁵ Another surviving totem with a staff featured the circular sigil version of its owner's woodcraft name with several connected arches to represent a rushing river.¹⁴⁶ On the other side of the sigil was a carving of the Great Mark. An oak leaf rose out of the sigil and was topped with an acorn. This staff and totem was not painted. These totems demonstrated that there was much variance in how individuals represented themselves and that both symbolic and naturalistic elements were used.

The Great Lectern itself was usually placed in the centre of the open semi-circle of the camp and those reading from it would have been on the Council or pre-approved by the Council. The Great Lectern was also used as a podium for speakers as well as for the Kinlog at the Kin Feast. The Kin Feast was the annual winter gathering of the Kibbo Kift. It originated from the end of the year party for members of the Scalp Hunters Club, a luncheon group that had been run by Hargrave for adult members of the Boy Scouts.¹⁴⁷ First held on 31 December 1920 as the Scalp Hunters Club, this winter gathering continued as the Kin Feast into the mid-1930s. It was usually held in London near to Christmas and New Year and was one of the few activities that the Kibbo Kift regularly held indoors, likely due to poor weather and the amount of food being handled. Guests who were not members of the Kibbo Kift were able to attend alongside those who were members. From 1930, awards for service were given out at this gathering, including “the buckles of Balder and Eostre, of the Hael and the Fair” which symbolised “the fittest man and woman in the Kindred”.¹⁴⁸ This reflected how the

¹⁴⁵ L.P. Elwell-Sutton, “A History of the Kibbo Kift.” KibboKift.org.

kibbokift.org/images/jhtotem.jp

¹⁴⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/E.8.2.

¹⁴⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 26.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 66.

latter years of the Kibbo Kift moved progressively from ideological and philosophical rumination towards increasing performative and public activities.

Mumming and puppetry gained popularity in the Kibbo Kift by 1925. Mumming was closer to pantomime than stage theatre, which was reflected in the panel in the 1928-29 illuminated page which features a pantomime horse in the bottom left panel.¹⁴⁹ There were “several groups of mummers and puppeteers who fully exploited these two highly entertaining forms of Drama to expound the objects and philosophy that gave Kibbo Kift its special character and impetus”.¹⁵⁰ The Cynstoke Mummers, a mumming group that first appeared in Arthur B. Allen’s article for the Fabian magazine, *The New Age*, in 1924, was founded in 1927 to be the official theatre group at the early fall celebration of theatre called Gleemote.¹⁵¹ Allen’s article of the mummers was reproduced multiple times in Kibbo Kift publications. It was not clear whether the Cynstoke Mummers of the Kibbo Kift were the same group that Allen reported on or if the name of the group was repurposed by the Kibbo Kift. The Ndembo, also called the Lodge of the Seven Degrees, which had been the name of the group who, as part of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, had originally founded the Kibbo Kift and drawn up the Covenant, was resurrected for puppetry.¹⁵² These puppet shows were part of the new Scalp Hunters' Camp, another reference to the origins of the Kibbo Kift and the Scalp Hunters Club that once attempted to attract other scoutmasters to woodcraft and eventually the Kibbo Kift itself.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁵⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/G.38.

¹⁵¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 73.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, p. 74.

The second song in the Guilding of the 1928 to '29 illuminated page, was about “Wayland the Smith”.¹⁵³ Wayland the Smith, who had been referred to as creating the sword of social credit, reappeared here in relation to Beowulf, who was a figure of particular interest to the Kibbo Kift throughout the interwar period.¹⁵⁴ Wayland acted as an observer of the coming of the Kibbo Kift:

Wayland Smith, Wayland Smith,
 shoe the white horse!
 See the Kin ride by
 Bracken and Gorse.
 Oh! When the Kin hikes
 you'll hear the tramp, tramp
 When the sun sinks
 the Kindred will camp.¹⁵⁵

The white horse was probably a reference to the Uffington White Horse, which had appeared at the top of the 1921 to 25 section beneath which an image of Wayland in the process of smiting also appeared.¹⁵⁶ Bracken and gorse are ground cover often poisonous to horses if eaten in large quantities, and the sound of tramping by the hiking members mimicked the sound of horse hooves. As before with “The Archer's Song” that ran adjacent to this song, the symbolism here situated the Kibbo Kift within the gaze and approval of a mythological figure.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁵⁴ YMA/KK/Hargrave/8.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 29.

The image of Kinsfolk tramping into a mythological story was a common narrative trend in their theatrical productions. The Kibbo Kift was represented by two figures in mumming and puppetry. There was the Kin Fool, who acted as a narrator and guide through the stories, costumed in white and yellow as a medieval court jester. The second figure was the Kin Hero, usually represented by a man in green Kin garb, who took centre stage during the climax of the plot. Both of these figures appeared in mumming and in puppetry, always recognisably dressed. One mumming play entitled *Fafnir's Bane* and written by Joyce Reason retold the Germanic legend of Sigurd and Fafnir, the dwarf who, due to greed, turns into a dragon and thus must be slain by Sigurd. Halfway, through, however, Sigurd was with "Sir Kibbo" who banishes Fafnir.¹⁵⁷ The Kibbo Kift was increasingly portrayed as an active participant in not only the stories that inspired it but also envisioned a possibility for change as "Sir Kibbo" integrated lessons and maxims about the value of social credit in his lines, eventually using these words as the sword to defeat Fafnir.

Piers Plowman was another mythological figure that rose to prominence during these later years of the Kibbo Kift. The third section of the Kinlog ended with a half-page illustration that contained both a pictorial representation of Piers Plowman as well a song about him on the framing Guilding:

Plow well Piers Plowman!
 Ha! Kindred! Speed the plow!
 Do well this dead!
 Take the tally sticks
 and notch by the people's need!¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/B3.1.

¹⁵⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 71.

This song calls not just the Kindred but Piers Plowman himself to action. The people's need took precedence over the earthly members of the Kibbo Kift and mythological figures, who were encouraged to work in favour of the broader population. It was a speedy movement, invoking older systems of economic notations with tally sticks, to plough forward with the social credit cause.

By late 1929 when the Piers Plowman song appeared, the Kibbo Kift had clearly begun to gear up for a transition. There was an increase in the number of public activities run by the Kibbo Kift. These included the 1929 and 1930 Education Exhibitions, the youth-oriented Dexter Fam Camp, and the opening of the Althing and Kin Feast to public attendance. While ostensibly open to public attendance, the Althing and the Kin Feast still required that guests of Kibbo Kift attendees either be paid for or vetted by existing Kibbo Kift members.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, members of the press were invited to the Althing in 1927, and the Education Exhibitions at Whitechapel in 1929 and Manchester in 1930 were open to the public. There was a steady movement of the Kibbo Kift from its former spiritual insulation at the beginning of the 1920s towards affecting society and culture through its cultural production and performance. As noted in the Kinlog:

But now the Kin had reached the third stage of the three-fold plan. The crowd had seen them much of late, on every hand; now they must fully return. Time ran short before the noisy contest, the sharp strife. The Kindred knew the sign, read Odin's message in the face of the times. They thought of valour, made ready for warfare.¹⁶⁰

This passage preceded the account of 3 January 1931 and the annual winter Kin Feast, which noted that, with the formation of the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit, “the Kin came

¹⁵⁹ YMA/KK/4.

¹⁶⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 79.

back to the people”. This three-fold plan had never been mentioned before and may have been applied retroactively to describe the transitions within the Kibbo Kift over its existence up until this point. The plan had been to pull away from industrialised, militaristic world, to imagine and develop a solution to the ills of the world, and then to return to carry out a regenerative operation.

By the twelfth Althing in 1931, the focus had fully shifted to social credit and “to Focus, Uniformity and Obligation”.¹⁶¹ The Great Mark of the Kibbo Kift was replaced by 1934 with the green double K.K. banner, which would become one of the few visual remnants of the Kibbo Kift in the Green Shirts Movement and the Social Credit Party.¹⁶² The mythical idea of the Kibbo Kift as a living entity also passed out of the public and most of the private dialogue. It was decreed in 1931 that “the effort of every Kinsman should be consciously divided towards this immediate objective: that of bringing The Kindred up to strength as quickly as possible”.¹⁶³ This meant that the focus was to shift to attracting more members regardless of their interest in the Kibbo Kift’s mythological and spiritual life and increasing resources both physical and monetary. With the passing of the Great Mark, the renaming of the Althing to the National Assembly, and the change in the habits by 1935, the Kibbo Kift itself, although surviving in the continued entries in the Kinlog and the notes of individual members, had already begun to pass out of the sun and return to earth.

This marked the end of the Kibbo Kift as an autonomous entity “as the Kibbo Kift idea shifted itself out”.¹⁶⁴ Activities from the organisation, such as the Althing, Kin Feast, and

¹⁶¹ YMA/KK/2-General Report for 1931, p. 1.

¹⁶² MOL/SWHC/L198/I.18.

¹⁶³ YMA/KK/2, General Report for 1931, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/C5.1.

camping excursions, continued as part of the Green Shirts and later the Social Credit Party, but the Kibbo Kift were no longer the main face of the movement. The Great Right Hand of Kinship was phased out as it became too easily confused with the Nazi salute. The Great Mark was replaced on letterhead and official communications with the double “K” logo before the Kibbo Kift itself was phased out of mention in the Social Credit Party’s official communications altogether. Certain vestiges of the Kibbo Kift did, however, remain. While mumming and puppetry with medieval and mythological themes were gradually phased out, theatre and music were still important propaganda and social aspects of the Social Credit Party. Stanley Dixon remained heavily involved with these aspects, becoming Director of Music in the Social Credit Party.¹⁶⁵ Kathleen Milnes continued working on the Kinlog, recording and illustrating the story of the Kibbo Kift and its successor organisations.

4.6 Conclusions

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a period in which British society conceptualised the natural world as both scientific and spiritual. Science and the supernatural were not necessarily mutually exclusive, and new ideologies influenced the perception of old mythologies. Victorian and Edwardian sensibilities and *fin-de-siècle* anxieties coloured the new mythologies developed by groups including the Kibbo Kift following the First World War. While the idea of creating new mythologies relevant to a modern, industrialised world was not unique, the manner by which the Kibbo Kift constructed and expressed its mythological philosophy and spirituality was. Combining ideas about magic, primitive practises, and imagination, the Kibbo Kift envisioned a renewed Britain with an all-inclusive Great Spirit to guide it. The Kinlog was the most comprehensive document of the

¹⁶⁵ YMA/Hargrave/42.2.

organisation's mythology and acts as a history of the movement from its own point of view. It also gave the Kibbo Kift a cultural background and a sense of tradition around celebrations like the Althing and Gleemote.

At the same time, the Kinlog was not an unbiased document. The narrative placed John Hargrave as the clear leader and hero of the movement, but Kathleen Milnes' illustrations and artistic choices occasionally subvert the patriarchal overtone of the narrative. While the religious experience of the Kibbo Kift occurred through the Great Spirit, the manner by which the Great Spirit was interacted with was a highly individual experience. Evans' writings for the Kibbo Kift reflected this and foreshadowed how members who were deeply invested in the spiritual aspects of the Kibbo Kift found themselves at odds with the increasingly political nature of the movement. Evans left during the transition of the Kibbo Kift to the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit as had Mary Neal before at the introduction of social credit politics. Kathleen Milnes stayed, following the political philosophy and remaining the Kinlog Scriptor until her death in 1942.

By 1932, the Great Spirit had been replaced by Social Credit, not only in narrative but visually within the Kinlog. While the Great Spirit had once appeared to a young John Hargrave in the smoke of a camp fire, the Kinlog page about the events of May 1932 features a campfire in which smoke rises and coils around an unhooded, smiling Kinsman who is flanked by ten uniformed Green Shirts.¹⁶⁶ The Kinsman and humanity in general had replaced the magical, cosmic force of the Great Spirit. Rather than reflecting the loss of numerous older members at the transition, the change was represented as a joyous and harmonious event. It was in 1932 that the Kibbo Kift fully transformed philosophically and visually into a political party, guided by Social Credit rather than the mythological ideology that had once

¹⁶⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 86.

been the centrepiece of the organisation. As the 1930s went on, music remained a part of the movement but the focus on the primitive, art, and woodcraft philosophy fell steadily to the wayside. While the annual Althing gathering continued, it was renamed the National Assembly by 1932.¹⁶⁷ The Kibbo Kift had evolved to the point where its previous name was no longer relevant, and the mythological world view was exchanged by many members, including John Hargrave and Raymond Dixon, for the political movement of social credit.

The mythology of the Kibbo Kift was not, however, wholly dead or forgotten. Milnes' work on the first half of the Kinlog, which concerned the foundation years and the Kibbo Kift's activities in the 1920s lasted seven years from when she first began working on the Kinlog in 1927 to 20 November 1934. Written in red beneath the Gilded panel containing the Piers the Ploughman song and hiking scene, she broke with the omnipresent third-person narrative to announce, "I, Kathleen Mabel Milnes, Kinlog Scriptor, known to The Kindred as Blue Falcon, have this day come to the end of my first seven years' work on this book, and now begin a second spell of seven years, because I have joy in doing it".¹⁶⁸ Her influence on the Kinlog was most obvious in its visual construction. While it followed some of the panelling conventions from the cover, which was designed by Hargrave, her selection of figures, colours, and symbols from the Kibbo Kift and other mythological sources reflected her interests as much as other members of the group. As Milnes stayed on and was active with the Kibbo Kift through its transition into the Green Shirts and later the Social Credit Party, the growing prominence of social credit in the second half of the 1920s was not a source of artistic or philosophical contention for her. Instead, social credit's centrality to the Kibbo Kift was seen and portrayed as a natural progression of the movement. The visual rendering of the

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 71.

scales of production and consumption as well as the formula for social credit on the blade of the Kibbo Kift's sword fully integrated social credit into Kibbo Kift mythology.¹⁶⁹

Milnes remained involved in the organisation and in the production of the Kinlog until her death in 1942. Her place in the history of the Kibbo Kift was unique in that her passing ended the narrative style of the Kinlog that invoked mythological overtones, and no more visual aspects were added to the Kinlog by Carole S. Dixon when she took over as Kinlog Scriptor. Dixon completed the story of the Kibbo Kift in the same black calligraphy that Milnes had used, but the illuminated lettering, pictures, and Guilding that Milnes created ceased. Two thirds of the 600 pages remain blank as the story ended with Hargrave's death in 1982. The mythological tale of the Kibbo Kift lived and died. As a creation story, it was tied to the birth and death of John Hargrave. The perspective of the myth was omnipresent and personal and reflected spiritual ideals and earthly hopes of the Kibbo Kift's membership.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 43.

Chapter 5

Gender and Domesticity in the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift

5.1 The Roof Tree Family and Lone Kinsfolk

The mythology of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift discussed in the last chapter served as the foundations for the organisation's attempt to create distinctive ideals and structures.

Members' input and intellectual influence on the mythology reflected in how the organisation came to conceptualise and perform gender, particularly around camp activities that related to domesticity. In August 1928, the Teacher's Guild, a subsidiary group founded to promote the educational ideals of the Kibbo Kift, hosted the second annual Dexter Fam Camp.¹ There were 33 participating children in all, which had increased over the previous year's attendance of 19 children.² Children, guided by adult members of the Kibbo Kift, slept out in tents and woke in the morning to "the sound of the tom-tom" to break their fast and do morning exercises together as a large group.³ They then divided up into small groups of four to six plus an adult group leader. These groups, called clans and imaginatively named in such ways as the "Clan

¹ YMA/KK/25, The Log of the Second Dexter Fam Camp, group lists; "Fam" was a shortened version of "family".

² YMA/KK/24, The Log of the First Dexter Fam Camp, group lists.

³ YMA/KK/25, The Log of the Second Dexter Fam Camp, entry for Monday.

of the Yellow Bow” and “White Sword”, separated to pursue activities such as listening to stories and learning animal tracking. Children were being educated throughout the duration of the camp in the Kibbo Kift’s experimental recapitulation theory. This theory had many broad-sweeping and lofty aims; the camp itself focused on the development of young children physically and mentally by stimulating the natural “play-impulse” in activities out of doors.⁴ Dexter Fam Camp was, however, not too far removed from the world nor did it lack the comforts that the children would have been familiar with and enjoyed. A hand-drawn picture of the camp clearly showed that there were two houses within view of the campsite, and the entry for the first Friday recounted how the children “then went for tea, after tea we did the tribe dance and were told that we should go a night hike. Then we went to the glee. The play went very well especially the ginger beer”.⁵

The world of the Kibbo Kift revolved around the camp. There was the large community camp where many individuals and families camped together at annual events such as the annual Althing and Easter Hike. Family units were called “roof trees” while individuals were designated as “lone” Kinsmen and women. Each roof tree and individual pitched their own tent, a private, domestic space. The wider camp formed the Kibbo Kift's public space. Meetings were held in the middle of the half circle formed by pitched tents. Each tent had a staff to the left hand side of the entrance flap that was mounted with a personal totem on top, which identified who the owning member was. Major Kin Council meetings would have been viewable to all pitched tents and audible from those that were closest to the Council seats.

⁴ YMA/KK/27, Educational Pamphlet No. 1, “The Child, Education and Kibbo Kift: what can a child learn with a bow and arrow?”.

⁵ YMA/KK/25, The Log of the Second Dexter Fam Camp, entry for Friday.

At the centre of the council circle was the main camp fire from which the rest of the camp branched out. The camp fire was both the geographical centre of the camp and the symbolic centre of the Kibbo Kift's life and philosophy. Members of the Kindred, old and young, gathered around the camp fire for everything from meals to major council meetings that brought changes to the governing Kinlaw. It was at gatherings around the camp fire that the ceremonial robes of adult Kinsmen and Kinswomen were worn. These robes were highly decorated in bright, intense colours, which contrasted greatly with the forest green and brown normal Kin habit. The camp fire and the Kibbo Kift camp at large was a place rich with ideas and practises, highly visual as well as performative in gendered symbolism.

This chapter will analyse the camp of the Kibbo Kift to recreate the lifestyle and practises that the Kibbo Kift envisioned. Both the lifestyle and practises were gendered and to a certain extent divided explicitly and implicitly. The domestic space of the roof tree family was the most philosophically developed, and the communal activities of the camp the most practised. Various totems and sigils (pictorial signs) as well as costumes and habits divided the domestic roof tree and communal camp, but certain sigils of the Kin Council and the main Kin habit bound them together. This chapter contains a brief literature review of separate spheres and the domestic space that will contextualise the tensions regarding gender and public and domestic space in Britain and the middle class. This will form the methodological background for the analysis of the Kibbo Kift camp as a public and a domestic space as defined by its layout, totems and sigils, and costumes and habits.

5.2 The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift as a Performance of Separate Spheres?

On the surface, the private space of the Kibbo Kift's roof tree family unit and its tent and the large public space of the camp appeared to fit into earlier social ideals of public and private spheres. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall's *Family Fortunes* stood as the seminal text on separate spheres in British historiography since its publication in 1987.⁶ While not the first book to analyse the idea, Davidoff and Hall's analysis of separate spheres was useful tool to examine divisions and intersections between roles and space as influenced by gender.⁷ These separate spheres contributed how class and gender identity was understood particularly in the English middle class. The Kibbo Kift brought into their contemporary period an idealised version of the past, which reflected their English middle class backgrounds. This included older nineteenth century concepts and understanding of public and private spaces. As the organisation wished to imitate so-called primitive existences, it ended up recreating and triumphing ideas of space and roles contained within them of earlier periods.

At the same time, the Kibbo Kift brought forward the inherent ambiguity of separating public and private spaces and roles. Utilising separate spheres in history often meant identifying and analysing restrictions. Separate spheres as a theory and concept were not as easily applied outside of the middle class and even within it. Robert Shoemaker's criticism of reliance on separate spheres in British historiography of the early modern period stemmed from close examination of secondary literature and attitudes towards gender difference.

⁶ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Classes, 1780-1850*. 1987. Revised ed. (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁷ The concept was in use prior in American historiography as well as Brian Harrison, *Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women's Suffrage in Britain* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978).

Shoemaker suggested separate spheres be redefined “as a loose division of responsibilities between men and women” which had multiple instances of overlap.⁸ Separate spheres could not be entirely representative, but it was a useful tool to provide insight into differences regarding how public and private space and roles within those spaces were conceived and performed.

To a certain extent, gender within the Kibbo Kift’s private space of the camp was continually traversed. The camp as a private space was both communal and domestic. The entire communal space of the camp had overlapping functions. It was private from the outside world as a whole, and it contained multiple private domestic spaces in the form of personal campfires and tents with it. There was a constant overlap of spatial purpose depending on how the camp was currently being utilised. Similarly, gender roles were conceptually separated by sex but overlapped in practise. This overlap between genders reflected not only the ambiguity of gender within the Kibbo Kift but also gender issues in broader society and history. In Amanda Vickery's critical analysis of separate spheres in English women's history, she demonstrated the usefulness of separate spheres as a concept by examining the early modern period and the rise of the middle class in the nineteenth century. For Davidoff and Hall, “the rise of the ideology of domesticity was linked, as in the American case, to the emergence of middle class cultural identity”.⁹ In her book *Behind Closed Doors*, Vickery contested this utilising archival evidence and material culture were utilised to examine the

⁸ Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (New York: Longman, 1998), p. 318.

⁹ Amanda Vickery, “Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History.” *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 2 (1993), p. 837.

space and gender within the Georgian home.¹⁰ In another critical study, Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair's *Public Lives* examined Glaswegian women's lives through analysis of twelve streets in the Victorian period.¹¹ Their analysis established that women were able not only to leave the home and the private sphere to carry out business, but that there was substantial overlap between the home and the public sphere for those who conducted business in the home. Spatial analysis such as in Vickery, Gordon and Nair's work offers nuanced insight to gender and gendered spheres by breaking down the boundaries around the physical home as the container of domestic space. Judy Neiswander's book, *The Cosmopolitan Interior*, examined the interior of the middle class English home and how gendered usages of material objects contributed to the meaning behind these objects.¹² The space of the Kibbo Kift camp was defined by totems, sigils, and clothing worn by members; all of these material objects had implicit gendered meanings.

How objects and the space of the camp were gendered was additionally affected by the growing importance of social credit and politics in the second half of the 1920s in the Kibbo Kift. Kathryn Gleadle examined women's political engagement and the often ambivalent responses both from men and from women themselves.¹³ Gleadle had previously edited a

¹⁰ Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

¹¹ Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, eds. *Public Lives: Women, Family, and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

¹² Judy Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior: Liberalism and the British Home, 1870-1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

¹³ Kathryn Gleadle, *Borderline Citizens: Women, Gender and Political Culture in Britain, 1815-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

book with Sarah Richardson that analysed women's political involvement in 1760-1860, establishing that women did have a place in English politics.¹⁴ Richardson's 2013 book on women in nineteenth century British politics further expands on where women stood in politics, concluding that the home as well as growing activity in community and neighbourhood, national, and international stages affected women's sense of identity.¹⁵ The Kibbo Kift had specific notions of gender role and space. Despite its coeducational membership, it maintained the ideology of men and women were separate. The new roof tree family unit as well as women's roles as mothers and homemakers was ultimately upheld in the Kibbo Kift. The organisation reinforced the masculine role of fatherhood, focusing on the adult male of the roof tree as the provider of shelter and sustenance alongside the adult female maintaining the hearth. Therefore, it did not encourage nor offer a space for the kind of political engagement explored by Gleadle and Richardson. As discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, feminist members who joined the Kibbo Kift in its early years left by the second half of the 1920s as the ideology of the group shifted against feminism itself.

In addition to upholding the traditional domestic ideals, the Kibbo Kift supported the hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity even though it changed the location of the home to the outdoors and had a coeducational membership. Connell's discussion of hegemonic masculinity first appeared in the 1995 book *Masculinities* and has maintained a strong influence on the

¹⁴ Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson, eds. *Women in British Politics, 1760-1860: The Power of the Petticoat* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2000).

¹⁵ Sarah Richardson, *The Political Worlds of Women: Gender and Politics in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

field since.¹⁶ Examining the effects of patriarchy and gendered expectations on men, Connell argued that hegemonic masculinity acted to subject and repress alternative expressions of masculinity through political, economic, and social oppression. Connell revisited the concept in a 2005 article, stating that “hegemonic masculinity has multiple meanings,” and it “represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practises”.¹⁷ Examining “internal contradiction” in the Kibbo Kift offers insight into the historical debate on how gender identities were conceptualised and performed.¹⁸ Different masculine roles were included within the organisation in its early days but were gradually positioned in subordinate roles to the hegemonic ideal Kinsman who donned the green uniform of the Green Shirts in 1932.

John Tosh's *A Man's Place* asserted that the Victorian ideal of the home and domesticity affected men just as much as it affected women.¹⁹ Tosh hoped the book communicated “that a gendered history of men must be relational, in the sense of being rooted in an understanding of masculinity and femininity as aspects of a gender order, each incomprehensible without the other”.²⁰ Michael Roper and John Tosh's 1991 essay collection

¹⁶ R. W. Connell, “Masculinities.” RaewynConnell.net.

http://www.raewynconnell.net/p/masculinities_20.html

¹⁷ R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (December 2005), p. 841.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 829.

¹⁹ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

²⁰ John Tosh, “Author's Response to Anthony Fletcher.” October 1999. Institute of Historical Research Online. 2001. <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Victorians/tosh1.html>

Manful Assertions had previously examined separate spheres in practise in relation to the development of the Boy Scouts and late Victorian male office clerks.²¹ Roper and Tosh agreed that masculinity, hegemonic or not, was historically mutable, although not necessarily in an obvious manner. As Antony Easthope discussed in *What a Man's Gotta Do*, “masculinity tries to stay invisible by passing itself off as normal and universal”; these qualities were previously assigned by Barthes and Foucault as inherent to dominant discourse.²² The masculine ideal was often not the same as masculinity in practise. Martin Francis pointed out that queer history denoted clearly “that normative masculinity not merely seeks to make distinctions between men and women (and between men and children), but also between different categories of men”.²³ Studies of masculinity have also been largely concerned with homosocial environments. As Shoemaker noted, though, the normative heterosexual dialogue did not necessarily reflect actual sexual practise. The same goes for homosocial environments like sports and scouting. These environments were heavy on imagery of masculine camaraderie and emphasised male companionship. Coeducational outdoors organisations like the Kibbo Kift were not as fundamentally divided by gender, at least on the surface. Internally, there were tensions concerning how much of the philosophy, administration, and practise should be the same or divided between men and women and boys

²¹ Michael Roper and John Tosh, *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 19.

²² Antony Easthope, *What a Man's Gotta Do: The Masculine Myth in Popular Culture*. 1986. Reprint. (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 1.

²³ Martin Francis, “The Domestication of the Male? Recent Research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity.” *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 3 (2002), p. 638.

and girls. Divided genders in a coeducational environment seemed contradictory but was not necessarily so as the Kibbo Kift ultimately demonstrated.

While the masculine ideal of the Kibbo Kift drew heavily from its background in the Boy Scouts, the feminine ideal appeared to be more mutable. As Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska succinctly put it, early twentieth century “female physical culture was subversive”.²⁴ It challenged ideas of what a woman was physically and therefore mentally capable of as well as ideas of beauty and what spaces women could inhabit with physical activity outside of the home. At the same time, female physical culture did not necessarily transgress traditional roles of women as mothers. Rather, “the advocacy of physical culture among women also stressed women's duty to be healthy and fit in view of their role as race mothers”.²⁵ Physical liberation was embraced “along with familiar demands such as greater access to education, wider employment opportunities, and full citizenship”.²⁶ The debate regarding female citizenship reflected changing ideas and ideals about natural rights; it opened discussion for exploration and creation of new identities shaped around the female body. Physical education experiences in the outdoors that were for women and girls as well as outdoors coeducational experiences offered women specialised spaces and networks in and around which to interact. Active participation of women and girls in outdoors organisations and educational movements in the early-twentieth century was an undeniable fact but a poorly defined and often poorly organised area. The Camp Fire Girls was founded in 1910, the same year as the Boy Scouts of

²⁴ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, “The Modern Woman as Race Mother.” In *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health, and Fitness in Britain 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 107.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 108.

²⁶ *ibid.*

America. The Camp Fire Girls “formulated a model of citizenship in which girls' primary responsibility to the home was supplemented by increasing opportunities in civic reform, education, paid employment, and athletics”.²⁷ For these groups, the male and female were viewed as intrinsically and organisationally separate. Coeducation in the outdoors did not erase gender differentiation. John Hargrave echoed this as did the early years of the Kibbo Kift, referencing such organisations as models that the organisation should draw from as well as eventually hope to influence.

Studying gender and domesticity in the Kibbo Kift offers a new example of some of the ways in which separate gendered spheres partially survived through the First World War into the interwar period. The Kibbo Kift, despite a coeducational organisational model and membership, ultimately upheld pre-war gender ideals of women in a private space and men in the public. Joseph Craven attributed this to gender anxieties common in coeducational youth groups which “necessitated [the development of the Kibbo Kift’s] own code of strict morality to act as a deterrent to any public criticism”.²⁸ This strict morality was, however, not always clear cut even within the Kibbo Kift itself both in its ideology and in practise. Gender roles were nebulous in the beginning, especially for women and girls who were not discussed and prescribed roles at length in early Kibbo Kift literature. The ambiguity feminine space allowed for both women and men to traverse the loosely defined public space of the general camp and private roof tree, an experimental family unit. The gendered divide became more apparent and intrinsic to how the Kibbo Kift conceptualised itself and how it operated from

²⁷ Jennifer Helgren, “Homemaker' Can Include the World: Female Citizenship and Internationalism in the Postwar Camp Fire Girls,” in *Girlhood: A Global History* (New Jersey: Rutgers, 2010), p. 305.

²⁸ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, pp. 216-17.

1924 onwards. This chapter will examine the camping layout that the Kibbo Kift used at major camping events through ideas about separate spheres and provide spatial analysis of gendered divisions of labour at these camps. This chapter will also discuss how the internal communication and publications of the Kibbo Kift offer additional insight to how the increasingly gendered performance of the camp and camping was occasionally at odds with the ideology of individual members of the organisation.

5.3 Domesticity and the Roof Tree

The family unit of the roof tree in the context of the Kibbo Kift's camp was the main space in which gender roles were conceptualised and performed. Examining the organised camp layouts developed by Hargrave and used as the foundation for all major Kibbo Kift gatherings revealed two aspects of the organisation. The first was the importance of the camp as a gathering space. The second was that the camp was intended to be a living space. It fulfilled individual needs with food, warmth, and shelter and community needs with government, social life, and education. The camp was heavily regulated in its layout and had many rituals associated with its maintenance, which contributed to the codification of gender roles.

Performance in the camp was supplemented by written tracts, such as a series by Alan C. Garrad, which addressed how male and female members should behave and interact within the Kibbo Kift camp. This section will reconstruct major functions of the camp layout and examine the camp fire as the central point for both the public and private nature of the camp. It will also attempt to unpick some of the persistent ambiguity of the Kibbo Kift domestic and spiritual life within the camp.

There were two ways to approach the camp. One was as a public space wherein only individual persons and roof tree tents were private and domestic spaces. In general, this was how both the Kibbo Kift and previous scholarship on the organisation implicitly treated the

camp space. The other approach to the camp was to look at the camp itself as an extended domestic space. This latter approach was one that the Kibbo Kift was aware of in its claims to be separate from the wider, industrialised world as well as a return to the so-called primitive. Both of these approaches were useful as the family and individual autonomy of lone Kinsfolk remained separate from the camp at large and the Kibbo Kift camp itself was separate from the rest of the world. There was therefore a constant aspect of ambiguity to the public and communal and the private and domestic space within the Kibbo Kift camp. By acknowledging this ambiguity, the members' ideas of the camp as a space and actions of members within the camp created a rich, performative space for the development of the Kibbo Kift itself.

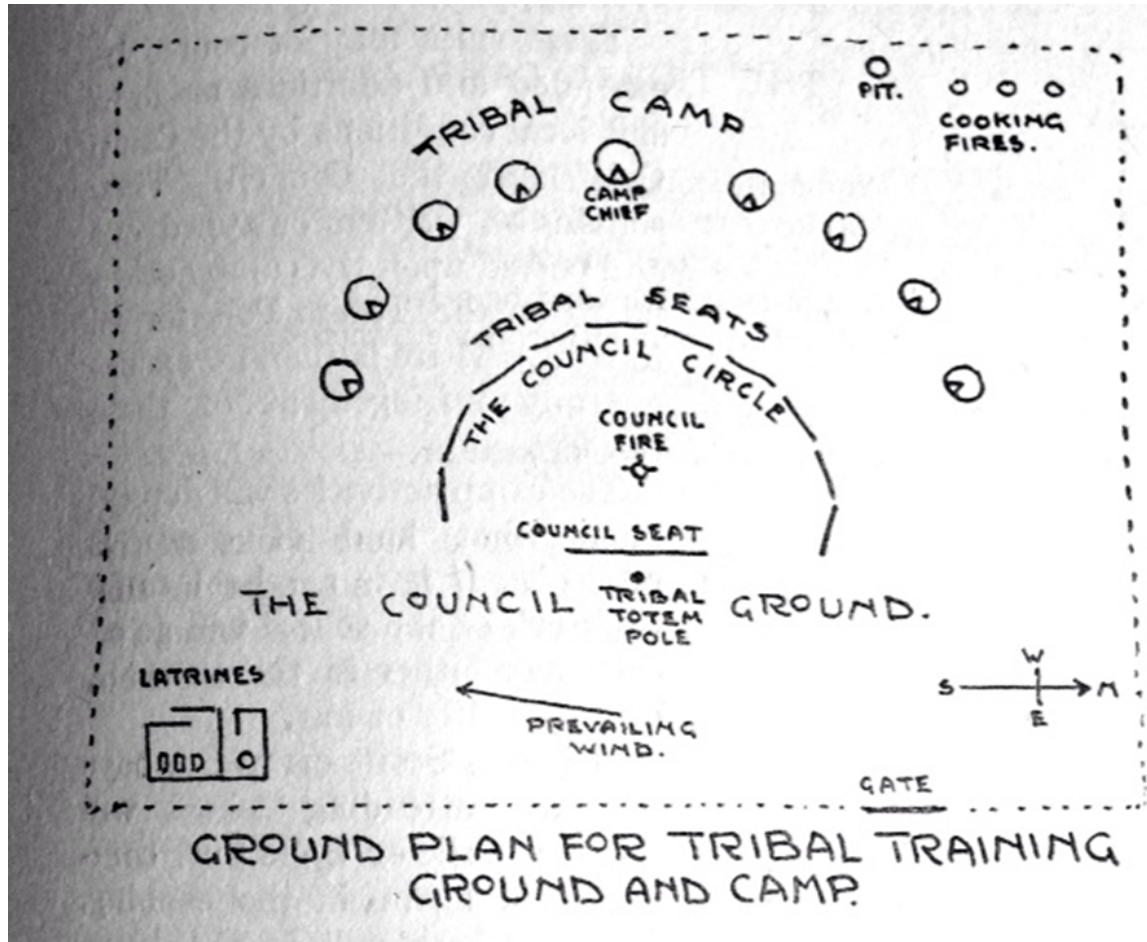
The camp was the setting for the idealised world of the Kibbo Kift. It existed in contrast to the industrialised urban centres from which the Kibbo Kift wished to move away. Hargrave blamed the lack of natural environment for the physical division between humanity and the earth, claiming, “we were so intent upon our trade and our industry that we had forgotten the Old Earth, with its mud, its rain, and its trees—we had forgotten that these meant LIFE”.²⁹ James Webb pointed out that Hargrave's ideas were part of a long history of “man's effort to put himself in some sort of secure relationship with the universe” and termed it as a “crisis of consciousness”.³⁰ Rather than creating a political party, Hargrave and early members of the Kibbo Kift concentrated their efforts upon the youth, attempting to affect and renew the human body and human living space. The camp, with its regulated layout and as a

²⁹ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 288.

³⁰ James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle: Open Court Publishing Company, 1976), p. 8.

centre for all major Kibbo Kift activities, was the most developed of the renewed human living spaces.

Figure 5.5.1: Ground Plain for Tribal Training Ground and Camp³¹



Hargrave claimed that the Boy Scout Court of Honour was the “equivalent to the primitive Camp Council”.³² The primitivism of Hargrave's early thought, as discussed in the previous two chapters of this thesis, was the main philosophical difference from existing

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 174.

³² Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 174.

British youth organisations.³³ It also allowed Hargrave a new and mutable template to create not only a new youth organisation but a new lifestyle and living experience. By negating progress made by modern civilisation due to industry and technology, Hargrave drew the foundations for a return to the primitive. His primitive society formed the basis for the Kibbo Kift's ideology and its unique lifestyle. His camp diagrams offered extensive insight into the organisation's blueprint.

The camping grounds designs, such as those in *Figure 5.5.1*, remained fairly stable over the Kibbo Kift's lifespan.³⁴ These designs were some of the organisation's most recognisable features aside from its elaborate ceremonial costumes and totem symbolism. Hargrave described the centre as “the Council Ground of the Tribe”. It was the primary gathering and social space where the boys would “hold their Night-time Pow-Wows, their Council Fire Ceremonies, their Tribal Dances, and there they will pass the Tests of Endurance just as if they were primitive Indian and Zulu boys”.³⁵ The basic camp was structured as in *Figure 5.5.1*. The tents, represented by circles with small triangles for flaps all opened up to face the Council Circle.³⁶ The Tribal Seats of the Council Circle surrounded the Council Fire, and the Kin Council members sat in a row beyond that. Overall, the entire camp formed a half-circle with all members aside from the Kin Council facing the Council from wherever they were when not cooking or in the latrines. The Council could oversee from their seats the entire camp. While not stated explicitly, the Council was almost entirely male until 1926 when

³³ Rachel Cheng, “I Went Alone: John Hargrave and the Origins of the Kibbo Kift” (MA dissertation, University College London, 2012).

³⁴ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 174.

³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

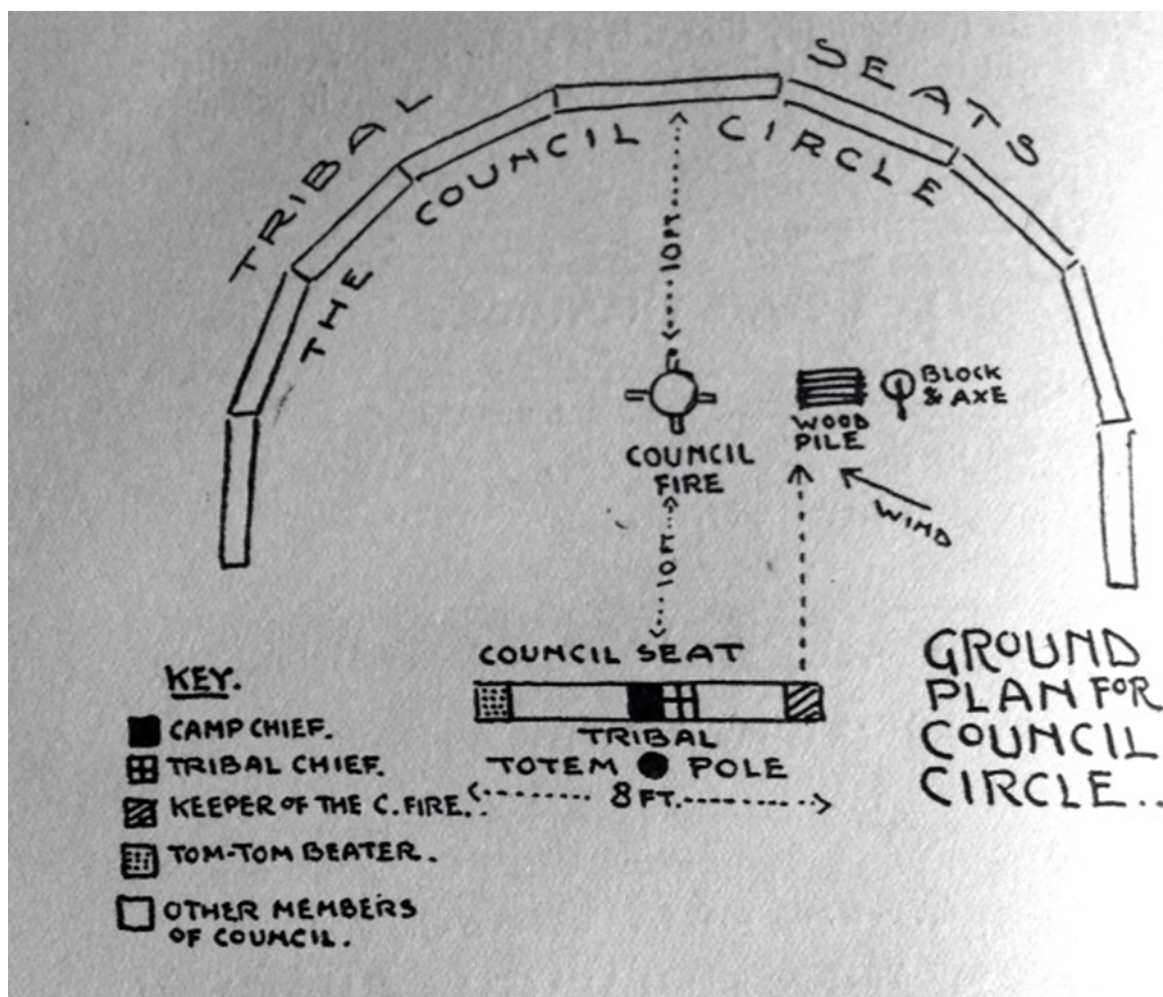
³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 187.

it became entirely so. The observation therefore had an implicit gendered element, the masculine view constantly and consistently imposed upon the goings-on of the campsite. This ground plan illustrated the ability of members to observe not only camp goings-on but each other. The community observed and assessed itself almost constantly.

The entire camp was space separate from the rest of the world, and the camping activities themselves were not open to everyone. To camp with the Kibbo Kift, membership of the organisation was usually necessary. Under specific circumstances, such as by knowing a member of the Kindred or having received special permission from the Kin Council, those who were not members could attend some functions as guests.³⁷ Guests were allowed to observe camp goings on, such as mumming and music, but they were not allowed to attend council meetings nor were they allowed to handle items considered “taboo”. Taboo, for the Kibbo Kift, meant generally personal items or sensitive subjects. As explained by Chapman cited in Craven's thesis, taboo subjects included religion and sex.³⁸ There was some ambiguity around taboo subjects. While the concept of taboo was personal and private, it was regularly commented upon by the members and the Council in the Kibbo Kift. Taboo subjects were ultimately considered taboo if they could not be discussed freely with non-members or children. The details of the religious and sexual taboos changed over time, likely reflecting the opinion and beliefs of the members.

³⁷ YMA/KK/3.

³⁸ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 147.

Figure 5.5.2: Ground Plan for Council Circle³⁹

Concepts of taboo were both a part of the camp itself and various structures in the camp, including the main Council Circle seen in *Figure 5.5.2*. Burning trash in the Council Fire as well as other individuals handling member-specific totems were considered taboo alongside religious, sexual, and political concepts.⁴⁰ A detailed diagram of the Council Circle “shows the formation of the Council Circle and the Tribal Camp, which [Hargrave] used successfully in [his] own camps”; Hargave claimed this was “modelled upon the Council

³⁹ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 162.

⁴⁰ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 147.

Circle of the Sioux, Blackfeet, Iroquois, and other primitive tribes".⁴¹ This formed the larger half-moon tribal training ground and camp.

The camp fire was the physical and spiritual centre of Kibbo Kift life. Children could become involved with the Council by passing Council Tests, which allowed them to gain roles such as the Keeper of the Council Fire. Being involved with the Council by holding a position changed what ceremonial garb the child would be able to wear and allowed them to use specialised signs, such as placing "The Sign of the Council Fire on a staff on the left-hand side of his tent door".⁴² The staff outside of the individual's tent acted as a marker identifying the individual and any important roles they held within the Kibbo Kift. The staff therefore designated the individual Kinsman or woman to the entire camp and would make their location available to those individuals who knew the specific signs. This mixed the role of the member with their personal, private space in their tent, much like putting a shop sign outside of one's own home.

While the Kibbo Kift camp remained closely based on Hargrave's initial layouts in *The Great War Brings It Home*, the philosophy and spiritual life of the Kibbo Kift was to be adapted by other members throughout the organisation's existence. Alan C. Garrad was particularly interested in achieving "the Oneness of Life" through application of Kibbo Kift camping and philosophy and was an active member of the Kibbo Kift until 1926.⁴³ He served as Chief Tallykeeper, a Kin Council role similar to a treasurer, and contributed a series of articles to *The Nomad*, the primary internal magazine of the Kibbo Kift that ran from 1924 to 1925, on Kibbo Kift life, the roof tree, and gender roles. Garrad's logbook for the local Kibbo

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 160.

⁴² *ibid.*, p. 176.

⁴³ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 158.

Kift group he ran, Sadhana Lodge, offered a more in-depth look into the evolving symbolism of the Council Fire. The lighting of the fire began with a chant by the Keeper of the Council Fire:

Light the Council Fire oh Guardian!
Keeper of the Fire light your fire,
Let the smoke of its wisdom curl around us,
Make the spark that lives for ever,
The spark is in our hearts.⁴⁴

This first verse revealed that the Council Fire represented the passion and wisdom of the Kibbo Kift. The chant would later go on to reveal that the Council Fire was representative of the very life of the Kibbo Kift and that keeping it alive was central to the tribe's continued vitality and education. The wisdom, which was carried from the fire by the smoke, represented communication of knowledge from the fire to those gathered around the fire. Gathering around the Council Fire brought the tribe physically together. The lighting of the Council Fire was a commonly shared ceremony. It was, however, an implicitly masculine symbol as the lighter was always described a young boy. Garrad's fire was an example of a local group's adaptation of Kibbo Kift philosophy. It represented connection to the life of the larger body of Kibbo Kift members as well as local fraternity and the individual search for wisdom.

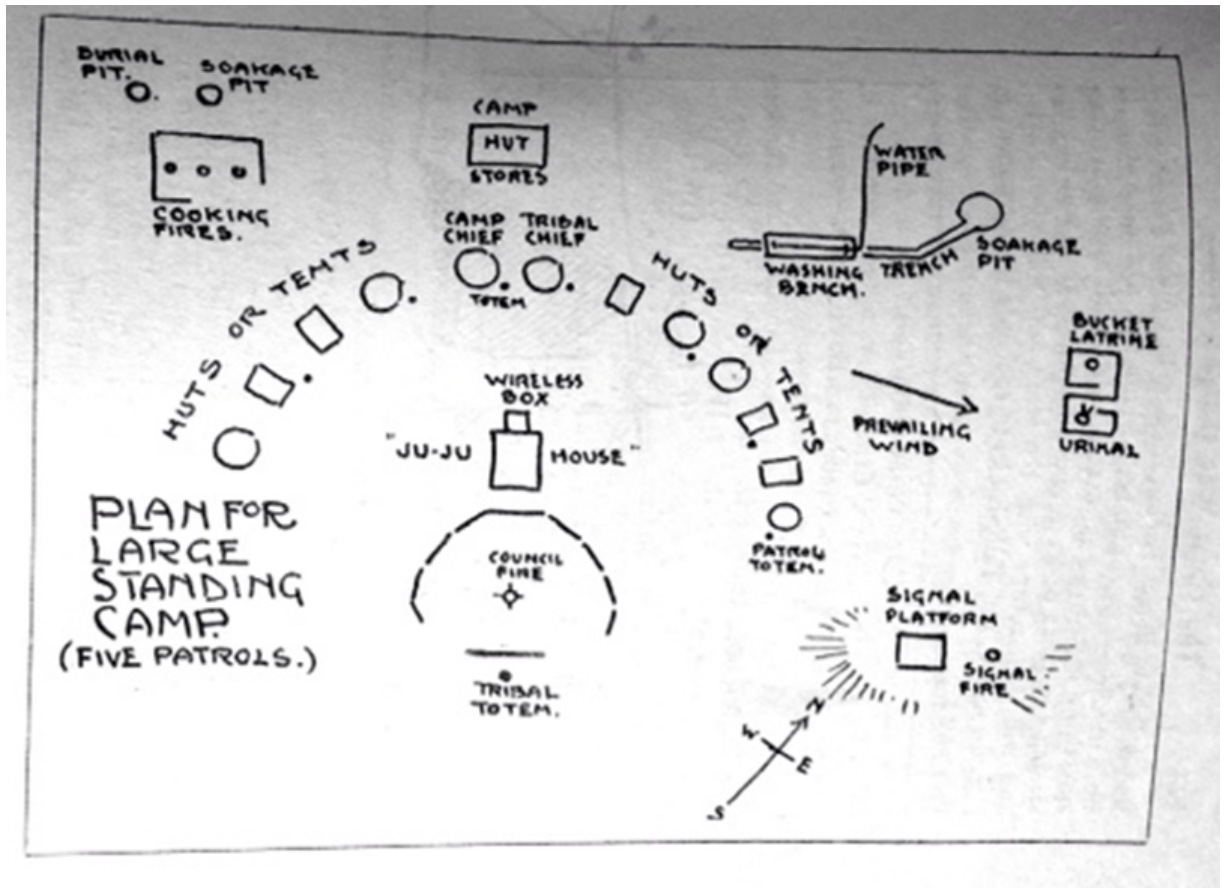
Garrad's Sadhana lodge had a life of its own within the larger organisation of the Kibbo Kift. Garrad developed iconography based on principles of art, science, and philosophy and integrated Hargrave's ideology of the roof tree family to support these principles.⁴⁵ The

⁴⁴ YMA/KK/6, p. 4.

⁴⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/C4.7.2.

roof tree would form the base for fostering enlightenment through studies of art, science, and philosophy, which would change the human race itself. The Sadhana lodge was likely one of the few local Kibbo Kift groups that would have been able to utilise the Plan for Large Standing Camp, pictured in *Figure 5.5.3* below.

*Figure 5.5.3: Plan for Large Standing Camp*⁴⁶



The large standing camp took into account irrigation for washing, and it had a signal fire separate from the main camp fire. This camp would be able to be used for an extended period of time and had methods of external communication via the signal fire and a radio wireless box, which was located in the “Ju-Ju House”. In this set up, the Camp Chief and Tribal Chief were separate individuals and had tents at the top of the tent crest. This afforded them the best

⁴⁶ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 193.

view of the camp activities and assured they were never removed from duty and ability to observe the camp. The space of the camp was constantly supervised and the only fully private space was inside individual members' tents.

Garrad further developed the philosophical ideas of the roof tree and gender within the Kibbo Kift with a series of articles published in *The Nomad*. The first article addressed “The Roof-Trees, or Family Unit” and their formation and maintenance. The roof tree was the Kibbo Kift family structure and basis for local networks of members. It consisted of minimally two individuals, an adult male and female; the number of people expanded based on the number of the couple’s offspring. Ideally, the roof tree envisioned the family unit as a self-sustaining and contained community that had a permanent outdoors camp.⁴⁷ The married man and woman would work together to provide and to educate any children they had. Once children reached adulthood, boys were expected to become lone Kinsmen and to seek to prove themselves as independent of their roof tree. This was done through a series of tests that engaged the body, mind, and spirit. These were covered in *The Great War Brings It Home* and included the Qualifications of the Tribal Tests, which required various tests of physical fitness as well as keeping a logbook, camping out for a week on his own, and keeping silent for ten hours.⁴⁸ Upon finding a woman agreeable to marriage, the formerly lone Kinsman would petition to establish a new roof tree. Once married, the Kinsman and Kinswoman would begin the cycle again.

The roof tree was the utopian family of the early, idealistic Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. The most basic local network in the Kibbo Kift, it was also “the most important unit in

⁴⁷ YMA/KK/166A, January 1924, p. 89.

⁴⁸ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, pp. 198-214.

establishing and continuing the ideals and traditions of the Kibbo Kift".⁴⁹ Lone Kinsmen were encouraged not to remain alone but to develop connections through camping with other local Kinsmen or through communicating via letter or the personal sections in Kibbo Kift publications. Hargrave's idea of redoing the structure of the family unit by both giving the individual roof tree greater autonomy and necessitating wider community involvement to establish or dissolve roof trees was closely related to utopian world building. The roof tree internal structure, however, maintained traditional gender divisions and expectations and kept the domestic space as a separate sphere from the public camp. This seemingly contradictory nature of the roof tree concept was closely related to post-war anxieties around changing family units and family planning. The roof tree kept the traditional heterosexual structure. It ultimately prioritised adult male authority; only grown Kinsmen could found a new roof tree. The role of the Kinswoman remained centred around the concepts of wife and mother. Despite the discussion of motherhood, the Kinswoman was a largely sexless and formless being due to her lack of discussion in comparison to the Kinsman to whom Hargrave prescribed many tests and duties.

The roof tree's structure and divisions of gender roles in the Kibbo Kift were further elaborated upon in the rest of Gerard's articles for *The Nomad*. While the roof tree was not put into extensive practise within the Kibbo Kift, the ideology of an outdoors organization with a central family component captured the attention of Garrad. The roof tree family unit formed the basis for Kibbo Kift society and would be the roots of the proverbial tree that would sprout in the revitalised world. Garrad's discussion of the roof tree attempted to resolve some of the contradictions in Hargrave's ideas. While Hargrave's ideas form the basis for Kibbo Kift philosophy, Garrad aimed to be more practical and to address women as well as men by

⁴⁹ YMA/KK/166A, January 1924, p. 89.

presenting articles that suggested activities and goals for girls and women participating in the organisation.

Garrad's article series extrapolated these activities and aims from both his own experience as head of Sadhana Lodge and from Hargrave's previous work in camping layouts and activities where the prescriptive focus had been primarily on developing character in boys and men. Although the ideas of some sort of manliness, steadfastness, and courage remained in this new tribal training brotherhood, Hargrave divorced it from militarism but maintained and promoted male camaraderie. Hargrave also promoted a unique stance on male independence. This loneliness and the lone Kinsman himself were uniquely situated to practise camping, scouting, and woodcraft without outside influences. He aimed to know himself inside and out and therefore could improve himself on his own. He could choose and build his own connections and seek spiritual enlightenment as he saw fit. For men, the Kibbo Kift and tribal training lifestyle offered both individuality and masculine solidarity; it was a brotherhood without the constant necessity of others. The authority of others was optional. In this way, Kibbo Kift masculinity was subversive to what it perceived as the hegemonic norm. A singular Kinsman did not have to adhere to any physically present authority. A Kinsman was the governor of himself. This recalled popular mythical figures, particularly Robin Hood, whom was often used as both a mythological figure and the ideal Kinsman, on which several songs in the Kibbo Kift and the Kin habit were based.⁵⁰ Through recognisable mythical figures like Robin Hood, the lone Kinsman was encouraged to challenge and overcome existing systems to create something new and better than before. In relation to the organisation, however, the Kinsman still had to establish themselves in the organisational hierarchy through tests and social observation in the larger camps. The subversive elements of

⁵⁰ This will be returned to later in this chapter.

Kibbo Kift masculinity became incorporated into the camp, which, like the roof tree, prioritised male authority.

Training of girls was originally expressed explicitly as something that should occur just as rigorously as the training of boys. Hargrave proclaimed that so long as “girls [were trained] upon the same principle” as boys, there was “no danger” of physical and racial degeneration.⁵¹ He quickly noted, however, that “*unless the girls of the race are given a training based upon the same ideal of health and hardihood we shall find that all the training given to the boys is of no avail*”.⁵² At the same time, “the physical and mental construction of the girl is fundamentally different from the boy” and had to be accounted for in training and camp activities.⁵³ What this fundamental difference was exactly was not specified, leaving the division between the male and female sexes the only known cause.⁵⁴ There were to be differences between training of boys and girls in the Kibbo Kift as “any system which tries to train both sexes on exactly the same lines is doomed to failure in the long run, simply because such a course is unnatural and opposed to instinct”.⁵⁵ Discussing training for girls detracted from the cohesiveness of Hargrave's overall argument at this point. He stated that “it is impossible in this book to enter into the detail of training the girls, nor is the writer competent to such a task—suffice it to say that the training of the girls should *not* be the same as for the boys”.⁵⁶ Hargrave suggested that the Campfire Girls of Great Britain, the Girl Guides, and the

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 294.

⁵² *ibid.* italicisation as in original text.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 295.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

Y.W.C.A. among ten other organisations should experiment with the tribal training system that he promoted to develop the best tribal training system for girls. Thus prescribed, Hargrave “[returned] to the boys”.⁵⁷ Therefore, the role of girls and women in the nascent Kindred of the Kibbo Kift was left largely undefined.

The primary exception to this was the topic of motherhood. Because they were viewed as the opposite sex and in need of tribal training, girls and women were defined in Hargrave's writing that their role was to be future mothers. Hargrave declared that “a man should marry a healthy woman, so that there may be healthy children. To be healthy, a woman must live as much as possible out of doors”.⁵⁸ Hargrave's early writings on women in *The Great War Brings It Home* also already featured some of the essentialist views on gender that would become clearer over the course of the 1920s. Already boys and girls were “fundamentally different” with women as ‘other’.⁵⁹ The roles and space of women in Hargrave's tribal training were nebulous and continued to be a rapidly changing area of the philosophy and practise of the early Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. In comparison to separate spheres of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides at the time, Hargrave's tribal training appeared to offer a different and co-educational outdoors experience that addressed not just the training of children's bodies but also the shaping of their and adults' places in the family structure of the roof tree. Despite the comparative ambiguity of feminine activities and space, girls and women were to be included in the Kibbo Kift, trained “from childhood on a simple and hardy system”.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 366.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 295.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 364.

Garrad's article series on the roof tree and gendered roles in the Kibbo Kift sought to give definition and structure to Hargrave's original outline for training youth. The second article in the series addressed "The Boy (10 to 18-21)", and continued the emphasis on developing independence, even when part of a tribe or local group. The Tribal Tests from *The Great War Brings It Home* remained the same although they were renamed the Nine Tests of Initiation. Directly addressing boys in groups, the article reminds them to "get to work yourselves. Try to develop your own personality and character. Think for yourself."⁶¹ These qualities of independence were intrinsically connected to boys' capacity throughout their lives as they were reminded that "you are never too old to learn".⁶² Boys were encouraged to camp out regardless of whether they had adult supervision and to seek out more information from Hargrave's scouting and woodcraft writing. Keeping a logbook was particularly important and appeared to be just as much an exercise in self-discipline as in record-keeping. In general, Garrad was more focused on the training of the mind than of the body. Hargrave originally encouraged nakedness or near-nakedness. It was essential to the healthy development of boys as "the three essentials of health are—Fresh Air, Cold Water, and Sunlight. [...] The boys of a Woodcraft Camp run on the lines I have tried to outline, unknowingly develop powerful lungs, a clean sunburnt skin, and graceful limbs."⁶³ Hargrave opined that "the man who has never felt the sunlight on his naked body, or the ice-cold morning dew drenching his naked feet at sunrise—has never lived".⁶⁴ Garrad did not repeat this recommendation but also did not reject it outright, leaving the naked body as a more ambiguous figure.

⁶¹ YMA/KK/166A, February 1924, p. 102.

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 103.

⁶³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 281.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

The third article addressed “The Girl (10 to 18-21)”. Personal health and menstruation were the most important topics in the article, the first emphasising cleanliness and loose clothing. Instruction regarding hygiene during menstruation was set as the task of the girl’s mother, noting “many mothers neglect their duty to their daughters in this respect”.⁶⁵ A girl, who was well-informed and appropriately trained, would also be expected to work; she should additionally want to work, despite outside pressures. These pressures included those from parents who were not part of the Kibbo Kift as well as any men who may be interested in her. Gerard bluntly asserted that “women can work; leave the men to weep if they want to”.⁶⁶ What sort of work a girl should aspire to was, however, not defined. A girl could also be “a Lone Kinsman” and was encouraged to be, so long as she kept a smile on her face.⁶⁷ The smile as well as her own logbook were exercises in self-discipline and would prepare her for perseverance in her future as “the girl to-day is the mother of the future. The children of the Roof Tree must have parents trained in the K.K.”⁶⁸ This last statement was particularly important. Girls were being trained to be mothers. Equally, however, boys were being trained to be fathers. The responsibility of the future children of roof trees was not solely of the Kinswoman but also of the Kinsman. Although the boy and girl were addressed in separate articles and therefore their gender roles kept separate, their training was of equal importance.

This point transitioned into Garrad’s fourth article in the series entitled “The Woman”, which was published in the April 1924 edition. This addressed the grown Kinswoman and prescribed specific and often domestic duties to her. Food transport and safety fell into her

⁶⁵ YMA/KK/166A, March 1924, p. 116.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

domain, and “there is excellent opportunity for some K.K. woman to produce the ideal camp menu” through experience in cooking outdoors.⁶⁹ Kinswomen were encouraged to found “a tribe of K.K. girls” with Ruth Clark's *Camp Fire Training for Girls* as a possible reference manual. By the time she reached adulthood:

A K.K. Girl should have trained herself or have been trained for initiation, before she is 21. Modern civilisation tends to retard development of both sexes, and thus it is known that through the present criminal neglect, or cowardice, or mock modesty of parents, many girls arrive at the age of initiation and are totally ignorant of the elementary facts of life.⁷⁰

The blame on mothers for a daughter's poor education in the previous article reoccurred here, and it had been expanded implicitly to fathers as well. Here the discussion turned again to sex and sex differences, referencing Havelock Ellis, a member of the Kibbo Kift's honorary Advisory Council, and maintaining that girls and boys had some vital differences that needed to be maintained. Education in these differences would help to prevent blurring between sexes. Kinswomen were opposite of Kinsmen, both in philosophical concept and in their appropriate roles as cooks, educators, mothers, and maintainers of the camp. These roles were valued in the Kibbo Kift: “K.K. Women, yours is a great and noble task; do not allow worldly considerations to impede or hinder your progress”.⁷¹ The independence encouraged for the girl and even the boy did not, however, continue into adulthood for the Kinswoman once she formed a roof tree with a Kinsman. While Garrad did not explicitly discuss it, the Kinswoman would have been observed in camps by the eventually all-male Kin Council, and her role as

⁶⁹ YMA/KK/166A, April 1924, p. 128.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 129.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 130.

mother situated her in the domestic life of camp. It offered no prescription for external, worldly roles outwith the main campsite.

In the next month's article on "The K.K. Man", however, Kinsmen continued to be encouraged to be independent individuals. The phrase "develop personality and character" was repeated again in this article; a Kinsman's education continued through his life.⁷² Fatherhood was also now an option, so long as the Kinsman was trained and educated as "the man, as well as the woman, must have sound knowledge and good training for parenthood before marriage".⁷³ There were both mythical and eugenic allusions in this passage. Garrad, who ran his Sadhana lodge with imagery focused around the regenerative combination of Art, Science, and Philosophy, wrote this into his concept of Kibbo Kift fatherhood by saying that this demonstrated that "the Blood-Line of the Kibbo Kift taking its natural evolutionary course—and the Wheel of K.K. (i.e. Life) makes yet another revolution towards the completion of the Great Work. It is the Great Prayer Wheel, formed of Flesh and Blood".⁷⁴ There seemed to be two paths implied under this passage. There was the path of fatherhood and reproduction, of producing offspring in the roof tree to continue the bloodline. There was also a second path, which was to "'take on' some special work for the Kindred".⁷⁵ This work would last for about three years and would show that the Kinsman had contributed "a hand in the building of the Temple".⁷⁶ The language here was religious, and Gerard suggested that this be done in shifts of three-year men, much like religious persons do pilgrimage. This mix

⁷² YMA/KK/166A, May 1924, p. 140.

⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 141.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

of eugenic and religious language continued from Hargrave's own in *The Great War Brings It Home*. Hargrave opined that “a man or woman trained from childhood to respect and care for the body and to honour the Blood-line will think twice before marrying into inferior or 'less improved' lines”.⁷⁷ Building the new bloodline would “become a sacred duty to keep the Caste of Health and Hardihood from generation to generation”.⁷⁸ The roof tree was the family unit that would carry this new caste forward and, from this, “a new race will evolve”.⁷⁹

This neatly transitioned into the last article in the series on “Your Part in the Great Work”. Gerard states that the Great Work was “to connect your daily work to your K.K. Ideals; to do your duty as a citizen of the World State”.⁸⁰ Everyone was “bound in united effort to translate our sevenfold Covenant from lifeless print to living fact”.⁸¹ The Covenant, which members had to sign along with a Declaration when they joined the Kibbo Kift and outlined a vision for the Kibbo Kift world, was still not taking hold outside of and even to an extent within the Kibbo Kift itself. It was little more than a formal document, despite its aims to create a new world state. The Covenant contained two particular points of interest, which were the second point addressing the “health of Body, Mind and Spirit” and the fourth which iterated the importance of “the Woodcraft Family, or Roof Tree”.⁸² All of these points would contribute to the development of the fifth point, the “Disarmament of Nation – Brotherhood of

⁷⁷ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 365.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ YMA/KK/166A, June 1924, p. 151.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 21.

Man”.⁸³ The gender specific language of the fifth point asserted a masculine overtone to the Covenant whether intentionally or not. The Covenant had contained these points since the Kibbo Kift's founding, but, as demonstrated in Garrad's articles, there was a strong feeling that these points had been achieved in 1924.

Thus, Garrad's statement may be read as a criticism of the current form of the Kibbo Kift, calling for the organisation to focus more heavily upon the second and fourth points. The roof tree's domestic space was ostensibly held within the public space of the campsite, but the roles of the men, women, and children within these spaces overlapped as well as remained separate. While both Garrad and Hargrave had attempted to create a campsite where men and women maintained traditional gendered roles whilst participating in the coeducational camp structure and new family unit of the roof tree, the result was often contradictory. Performing gender in the Kibbo Kift was ultimately quite different from conceptual camping layouts and philosophical writings about the camp and the idealised life within it.

5.4 Totems and Signs

Creating a domestic space in the philosophy of the Kibbo Kift was just as important as the actual camping and family practise. The camp itself was a symbol of the Kibbo Kift's hopes and dreams, as much an imagined and idealised environment as one that was utilised in practise. No member of the Kibbo Kift was able to camp constantly and consistently; all lived and worked the majority of the time in houses rather than out of doors. Most members had jobs that necessitated them living in city centres, particularly London. Dedicated members who believed in the renewal that the Kibbo Kift dreamed of desired a way to take the camp with them even if they could not physically camp out. The intellectual life of the Kibbo Kift

⁸³ *ibid.*

was, therefore, an important part of its development and members' interaction with each other and the organisation's ideals. Various totems and signs that were used in the camp were taken with members and acted as symbols in daily life. It was therefore a very individual approach that had to be taken by members, not only in overall participation in Kibbo Kift activities but in how gender roles and gendered space were developed while the organisation was active in the 1920s.

Vera Chapman was a dedicated member who focused her participation in the Kibbo Kift on developing and distilling women's roles. This was what the *Hearth Fire*, the first Kibbo Kift women's publication, addressed. *Hearth Fire* ran from August 1926 to December 1926 and was edited by Vera Chapman. In this publication, she styled herself "Lavengri, Runewife at this time to the Lodge of the Lone Wigwams".⁸⁴ She explained the title of Runewife by claiming that "I look to myself as only the keeper of the 'Runes,' or secrets of the Lodge, and do not claim in any way to be 'Wise-wife' or Witch".⁸⁵ The first issue featured a cover with a single wigwam tent within which a single stick aflame with rising smoke could be seen. Over the wigwam, a shining star rose. This was Chapman's explicit artistic choice. Usually, the sun is placed over the scenes with a fire in Kibbo Kift symbolism. In contrast, the star indicated the lonely nature of the wigwam. The cover image emphasised "the fire of the K.K. burning alone if need be, shut in the walls of the tent but still bright".⁸⁶ This departed from the regular Kibbo Kift camp fire symbolism of the fire in two ways. Firstly, the camp fire was nearly always a gathering place with a masculine association with its lighting. Secondly, the camp fire was outdoors. Here, Chapman defined the fire as one that could burn

⁸⁴ YMA/KK/173C, August 1926, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

alone and within the confines of the tent. With the cover illustration, the fire was brought into the domestic space and given individual control. This also related Kinswomen, the target audience of the publication, to the usually masculine idea of loneliness in the Kibbo Kift. The Kinswoman, too, could camp out alone, day and night as implied by the star above the wigwam.

The timing of this publication reflected the major organisational and membership shift that occurred from 1924 to 1926. Chapman noted that there was need for female “solidarity” and hoped that the publication would help women create a dialogue within the Kibbo Kift.⁸⁷ To facilitate a dialogue between women in the Kibbo Kift, *Hearth Fire* served as both an informational and a women's networking publication. It had a section entitled “That We May Know Each Other” where profiles of members were featured in hopes of finding other like-minded women with whom to communicate. A typical profile contained the members' woodcraft name and various pieces of personal information; this included some proper names, home addresses, and individual hobbies. Through these details, members situated themselves in why they were interested in the organisation. Profiles addressed how individual members “joined K.K.” and the different circumstances of their participation.⁸⁸ Chapman, through *Hearth Fire*, did not explicitly use the word sisterhood, but a network of Kinswomen who knew basic personal information would be the foundation for a sense of female solidarity within the organisation. This would have also helped to connect lone Kinswomen to each other, to exchange ideas and perhaps assist in growing networks. While not explicitly stated, this implied that Chapman likely felt that the female role in the Kibbo Kift was uncertain.

⁸⁷ YMA/KK/173C, August 1926, p. 3.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 5.

This echoed Milnes' drafted speech discussed in the third chapter of this thesis regarding the place of women in the Kibbo Kift and the fact that no women sat on the Kin Council.

The second issue of *Hearth Fire* featured an article entitled "The Freedom for Women" written by Ann Devenish, who had joined the Kibbo Kift in 1926. In this article, Devenish argued that legislative power such as the right to vote was not what women needed to work towards. Rather, she called for women to "work together" and "when a woman has educated herself to think, she could be a tremendous power in the world".⁸⁹ Devenish envisioned how:

Women must strike out in another direction, entirely opposite of man. She must – a) Try and spend her time profitably to feed herself and the younger generation mentally and let man generally speaking feed her and her children physically; – or (b) The world must divide up to feed the younger generation mentally – for at present just a few people specialize in teaching and research. The majority spend their time in feeding and clothing the body.⁹⁰

Men were providers for the physical needs of women and children, and women were to be the educators. This would be achieved through the sexed division of labour, an issue that had preoccupied the Kibbo Kift since its inception. With men devoted to providing physical means of survival, women could devote their time to teaching and research instead of both sexes having to split their concentration between providing and preparing food and clothing. There was an obvious amount of elitism in this statement, referencing that "few people specialize in teaching and research".⁹¹ The implication was that from these people as well as

⁸⁹ YMA/KK/173C, December 1926, p. 2.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 4 (punctuation as in text).

⁹¹ *ibid.*

those who were physically fit, the younger generation would be fed and educated. Those in power had had to move beyond basic survival concerns.

To tackle this issue, Chapman outlined the five most important issues that needed to be addressed to bring women into positions of power without voting and public political involvement. These were iterated as “the Sun, Control of Birth, Food, Education, [and] Clothing”.⁹² Symbolically, the Sun was both literally the Sun in the sky and a figurative energy source. The Sun’s warmth and light should have been brought into the home as the first and most important step to restoring the home to a more natural state. The Sun may have been Chapman's attempt to create a distinctly feminine symbol in the Kibbo Kift. While fire had pre-existing masculine overtones, the Sun was neutral symbol that had major intellectual and spiritual significance. Although the wigwam on the front of the first issues of *Hearth Fire* was the light source, the Sun was a symbol with greater continuity within the Kibbo Kift. As the fire in general was masculine, the Sun as a provider of warmth, energy, and light would have been both equally important and complementary. In Kibbo Kift symbolism, the sun often appeared over the camp, which was represented by camp fire. Together with the evergreen tree and the tall K symbol, the Sun and camp fire are the most frequently occurring visual symbols. Indicating the Sun as the most basic source of women's power, Chapman made the case that, while separate from the camp fire and masculine power, women's power was as constant and central to the livelihood of the organisation.

Control of birth was considered the next step in giving women power in the Kibbo Kift lifestyle. Birth control and reproductive labour were interlinked issues in the Kibbo Kift; it was a women’s duty to control with whom and when they had children. Controlling the qualities of offspring was considered the responsibility of prospective parents. Hargrave had

⁹² *ibid.*, capitalisation as in text.

promoted a “natural system of racial reconstruction” in which “the education of the child begins long before it is born and while yet it is within the mother's womb”.⁹³ This system was governed partially by genetics but also by the mentality and focus of the mother. Referencing how women in Native American cultures envisioned qualities they wanted their children to have and isolated themselves from those they did not want to pass on while pregnant, Hargrave implied that women could and should influence the unborn child. He explained, in deeply eugenic terms, that:

certain inborn tendencies—both on the mother's line of descent and the father's—
which we call inherited tendencies; and it is largely in the power of the mother to
decide *which* class of tendencies, the harmful or the beneficial, shall arrive at fruition.
The fate of the child is in the balance.

[...] The future of the race depends upon the mental attitude as well as the physical
health of the mothers. The thoughts of the mother have a vast influence for good or
evil on the specialised material which goes to the making of brain and body.⁹⁴

Fate was directly in the hands of the mother in relation to her child, a prescribed duty that mirrored some Christian evangelical tracts of the mid-nineteenth century. Training the mother and making sure that the influence of the mother over future children was good was essential to preventing “evil” being passed down to her children. The development of the child after birth continued to be influenced by their parents and their environment. Most of this explanation was, however, made to be self-evident. Hargrave continued with the statement that “the parents—father and mother—are equally responsible for this birth; as they were for

⁹³ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 129.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

the first”.⁹⁵ The division of labour in this responsibility was not made immediately clear, and Hargrave’s discussion on the topic remained polemical and ill-defined.

Just as Garrad had dug deeper into Hargrave's initial ideas to develop the gendered roles of individuals in the Kibbo Kift and structure the roof tree family unit, Chapman expanded upon Hargrave's ideas of birth and put it into a prescriptive context. Chapman's methods were also distinctly class-aware and tied to popular science. Hargrave's concept of class was based on the physical capacity of men and women, and he tended to view poorer men and women as weaker physically. Chapman promoted modern birth control, opining that access to “it could: a) do away with the war which come about by overpopulation; b) do away with overcrowding in the poorer classes who are wanting knowledge of birth control”.⁹⁶ Chapman's ideology of class was connected to levels of income and population size, which had not been part of Hargrave's original model explicitly. Birth control, Chapman suggested, would prevent war and “overcrowding the poorer classes” by providing affordable access to education.⁹⁷ This conceptualisation of class was basic, but that was the point. This article served as an outline for sweeping social and cultural changes that Kibbo Kift could bring about.

The third step addressed food ranging from diet to how a woman was “a slave to the house, chiefly due to cooking”.⁹⁸ Chapman promoted a mainly vegetarian “fruitarian” diet rich in fruit, milk, and roots, arguing that the human body was evolved for such a diet and

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 132.

⁹⁶ YMA/KK/173C, December 1926, p. 5.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

referencing Herewood Carrington, a popular psychic investigator, *The Natural Food of Man*.⁹⁹

Changes to the general diet of the population, which meant that women spent less time in the kitchen, would free up women's time to address educating the younger generation. The fourth point on education was not expounded upon, but the fifth and final point on clothing posed questions presumably for open discussion concerned with how and how quickly fashion was changing, men's influence over women's fashion, and the cost of clothing. This fifth point circled back to the issue of education with the argument that:

Women must educate women. They must help each other. The women who have constructive brains and wish to think and use them for the good of the Universe must have time and a suitable environment. Married women must have time to work out sociological issues – for they have a different point of view from any other being.

They value life more than any other class of society.¹⁰⁰

Women were expected to influence society not in the legislature but in other spaces. Without being held back by constantly having to plan, provide, and prepare food and clothing, they would have time, money, and energy to focus and develop education of themselves and others. Married women, who had a husband who could provide the money and physical supplies, were best suited as they would have the most time to devote to education of others.

This education was not, however, to be politicised. In another article in the same month's *Hearth Fire*, Chapman proposed that “A Federation of Women” that was “non-political, outside politics” was the way forward for the betterment of women.¹⁰¹ United in their roles outside of the political realm, women would be able to “alter public opinion” as

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 6-7 (punctuation as in text).

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 7.

experts of subjects that lay out of men's expertise.¹⁰² *Hearth Fire* offered insight into the gendered interaction with Kibbo Kift spirituality through its symbolism and discussion of the Great Spirit. Friday was suggested as a day where recollection of the week's events should take place, and a Kinswoman "goes apart into the open air, if possible to a place set apart for a Hallowed Ground, where her Totem is set up. Here she greets with upraised hand the Great Spirit, the Sun, and the Totem".¹⁰³ Chapman went in depth at this point into how the hearth and its fire were symbols of the "ideal home" of the Kibbo Kift and the woman's domain.¹⁰⁴ This hearth was a domestic fire that was physically separate from the main Council Fire and was the duty of the Kinswoman to maintain it. By bringing the fire into the domestic space, the Kinswoman could establish a seat of power for herself. It was separate from the public and masculine duties of Kinsmen but remained part of the overall fire symbolism of the Kibbo Kift at large.

Hearth Fire ran for only these two issues, although it provided a rich and intriguing outline for Kinswomen to form a philosophical identity. In the wake of Hargrave's publishing of *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* in 1927, a new women's magazine publication started up called *The Distaff*. This magazine was also edited by Vera Chapman and named for a tool for holding unspun fibres such as wool and flax. The year-long break between *Hearth Fire* and *The Distaff* indicated that, while Chapman still had permission to run a Kibbo Kift women's publication, there was a necessary change in dialogue and stance. *The Distaff* received support and advertisement in the March 1928 issue of the main Kibbo Kift periodical edited by Hargrave, *Broadsheet*, which indicated that it would absorb the previous publication, *Hearth*

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 19.

Fire.¹⁰⁵ This advertisement occurred at the very bottom of the *Broadsheet's* member notice section, "Patteran," following the regular trend in *Broadsheet* to place items directly concerning women after all other information. Individual issues of *The Distaff* were 3d. and women could take out advertisements to sell their own handiwork and services for 6d. for three months, 9d. for six months, and a pound for twelve months. This would have continued Chapman's efforts to develop a communication network for Kinswomen and expanded it to help them generate personal income. Chapman would later comment to Craven that she understood following the 1927 Althing that "the world in general can't go camping and have fun until the battle was over".¹⁰⁶ Economic issues for women in the Kibbo Kift were part of that battle.

The first issue of *The Distaff* begins with a welcome greeting by Chapman and then some commentary upon the recent election. This immediately situated the publication as one that upheld the Kibbo Kift's at best ambivalent positions on feminism and the women's movement. Chapman opined, rather scathingly: "that precious vote, that some of us once made such a fuss about – what of it? Well, perhaps this much good may come of the women's franchise that having got a hold of the menfolk's silly toy, we may realise its worthlessness and expose it".¹⁰⁷ Overall, *The Distaff* published articles that re-articulated and expanded the stance that *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* had put forward. Chapman, although against feminist movements for women's political power, was not entirely against utilising language from women's movements and appealing to modern values. The "women's franchise"

¹⁰⁵ YMA/KK/168, *Broadsheet* no. 31 (March 1928), p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 196.

¹⁰⁷ YMA/KK/172C, July 1928, p. 1.

currently held some power, but it was the wrong, “silly” sort of power.¹⁰⁸ The women's focus should not be upon voting but rather exposing how the process was not working. As men were not going to give up democracy, women needed to in order to establish a new and better society. Women were opposite of men, equal in importance but different in their roles. A woman's role was to expose men's follies.

While this could be read as a subversive element to the *Kinswoman*, the intention was to argue that Kinswomen were complementary to Kinsmen. A member writing under the woodcraft name “Ronin,” contributed to *The Distaff* with an article series entitled “Sex Polarity in the Primitive”. This article presented a combination of the Kibbo Kift's enduring interest in primitivism combined with its evolving stance on race and gender. It argued against matriarchal societies where women held political power and against the idea of the role of women as mothers and therefore persons of veneration within society. Feminism was related to ignorance of the actual state of primitive societies in the following passage:

The feminist movement of pre-war days made use of this system of mother right, and imagined a primitive prehistoric state of affairs in which women were the important part of the race, and man occupied a very inferior position indeed. Full of respect, gratitude, and affect for the Great Mother, Woman the Child Creator, they were supposed to have been content to act as adoring guards and food-providers for the human goddesses among them.

There is no evidence in particular for this state of affairs.¹⁰⁹

The “mother right” in primitive society was alleged to be made up by first-wave feminists to place women in a place of supremacy, and those adhering to the idea were implicitly

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ YMA/KK/172C, December 1928, p. 3.

unbalancing the natural function of both men and women. Instead, Ronin proposed that “the ‘vital polarity’ of the sexes” should have been promoted.¹¹⁰ This polarity was the true nature of primitive societies and therefore the natural state of functional human society. This passage attempted to disprove modern thinking about gender and modern understanding of the past. Rather than women holding power in politics, spiritual practises, and reproduction whilst men were reduced to physical tasks, the argument of vital polarity was that men should take care of provisions and politics and women the preparation and division of provisions and support of men and children in the home. Essentially, the argument was for separate spheres. The November 1928 edition recommended *Feeding and Care of Baby* by Sir Frederic Truby King, who was a New Zealand Director of Child Welfare and founder of the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society.¹¹¹ This popular childcare book utilised eugenic science to instruct mothers on baby care, offering nutritional advice and advocating strict feeding and care routines to regulate the health of the baby. Angela Davis noted that this meant the mother’s time was “deemed valuable” but also placed the responsibility upon mothers to avoid spoiling their children and creating “flawed” adults.¹¹² Overall, *The Distaff*’s content and contributors attempted to balance older Kibbo Kift ideals of returning to what they imagined to be “primitive” society with supporting evidence taken from modern eugenic science and philosophical knowledge.

Although somewhat on the periphery, food and cooking was a recurring topic in *The Distaff*. Although the image of the hearth had been removed from the publication's name, the

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

¹¹² Angela Davis, *Modern Motherhood: Women and Family in England, 1945-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 136.

Kinswoman's domain remained around it. Cooking took place around the hearth and was a preoccupation for the maintenance of family and individual health. A recipe for steak and ale pudding by Winifred Tuckfield was printed in the November 1928 issue.¹¹³ The Yuletide issue printed the following month returned to this recipe, discussing the importance of recipe mastery rather than a massive repertoire of individual recipes. The household ritual of Yuletide was closely tied to food and its preparation around the hearth. Kinswomen were expected to take pride in doing the preparations themselves. Chapman expounded that they should "pity those who are content to buy all their mincemeat in bottles, their puddings in tins, their Christmas Cake by the pound from the baker's! Pity still more those who book their seats for Christmas dinner at a fashionable hotel—poor little rich people".¹¹⁴ Ironically, the annual Yuletide meeting of the Kibbo Kift was usually held indoors with booked seating. Additionally, the preparation of mincemeat, puddings, and Christmas cake were all highly labour-intensive and would have taken a full day for the cooking only, not counting the days and weeks spent checking on the ageing of the cake and the puddings. Mastery of the Yuletide spread reflected the Kibbo Kift's requirements of personal time as well as at least a modest disposable income.

As careful examination of the women's magazines of the Kibbo Kift demonstrated, gender roles became increasingly prescriptive as the 1920s progressed. By fulfilling roles related to food and children and advocating giving up the vote, Chapman and "Ronin" placed Kinswomen within Hargrave's vision of an anti-feminist primitivism. This appeared to have coincided with a growing membership of teachers and later social credit supporters although it did not notably change the gender ratio of paying members. The increasing concentration on

¹¹³ *ibid.*, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ YMA/KK/172C, December 1928, p. 2.

social credit and economic policy had increased its operation costs. The changes affected philosophy and the overall cost of being a member as well as the clothing of the organisation. The Kin habit was officially divided between male and female habits and ceremonial costumes became more complex. These costumes and habits were the most performative aspects of the Kibbo Kift, visually striking to outsiders and deeply tied to the internal mythology of the organisation.

5.4 Kin Costume and Habits

Clothing was an important part of the Kibbo Kift's lifestyle, easily distinguishable from the fashion seen in the contemporary clothing industry and urban centres. Creating distinctive clothing had been part of the renewed environment from *The Great War Brings It Home*. Suggested designs of costumes such as the ceremonial garb of the council and the Keeper of the Council Fire saw their first iterations in the book. Hargrave also provided multiple illustrations of variations of the Boy Scout uniform for appropriate boys' wear, which would evolve into the basic Kin habit. Women's garb, for the general habit and the ceremonial costume, was not supposed to be exactly the same as that of men. While Hargrave did not prescribe feminised versions of ceremonial wear, he implied and promoted some existing examples of what could be appropriate regular women's wear. Using Vancouver's Y.W.C.A. as an example, Hargrave cited that "the girls wear 'bloomers,' 'middies,' and 'sneakers.' The 'middies' are waistless sailor blouses of a kind we do not see in England, and the appropriately named 'sneakers' are noiseless soft shoes".¹¹⁵ Clothing should be practical and suited for the outdoors. Hair was also meant to be practical, as Hargrave took a jab at "You modern girls who 'bob' your curls/And take your B.Sc.s" in an August 1922 poem in Kibbo Kift magazine,

¹¹⁵ Hargrave, *The Great War Brings It Home*, p. 71.

The Mark.¹¹⁶ The extent of female education in university was explicitly viewed as less desirable than the possibility of education in the outdoors. In some ways, this statement in 1922 already reflected a distain for contemporary feminine roles; this distain would grow over the course of the 1920s in Hargrave's writing and within the official writing of the Kibbo Kift itself.

The early version of the Kin habit was almost exclusively masculine in its iconography. Originally based on the Boy Scouts uniform, the Kin habit evolved further as it drew from medieval iconography, specifically from popular images of Robin Hood, portrayed in the forest in green and a hooded cloak. Robin Hood was considered to be the primeval Kinsman and was the emblem for the organisation throughout most of the 1920s, acting as both a role model and as a call sign in hiking songs such as "The Archer's Song".¹¹⁷ The standard Kin habit was a "Lincoln green" with durable shoes, belted tunic, and hooded cloak.¹¹⁸ The hooded cloak also referenced Piers Plowman, whose hard work was related to the foundational Kibbo Kift ideology of "Food, Warmth and Shelter".¹¹⁹ The habit had shorts for the summer with knee-high socks, and long trousers to be tucked into boots for the winter. It did not include a hat; rather, the hood of the cloak should have provided sufficient covering. The habit was often supplemented with walking sticks for more difficult or wet terrain, and some of these walking sticks were carved by the individual member.¹²⁰ These habits were meant, above all, to be practical and functional for outdoors wear. Differentiating the habits

¹¹⁶ YMA/KK/165, August 1922.

¹¹⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/B4, 3.3, transcript of "The Archer's Song", p. 1.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/B4, 3.3, transcript of "Piers the Plowman".

¹²⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/F.37.1.

between men and women did not change their function; rather, it was meant to make the different sexes obvious in identity.

The women's habit was a joint effort of Kathleen Milnes, Joyce Reason, and Muriel Gray with assistance from Angus McBean, who provided fabric samples.¹²¹ The colouring and function of the habit remained the same as the men's, a forest green made from warm, durable fabric. It included the hiking pack and optional walking stick. One of the features that the female habit had that the male did not was a hat.¹²² It was a fitted woollen hat with ear flaps that could be worn pinned up or down depending on the weather. This hat, as well as being functional, also made Kinswomen immediately identifiable from men in Kibbo Kift art and iconography after the female kin habit was implemented in 1927. Pictures of hikes show that the female habit could also be supplemented with walking sticks and the addition of a hooded cloak for cold and inclement weather.

The Kin habits were the most common iconography and publicly photographed costumes of the Kibbo Kift. In reality, there was a great variety of clothing worn by members of the Kibbo Kift that can be seen in members' private photos. Cecil Paul-Jones' photo album covered camps and the Althings of 1926, 1927, and 1928; it therefore featured men and women in a mixture of clothing.¹²³ There is a photo of Hargrave in a knitted sweater with the White Fox face sewn into the breast. There are also a couple photos of Paul-Jones dressed only in a loin-cloth, one photographed from behind with other men in a chorus and a couple of others while acting for Garrad in "morning exercises". There are several pictures of Angus McBean also in a loin-cloth as well as several photos of Ruth Clark in a cupped, brassiere top

¹²¹ YMA/KK/98, loose fabric scraps.

¹²² MOL/SWHC/L198/B.12.2.

¹²³ MOL/SWHC/L198/H, Cecil Paul-Jones photo album.

and short skirt. The same brassiere top is later shown worn by Milnes along with a decorated skirt. These pictures mainly take place in the summer at the Althing, and it does not appear that the clothing choices were considered out of place. The public presentation of the Kibbo Kift was far more controlled than the private presentation, and members had both creative and personal agency over their costume within the private sphere of the camp.

The camp remained, therefore, both a public and a private space. Members with Kin Council positions had special tabard coats worn over a standard habit which carried the sign of the wearer's positions in the middle of the breast. These tabards were likely based on those of medieval knights, which were short-sleeved coats “emblazoned on the front, back, and sleeves with his armorial bearings”.¹²⁴ Instead of armorial bearings, the Kin Council tabards were decorated with various signs that signified their specialised roles. The tabard of the Chief Tallykeeper was tan and had the circular sign of the office sewn onto the breast.¹²⁵ There were also specialised tabards for members who were not on the Kin Council but who were fulfilling important ceremonial roles. The four men who carried the Great Mark, a wooden carving of a Kinsman holding up the Mark of the Kibbo Kift, on its ceremonial stand at the beginning of major ceremonies wore tabards in forest green with a large K down the front of the tabard.¹²⁶ All of these specialised tabards and their signs created an internal language in the Kibbo Kift, which necessitated knowledge of the mythology and intellectual thought of the organisation to understand the roles of those who wore them and ceremonial goings on.

Individual adult members who held council and specialised positions also had

¹²⁴ “tabard, n.” *OED Online*. June 2015. Oxford University Press.

<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/196736>

¹²⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/A.2.2.

¹²⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/F.11.

additional costumes that related to their woodcraft names. These costumes were far more elaborate than the regular habit and tabards and included intricate designs that represented both positions held within the organisation and individual member's totems.¹²⁷ The colours of ceremonial robes were rich and bright, and the designs reflected the individual member's personal totem and aesthetic. Robes would have also carried patches that indicated Council and specialised roles held by the individual member. To a certain extent, these ceremonial robes were transformative, giving the individual wearer the ability to become their woodcraft name and to physically become the special, woodcraft identity that they had forged within the Kibbo Kift. Unlike the Kin habits, which were worn out on hikes or at demonstrations in London, the ceremonial robes were worn almost exclusively in the camp. Hargrave's robes were "a brilliant white" and were "lined with regal purple".¹²⁸ Pictures show that his ceremonial robe flowed out behind him when he moved, and it may have been worn with a full white fox mask.¹²⁹

Perhaps the most complete surviving example is Kathleen Milnes' ceremonial garb. It consisted primarily of a blue, foot-length hooded cloak on which she painted the black outline of feathers.¹³⁰ The sleeves of the cloak were unique to Milnes' ceremonial garb. When extended, the sleeves gave the impression of wings. The cloak itself was lined with a gold fabric. On Milnes, the cloak would have given the impression that she was a Blue Falcon, the woodcraft name she was known by within the Kibbo Kift. This effect would have been increased if she wore the headband that was shaped like the beak and had the eyes of the

¹²⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/E.8.4.

¹²⁸ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 143.

¹²⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/H, Cecil Paul-Jones photo album.

¹³⁰ MOL/SWHC/L198/A.9.1.

falcon.¹³¹ This headband was made of blue fabric with the details of the falcon painted on. The beak of the falcon extended forward, and there were bright green beads attached to the sides of the headband that would have hung down over the Milnes' ears and to her shoulders. Milnes' ceremonial robes were not only personal in their construction and symbolism, but they were also highly performative. When publicly handling the Kinlog, Milnes added to her ceremonial robes a white glove decorated with the double K sign of the Kibbo Kift on the hand that turned pages.¹³² Milnes continued to wear her robes and the ceremonial glove after the Kibbo Kift had transformed into the Green Shirts when she handled the Kinlog, which was maintained through the early 1940s when Milnes herself passed away. Milnes' costume was itself a legacy of the Kibbo Kift just as much as the Kinlog was.

The Kibbo Kift's approach to colour in garments had lasting influence on at least one member who left as the organisation moved further towards social credit. Roland Berrill, who would eventually found Mensa in the 1940s, was involved with the Kibbo Kift from the mid-1920s until 1929. After leaving the Kibbo Kift, Roland Berrill joined the Men's Dress Reform Party. This party, as Joanna Bourke described, viewed male "dress reform [as] necessary not only for the sake of enhancing masculine beauty, but also to prevent the further degeneration of the 'British race'".¹³³ Through reforming the aesthetic of modern men's clothing to be less restrictive and to have more personal expression, "a new generation of men would rise from the ashes of war: elitist, rather than democratic; masculine, without any taint of femininity;

¹³¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/G.13.2.

¹³² *ibid.*

¹³³ Joanna Bourke, "The Great Male Renunciation: Men's Dress Reform in Inter-War Britain." *Journal of Design History* 9, no. 1 (1996): 23-33, p. 23.

beautiful, not deformed".¹³⁴ The medieval tones of the Kibbo Kift's visual aesthetics and mythological ideology were echoed in the movement. Whether intentional or not, the Men's Dress Reform Party and the Kibbo Kift spoke to a similar audience, specifically men who were dissatisfied with their period's expectations and gendered aesthetics. From the aesthetic point, the Men's Dress Reform Party was a visual and philosophical successor to the Kibbo Kift at least for Roland Berrill.

Within the Kibbo Kift itself, some parts of the costumes and habits would survive in the Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party into the mid-1930s. Milnes was allowed to wear her ceremonial robes when publicly presenting and handling the Kinlog, continuing to invoke the mythological ideas that had formed the basis of the organisation in the 1920s. A number of members still went out camping together, and the tradition of the Althing continued as a general meeting. The founding ideology of the Kibbo Kift was, however, gradually phased out over the course of the 1930s, although some symbolism and internal discussion between members who continued with the organisation remained. The roof tree family unit and extensive symbolism of the camp fire faded out; the roof tree in particular had been fading out of focus since 1924 to make room for social credit. Members who remained in the Green Shirts and later the Social Credit Party were those who agreed that a new economic policy had to come first before they could return to the fun of camping and the activities they had enjoyed as members of the Kibbo Kift. Those who had left in 1924 with the Brockley Thing had formed the Woodcraft Folk, which kept some of the iconography of the Kibbo Kift and continued to evolve into a youth organisation in its own right separate of the changes taking place in the Kibbo Kift.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 24.

The constantly shifting focus of the Kibbo Kift gendered performance within the organisation was never stable. A single ideology was never comprehensively developed and implemented. In mapping gender in the Kibbo Kift, what is revealed is that the organisation was inconsistent in its conceptualisation and practise, but there was a gradual shift towards more conservative views of gender. Ideas revolving around domesticity and family became increasingly conservative. While there had been room for different or varied gender roles in the ambiguity of the early Kibbo Kift, the coeducational structure of the organisation did not lend itself to changes in how gender was viewed and performed. The outdoors setting of the public and domestic spheres was the only firm difference as even the habit and costume of the organisation became increasingly gendered over the course of the 1920s. The “anti-feminist feeling” that Milnes’ identified in her draft speech in 1927 was very much real.¹³⁵ The Kibbo Kift upheld anti-feminist masculine and feminine roles as it began to move forward towards the organisation-wide transformation in January 1932 into the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit.

5.5 Conclusions

The public and domestic spaces of the Kibbo Kift were not wholly separate spheres. The camp itself was a dual space, public to the Kindred but largely private to those outside of the organisation. The domestic space of the tent automatically interacted with the public space of the camp, the tent flaps facing the Council Circle and those sitting in the Council Circle able to look in on domestic goings-on. Additionally, members holding positions on the Council took their positions' symbols into the domestic space, placing signs and sigils on their personal totem and staff. This contributed to ambiguity of camp space, and the Kibbo Kift

¹³⁵ YMA/KK/101, Milnes’ 1927 speech draft.

continuously struggled to articulate gender roles. Latter attempts to construct gendered space became increasingly essentialist, reflecting the gender ideals of members like Hargrave and Chapman. The public and domestic ideology of the Kindred remained coeducational but became separate in practise and performance. This was ultimately down to increasing social conservatism within the organisation, as reflected in Chapman and Hargrave's writings, and the growing prominence of political promotion by the Kibbo Kift for social credit. Examining the ultimately failed dreams of the Kindred gives insight on not only contemporary ideas of gender roles and domestic space but also a new perspective on backlash against feminism in the 1920s middle class. The Kindred was against economic and social changes to industry and education but also came to protest against non-traditional gender roles. At the same time, it created a non-traditional domestic space within which men and women were able to move between certain activities around the hearth and within the camp. Gender was, however, increasingly regulated by the evolution of the Kin Habit and the development of a separate female habit in the latter half of the 1920s.

By the end of the 1920s, the Kibbo Kift's ideas about gender firmly envisioned men and women as separate yet complementary. There was still an amount of ambiguity regarding the space in which men and women inhabited. In the imagined world of the Kibbo Kift, women tended the hearth and did not need to exercise the right to vote. A largely imagined domestic sphere existed around the hearth, where cooking, raising children, and education of the young occurred. In reality, though, this domestic sphere did not replace the middle-class home that most members originated from. None of the members of the Kibbo Kift camped outdoors all the time with most needing to maintain jobs in industry as teachers, illustrators, and writers. The opportunities to perform the lifestyle of the Kibbo Kift at annual camping events like the Althing and Easter Hike were generally short-lived and restricted to the spring and summer months by the weather. The theories and lifestyle of the Kibbo Kift remained

primarily theoretical, reflected upon extensively in published materials but limited in its actual performance and public appeal. The new domestic space of the hearth and the re-establishment of separate spheres free of feminism's effects did not actually take place. The Kibbo Kift could not go backwards to a more primitive time any more than it could meaningfully affect the future. It was a contemporary iteration of rapidly changing internal ideology and individual members' hopes and anxieties. While most of the primitivism and regenerative philosophical life of the Kibbo Kift did not survive, its iconography and some of its costumes did.

The next chapter will examine the legacy of the Kibbo Kift. It will discuss what of the philosophical and performative ideals of the organisation survived in its successor organisations. It will also examine the Woodcraft Folk, which formed in late 1924 following the Brockley Thing, and the Douglas Social Credit groups formed after C.H. Douglas disassociated himself from the SCP.

Chapter 6

Legacies of the Kindred of the Kibbo

Kift

6.1 “Organisational Adjustments”: The Transformation of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift into Something Completely Different?

In January 1932, the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift made official the transformation into what was called the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit. The letterhead changed for internal communication as did the main news publication *Broadsheet*. The organisation’s former primitive mythology and outdoors camping lifestyle was exchanged for the campaign and propaganda of social credit. The Kin habit and the elaborate costumes of the group were put away and a new green paramilitary uniform was donned by male members, which created further differentiation in clothing between male and female members. These “organisational adjustments” transformed the physical and ideological face of the Kindred into something that appeared both ideologically and aesthetically to be completely different from the Robin Hood and Beowulf-inspired primitive utopia that they had been hunting to bring to fruition.¹

¹ YMA/KK/168, July 1931.

This chapter examines what the Kibbo Kift transformed into and what happened to the organisation in the following decades. It discusses the three afterlives of the Kibbo Kift. First, it will give an overview of the failed social credit political parties that the Kibbo Kift transformed into: the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit, which was active from 1932 to 1935, and its successor, the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (SCP), 1936 to 1951. It will also examine the Douglas Social Credit groups that appeared after Major C.H. Douglas broke from the SCP and formed his own social credit groups. All of these political parties were subject to surveillance from Special Branch and M.I.5. with one spy, Muriel A. Stewart, remaining involved from 1925 to through the 1940s, effectively charting the rise and contribution of the organisations' social credit activities for her handlers in the security services. These failed political parties will be contrasted with the Woodcraft Folk, an outdoors youth movement founded by former Kibbo Kift members following the 1924 Brockley Thing. The Woodcraft Folk continues to operate both as a youth organisation and in political activism today.

All in all, the autonomous life of the Kibbo Kift ended when it transformed into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit at the beginning of 1932. The rich spiritual ideology of the Great Spirit had declined in importance over the second half of the 1920s, but the transformation of the Kibbo Kift to the Green Shirts was when it was fully put aside. From 1932 onwards, the focus of the organisation was the promotion, propaganda, and attempted implementation of social credit policy through election in local government and Westminster Parliament. Many central aspects of the Kibbo Kift were gradually phased out of the public face of the organisation and replaced with a paramilitary and political aesthetic and dialogue. Woodcraft names were no longer used in official communication, and camping was slowly phased out of official activities. While some members who stayed on with the Green Shirts

and later the SCP continued to use their woodcraft names and camped out, it was a private social activity rather than organisation-wide.

The Kibbo Kift's internal structure, particularly the setup and membership of the Kin Council, had, however, influence on the structure of the new movement. Hargrave remained at the head position and other members of the Kin Council such as Richard Dixon also remained in positions of authority, just not utilising their woodcraft names officially. Some members, such as Kathleen Milnes in her capacity as Kinlog Scriptor, held onto their former roles and duties after 1932. Creative endeavours in art and song continued not only in personal communications and other private contexts but also in public, although the content was changed to the propaganda of social credit. Additionally, members did not stop doing activities in the outdoors, including camping and hiking. Aside from the annual Althing, which was renamed to the National Assembly, these activities were personal and recreational and no longer the policy of the organisation.

These, along with other "organisational adjustments," were officially declared in the July 1931 issue of the internal publication, *Broadsheet: The Official Gazette of the Kibbo Kift*.² In November 1931, an additional supplement was published giving further details on how the Kibbo Kift at large would be transforming over the following year.³ The new direction, with the economic ideology of social credit as the guiding light, eventually remade the organisation into something vitally different from what it had been when it was founded by Hargrave and Cecil Mumford in 1921. At the same time, the group had already gone in a different direction than its original form in 1921 following the introduction of social credit ideology to the group in 1924 and the breakaway of the Brockley Thing. The restructuring

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*, "Note – November 1931."

that took place in late 1931 changed the organisation from one based around camping and hiking to a regimented body with a militaristic hierarchy. The Kibbo Kift, which had formed in reaction to the First World War but had also carried forward Edwardian ideas of the primitive and domesticity, transformed into the Green Shirts in reaction to the times with members concerned with economic issues of unemployment and distribution of wealth.

6.2 The Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit, the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Issues with Douglas' Social Credit

At the end of 1931, the members of the Kibbo Kift met for the winter performance of the Kift Theatre Show in King George's Hall in London. The Kift Theatre Show featured two recurring mediaeval-style fools, Sib and Gee, jesting about "the absurdity of the economic ideas of the day".⁴ Sib and Gee were articulating that the Kibbo Kift was undergoing an ideological shift of focus, and at the forefront was the growing centralisation of social credit. At the 1931 Althing, "it was decided that immediate re-organisation was necessary for the movement which was becoming daily greater in national significance, and determined to affect and rouse the whole of Britain".⁵ This statement, tinged with hubris, reflected both the intensity and the ambition of the organisation. In the previous decade, the Kibbo Kift had focused on developing itself and its internal intellectual and mythological ideology. This had aimed to enrich the lives of its existing membership. It was the time to turn towards national concerns. It was time for the organisation to influence the nation and to bring forward its ideas for Britain's future. The Althing announcement was the overt move to begin the

⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, pp. 81-82.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 76.

transformation of the Kibbo Kift from a movement that concentrated on a rich internal life to one that aimed bring about social and economic change. Kathleen Milnes recorded in her logbook that this transformation was a long time coming as “since 1926 the K.K. had been working for Social Credit, & this year’s assembly showed clearly the changes in formation that had been taking place. The Kindred now organised an army to bring this thing about.”⁶ This was a powerful shift in language from the origins of the Kibbo Kift as a reaction against militarism, but it was not entirely irregular.

In some ways, the transformation into the Green Shirts Movement was an inevitable culmination of the changes in the Kibbo Kift over the previous six years. Mark Drakeford noted in his sociological analysis of the three movements that the Green Shirts, like the Kibbo Kift before it, was purposefully created as a social movement and went through a distinct lifecycle.⁷ Social credit had become the driving force of the Kibbo Kift, replacing the woodcraft ideals and primitive imaginings of the first five years of the Kibbo Kift’s life. The basic philosophy was that the modern economy was based upon money rather than a barter system. Therefore, money should be exchanged between producers and customers based upon the perceived cultural worth of a good or service. This aimed to put the purchasing power back into the hands of the people, who decided the price they would pay for goods and services and that they would be paid for their labour. This system would be supported by the government with a price rebate, called compensated price, and a National Dividend, which would calculate for inflation. The hope was that, with customers directly in charge of what was produced and the quality of its production, monetary prices would reduce over time. With decreasing need

⁶ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon’s Logbook, pp. 64-65.

⁷ Mark Drakeford, *Social Movements and Their Supporters: The Green Shirts in England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 13-14.

for money, it would also mean that people needed to work for less money and therefore decrease unemployment as employment would become obsolete as technology increased efficiency in production without sacrificing quality. Rather, however, than returning to a barter system, all money and resources would become credit that was open to all people. This would increase individual leisure time and personal freedom.

Social credit was, therefore, itself a type of utopian economic system. It reflected Douglas' background as a mechanical engineer and his belief that technology would eventually assist in solving problems of unemployment and poverty by eliminating "the money problem".⁸ Hargrave was not the only one pushing for social credit within the Kibbo Kift; Milnes, Dixon, and Gray also agreed that social credit was the way forward. While Chapman left the Kibbo Kift prior to this, she had understood following the 1927 Althing that "the world in general can't go camping and have fun until the battle was over".⁹ At the same time, Chapman herself did not continue on with the Kibbo Kift beyond the end of the 1920s. As the organisation transformed into Green Shirts over the first half of 1932, the rapidness of the change caused an upheaval in membership. The policy and administration of the organisation was top-down with the instructions issued through official publications. While leadership remained fairly stable, general membership, while superficially increased by the absorbing of the Legion of the Unemployed, changed face. This section will further examine the changes that took place as well as discuss what of the Kibbo Kift survived into the new political movements and for how long.

⁸ C. H. Douglas, "The Approach to Reality Address to Social Crediters at Westminster on March 7, 1936 Together with Answers to Questions" (London: K. R. P. Publications Ltd., 1936), p. 6.

⁹ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 196.

As discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, what it meant to be a British citizen rapidly evolved in Britain during the interwar period. This was reflected in the Kibbo Kift's and specifically Hargrave's idea of a world state that would be headed by healthy, physically and mentally active people. Hargrave did not abandon the organisational focus on building citizens and a world state as the Kibbo Kift became the Green Shirts. Transferring camping philosophy to a political activity fits into changes in camping culture in the 1930s as it became part of the recreational and leisure ideology often associated with meeting spaces and group activities that promoted communism, fascism, and socialism. John Field connected work camps to land ideology and discussed how, by the 1930s, "the importance of camping and outdoor activities for children was therefore well established within pedagogic thought".¹⁰ Examining work camp systems, Field argued that ideas from youth camps adapted to the work camp system and that "inmates were being emancipated from existing bonds and habits, but were also to acquire new dispositions and capacities as a result of their interactions with nature, with one another, and with the camp leaders".¹¹ While the use of camping and outdoors activities with inmates had a very different dynamic from camping within youth movements, the methods of instruction remained similar enough to achieve the goal of building better citizens.

The Kibbo Kift had devoted much of its physical life and part of its intellectual life to creative evolution and the idea that human beings could evolve into something more in their own lifetimes. As discussed in this thesis' chapter on intellectual influences in the Kindred, prominent members including Milnes, Garrad, and Chapman understood the Kibbo Kift to be

¹⁰ John Field, "An Anti-Urban Education? Work Camps and Ideals of the Land in Interwar Britain." *Rural History* 23, no. 2 (2012): 213-228, p. 214.

¹¹ *ibid.*

the answer to a physically and mentally weakened British citizenry. The Kibbo Kift was meant to be the instrument to bring about the evolution of a revitalised and stronger British citizenry in the post-First World War period. The transformation from the Kibbo Kift into the Green Shirts did not abandon this goal; rather, the desire to influence and mould the British citizenry and state strengthened and was reiterated in a new language. Social credit rather than scouting and woodcraft was the tool that would allow for Britain to achieve great economic and social power with the transforming Kibbo Kift the appropriate body of people to bring the change about. This involved a complete restructuring of how the Kibbo Kift operated and a movement towards the militaristic language and aesthetic it had once shunned.

A prime example of the adoption of military language and aesthetic into the Kibbo Kift as it transformed into the Green Shirts was the association of the organisation with the Legion of the Unemployed. The Legion which was a green shirted paramilitary organisation based in Coventry, became associated with the Kibbo Kift officially at the 1932 National Assembly. In the early days, the Green Shirts focused on the issue of high unemployment rates, which had increasingly preoccupied the Kibbo Kift over the second half of the 1920s and into the 1930s. The Legion of Unemployed was set up by George Hickling in Coventry in 1930. The members of the Legion were the first members in the Kibbo Kift to wear the Green Shirt uniform. This uniform consisted of a green beret, a green pocketed shirt, and khaki trousers. The Legion's uniform was adopted and modified by the Kibbo Kift Design Department, reflecting practicality in the outdoors.¹² Debate on “what costume or habit should be worn for town work, since cowl and jerkin, helm and kirtle belong to camp and outdoor life in the country” led to the adoption of green, paramilitary uniforms for men and utilitarian green

¹² MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 73.

uniforms for women.¹³ The Kin habit and costumes continued to survive in private Kibbo Kift camping contexts, but the public face of the organisation had to transform to match the Hargrave's new combative vision. This visual and practical continuity was important for two reasons. Firstly, it gave the Kibbo Kift control over the Legion of the Unemployed as it acted as a monetary backer and uniform supplier. Secondly, it would also have been important for Hargrave to maintain his position as leader of the new Green Shirts movement to continue a vision of an outdoors organisation. As Craven rightly noted, camping was the defining factor of the practical and physical life of the Kibbo Kift as "many Kinsfolk found they could relate better to the Head Man's invocation to concentrate their efforts primarily on elevating their camping and hiking into an art form" rather than to Hargrave's visions of a world state.¹⁴ While camping and hiking went into decline as an organisation-wide focus, these activities remained part of the Green Shirts until the latter half of the 1930s when it transformed into the SCP.

To a certain extent, the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit was an inevitable outcome. As the 1920s progressed, the Kibbo Kift had become increasingly concerned with social credit, which gradually usurped the central position of the Great Spirit in the spiritual and intellectual philosophy of the Kibbo Kift. This was reflected in the Kinlog's entry on December 1924 in which social credit was pictured as balancing scales to solve "the state of this unhappy world".¹⁵ Hargrave and Douglas, the creator of social credit, shared a positive relationship throughout the second half of the 1920s and into the 1930s, although they would come to have differences by the mid-1930s. Hargrave promoted social credit within the Kibbo

¹³ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 76.

¹⁴ Craven, "Redskins in Epping Forest", p. 172.

¹⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 43.

Kift, eventually enforcing its centrality at the cost of members who were not as interested in the ideology. The economic philosophy gradually usurped the woodcraft and primitive ideology that had been the founding principles of the Kibbo Kift. The utopian world that consisted of camping as the lone Kinsman and as roof tree family units faded as social credit caused the overall organisation to focus on life in the political arena. In a September 1931 article in the internal Kibbo Kift publication *Broadsheet*, Hargrave promoted the “unarmed military technique” for the changing organisation, which was preparing for “the struggle between the British People and International Finance”.¹⁶ This technique reflected the development of an army of members who were physically fit and able to operate as a military body but did not seek to start fights. Rather, it was concerned with exposing the “Bankers’ Credit Combine,” meaning the belief held by Hargrave and Douglas that there was an international network of banks working together to maintain their power, and its insidious “invisibility” to the general public.¹⁷ The unarmed military technique was to organise like an army but, instead of fighting with conventional weapons, to fight with words and information.

The administration of the Kindred rapidly changed to suit its new life as an unarmed but uniformed political movement. The Kibbo Kift shed its medievalist language and began promoting the idea that they were fighting a righteous and modern fight. This was a gradual change that occurred over the 1920s in the main circular *Broadsheet*, but, upon becoming the Green Shirts, it matured into an actively combative tone and dialogue. The Althing was renamed to the “Kibbo Kift National Assembly”.¹⁸ At this point, camping was still part of the transforming Kibbo Kift, although the Norse-inspired names for the camps were replaced with

¹⁶ YMA/KK/168, September 1931.

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ YMA/KK/168, “Note – November 1931.”

“propaganda camp”. Kinlaw, which was the internal government of the Kibbo Kift that guided camping, costume, and general activities, were renamed to Decrees, which guided the practise and promotion of social credit ideas. Personnel changes on the Kin Council were less dramatic. Hargrave remained Head Man and the Deputy Head Man, Richard Dixon, also maintained his position. The Glee Mote, which celebrated Kibbo Kift theatre, song, and dance, was renamed the “Glee Assembly”, although the same person, Stanley Dixon, remained in charge. The Glee Assembly would eventually become part of the Green Shirts propaganda department. A Women’s Section was created to foster women’s involvement in the new political movement; this was headed by Carole Griffiths Dixon, who had married Richard in 1928.¹⁹

While the Kin Council initially kept its name, local geographical groups were renamed and restructured. Implementing the scheme of National Organisation was described as “an important step in the development of our unarmed military technique of action”.²⁰ The National Organisation was the overarching plan for changing Britain under the Green Shirts and guided by social credit. It outlined, again in militaristic language, how “in place of the old Thing Areas were District Commands, to cover in time the whole country, with Country Commands and Area Commands to be organised as need arose”.²¹ This transformed the previously primitive and woodcraft-inspired names and categories for geographical locations into something more akin to military regiments. Even the titles of leaders in these areas

¹⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 82.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 75.

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 76.

changed; for example, the Nomad Chiefs were renamed to Local Organisers, although they remained in charge of their local units.²²

The most drastic organisational change was the development of Kin Units.²³ The Kin Units were men only and were divided between district level, county level, and command areas. The somewhat confusingly named “Threats” were the smallest groups, formed based on local geography and consisting of ten men. These Threats were organised at the district level into Hundreds, which consisted of ten threats. At the county level, three Hundreds were combined to make a Throng. To cover larger geographical area, a Host consisted of four Throngs. Each level had someone in charge: Threat Leaders, which were likened to non-commissioned officers, and Hundred Chiefs, Throng Commanders, and Host Commanders, which were likened to officers. There were also Special Units, which covered transport, signals, and medical divisions and were to be “developed as required”.²⁴ The organisation was shifting from a pseudo-tribal society centred on the campsite and domestic roof tree family unit to an externally-focused paramilitary society. It was also becoming more stiffly divided between men and women on the surface.

In practise, however, the evolving Kibbo Kift continued to treat women and men as separate but also had room for overlap between certain types of roles as it transformed into the Green Shirts. While there was no longer a women’s magazine publication as Chapman’s *Distaff* had ceased publication at the end of 1928, the women remained prominent participants in the new political life of the organisation through teaching, speech-writing, and participation in activities at the new headquarters. The Kibbo Kift began to centralise its base of operations

²² *ibid.*

²³ YMA/KK/3, Extract from Decree 14, July 1931.

²⁴ YMA/KK/168, “Note – November 1931.”

in London. Although most of the main activities had been based in and around London, it had left other lodges fairly autonomous, such as those in Northern England. From 1932 onwards, “the policy [of] attending meetings to promote Social Credit was intensified. In this the two chief centres were London and the North. Numbers of lectures and propaganda meetings were held in many parts of the country.”²⁵ A new headquarters was set up in London at 35 Old Jewry and was staffed voluntarily by members of the Kibbo Kift and the Legion. Furthering their London political presence, “forthcoming public meetings—economic, political and social—were watched for, and these were attended from now on increasingly by Threats of kinsfolk in uniform”.²⁶ Members attending were supposed to “to ask questions that would turn the minds of all present to the Kibbo Kift focus point – Social Credit”.²⁷ These activities reflected the unarmed military technique as members attempted to get the word of social credit out into society. It did not, however, earn the Green Shirts many allies.

Magazine publications remained important both to the internal communication of the existing membership and to contribute to the goal of attracting more people to join the Green Shirts. The internal communications remained the same as in the previous years with *Broadsheet*, but a new publication called *Front Line*, which was aimed at the general public, was introduced in mid-1932. This was the first publication that was focused on a general audience and was produced for public circulation. The *Broadsheet* and previous magazines provided news and instruction for kinsfolk only. In addition to the periodicals sent out from time to time by local groups of Kindred, previous publications were intended for those already interested in the organisation and were read by few or none of the general public. *Front Line*

²⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 78.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 79.

attempted to attract new members to the social credit movement. It was sold in the streets to the number of eight hundred a month, and continued for a year, until May 1933.²⁸ *Front Line*'s short-lived publication saw members selling it out around London in uniform, and, while it does not seem to have had much success, it gave the Green Shirts an early public presence. The importance of print publications for dissemination and development of the Kibbo Kift's ideology has been discussed previously in this thesis, and *Front Line* was an ambitious attempt to expand the readership and membership. Its success appears to have been limited as the publication was discontinued and *Broadsheet* became the main public and internal publication for the Green Shirts and SCP throughout the 1930s.

Schools were one of the first places that the Green Shirts attempted to disseminate information about social credit. Milnes records that, in 1933 "during the spring and summer I was in London, teaching at King Alfred's School in place of Mrs. Gregory (Squirrel), and I helped at street meeting in Deptford and other places".²⁹ She also "worked in the canteen at Headquarters (35, Old Jewry) on Wednesday nights".³⁰ During these first couple of years of the Green Shirts, Milnes continued to run a small outdoors girls' youth group called the Cherry Tree Clan. As time went on, however, Milnes dedicated herself to the cause of promoting social credit, eventually moving away from running the youth group and increasing her public presence by attending debates in parliament and giving public speeches. On one occasion in 1938, Milnes disrupted parliament proceedings by standing up and shouting for

²⁸ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 86.

²⁹ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook, p. 66.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 66-67

social credit.³¹ While she was ejected, this action was warmly received by the SCP and by Hargrave, who included the incident in Milnes' eulogy.

The early years of the Green Shirts kept some of the flavour of the Kibbo Kift in its public and political life with continued use of the double "K" as its logo. It also continued to utilise camping activities up until the 1936 National Assembly. While the habit changed to the Green Shirt uniform and camps were renamed from Things to camps, it was not a complete move away from the Kibbo Kift itself. Although without the heavy medieval and primitive language, it had the same optimism of the previous moment in its language and aims. Theatre and song activities continued in the Green Shirts and SCP with Stanley Dixon still in charge. It was renamed from Glee to part of the propaganda department and was used to explore and promote artistic ideals in the Green Shirts and SCP. In this way, the performative life of the Kibbo Kift continued, although the method and tone of the music and theatre were now modern rather than epic and medieval. The allegories to mythological tales and medieval history were traded for topical pieces such as "Words Win Wars," which was based upon Hargrave's reaction to the beginning of the Second World War.³² While the communicative purpose of performance remained, the aesthetic had changed. The allegorical nature of much of the Kibbo Kift's work did not continue through the new literature and music, which increasingly invoked current events. While the Kinlog recorded that "the Kibbo Kift dramatic tradition proved it could adapt itself to the theatrical conventions of the time, and produce a highly finished performance of good propaganda value," the aesthetic of the drama was

³¹ MOL/SWHC/L198/C5.1, Milnes eulogy by Hargrave.

³² YMA/Hargrave/42.2, Diary for 1939.

completely different.³³ It reflected the current times and goings-on rather than attempting to invoke the past.

The aesthetic of the Green Shirts and SCP was functional and utilitarian. This was reflected in their performances. In a photo of song practise, Dixon conducted a group of six men, including himself, and two women.³⁴ All were in an office setting in the London SCP headquarters; the men were dressed in suits and the women in dark turtleneck shirts. The atmosphere and setting was professional and controlled. This image, attire, and atmosphere stood in stark contrast to the Kibbo Kift years, where the fantastic and mythological guided the overtone of activity. Theatrical performances had become functional and utilitarian as well; performances featured women and men in controlled formation, wearing the identical choir uniforms of the SCP.³⁵ This choir uniform was a white sweater with the logo of the SCP emblazoned in the middle of the breast; men wore shorts and women knee-length skirts. This is the opposite of the hectic whirling dervishes in the 1923 news reel footage of the Kibbo Kift camp and the private pictures of men in loin cloths and women in ornate brassieres and skirts.³⁶ Uniformity and cohesiveness had replaced the individual expression of members in visual and aesthetic performativity. The primary variation in uniform was between the male and the female, reinforcing the gender binary within the organisation.

³³ MOL/SWHC/L198/The Kinlog, p. 76.

³⁴ MOL/SWHC/L198/G18.

³⁵ MOL/SWHC/L198/G11.

³⁶ BFI National Archive, “The ‘Kibbo Kift’ – Meeting of new Kindred who aim at a race of Intellectual Barbarians.” Daily Sketch in *Topical Budget News Reel*. 1923.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uko6ppVRWDE>

This uniformity reflected the major shift in the organisation from enrichment of the individual member to the aim of influencing those outside and not yet members of the Green Shirts. The public life of the Kibbo Kift had shifted from the intellectual and spiritual pursuits centred on woodcraft, the Great Spirit, and the overall intellectual thought and mythology of the movement to the promotion of social credit and attraction of new members to join the Green Shirts. This meant that Hargrave frequently gave talks to groups in London as well as outside of the city, which were arranged by other members. Milnes records that, while setting up a lecture gathering for Hargrave in Colchester, they “surprisingly got no help from the Colchester Study Circle – in fact, there was a good deal of passive opposition. (They didn’t like the Green Shirt)”³⁷ While there was some interest outside of London, there was not widespread appeal due to a mixture of misunderstandings of what the Green Shirts were and miscommunication of how the organisation operated. Meetings were also still held outside, raising the visibility of the Green Shirts and giving members public platforms. Milnes recorded speaking “from a street rostrum” with her work with the Colchester Section of the Green Shirts in 1933 just before her logbook ends.³⁸ The bulk of the publicity work for the Green Shirts fell upon members to take their own initiative and would have included attempting to sell issues of *Front Line* at that particular point in time.

The Green Shirts Movement therefore served as a transitional period between the outdoors utopian movement of the Kibbo Kift and the SCP. The movement transitioned into a fully uniformed political party, the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which was active from 1936 to 1951. Two major functions of the SCP were to support political candidates, including Hargrave, to run for election and the continued promotion of

³⁷ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon’s Logbook, p. 66.

³⁸ *ibid.*

social credit. There were two major events that hampered the SCP's success during this period. One was that Major Douglas formally split from the organisation and formed his own associations for the promotion of social credit, which he also used to espouse his anti-Semitic views. The second was the Second World War itself. While the SCP continued to function throughout the war, it had little effect and would go into decline following it.

During this period, however, social credit as a political movement saw some success in Alberta, Canada, with the election of William Aberhart as the seventh Premier of Alberta from 1935 to 1943.³⁹ Hargrave travelled over in February of 1937 to observe and in hopes of advising the party. This trip had mixed results as Hargrave was able to observe what the party was doing and what sort of changes the early Aberhart administration brought about, but Hargrave himself did not have much impact upon the party. While he was overseas, the SCP in London engaged in some of the acts that brought them into conflict with the Metropolitan police. The slogan "Hands Off Alberta" was painted in green on the Bank of England, and green bricks were reportedly thrown through a window of 11 Downing Street. These acts were brought to Hargrave's attention while abroad, and he did not appear to have been particularly against them although they had occurred in his absence.⁴⁰

This was not the first time that the organisation had come to the attention of the authorities. There are two files that consolidate information about the surveillance of the Kibbo Kift through to the SCP. The first set of files, now stored in the National Archives, concerned Special Branch's intermittent surveillance of the Kibbo Kift and the comparatively

³⁹ Janine Stingel, *Social Discredit: Anti-Semitism, Social Credit, and the Jewish Response* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).

⁴⁰ YMA/Hargrave/42.2, Diary for 1937.

more detailed surveillance of the Green Shirts and SCP throughout the 1930s to the 1950s.⁴¹

The second consolidated file concerned some overlapping files wherein the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP were profiled alongside the British Fascist Party and the Black Shirts.⁴² Both of these files contained multiple different summarising of what the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations were, who was involved, and what were their aims were. Hargrave's leadership was perceived as central to how the organisations functioned; little mention was made of other individual members. Several different profiles of Hargrave were created over the course of these files. All of the profiles noted his former connection to the Boy Scouts, some of the earlier files mentioned his war service, and two mention his Quaker background. Overall, the reports did not seem to view him particularly seriously aside from how he maintained leadership of the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations. The authorities were more concerned with the overall activities of the organisations and any potential connections to other national and international organisations with communist or fascist leanings.

One file consolidated the over three decades of collaboration between Special Branch, the Metropolitan Police, M.I.5, and occasionally international security organisations in watching the Kibbo Kift, the Green Shirts, the SCP, and related groups from 1925 through the 1950s.⁴³ The mole within the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations was Muriel A.

⁴¹ Files under HO 45/24966, Disturbances: Kibbo Kift Kindred, also known as the Social Credit Party: activities.

⁴² Files under HO 45/25384, Disturbances: British Union of Fascists: reports on meetings and activities. Reports on various organisations including the Imperial Legion, the Kibbo Kift Movement and the Knights of Columbus.

⁴³ HO 45/24966.

Stewart, who joined around 1925 and would eventually become secretary of the SCP in the 1940s. She may have been spying from the beginning of her membership and therefore was likely placed in the organisation. It does not appear that she was never discovered by members the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations as an agent of Special Branch. By the time she became the SCP's secretary, she was probably trusted by other long-term members. She had a very good understanding of the political aims of the Green Shirts and SCP and presumably would have joined the Kibbo Kift in 1925 with a political interest in the organisation.

All three organisations faced postal and telegram censorship. Aside from the information supplied from Stewart, Special Branch and M.I.5 relied primarily upon published materials of the Kibbo Kift and related organisations to assess what they were doing and upon which connections it was focused. Pamphlets and circulars published by the organisations were collected, and the main magazines of the Kibbo Kift, the *Mark* and the *Nomad*, were known to Special Branch in 1925. The published material of the organisation served as the primary method aside from Stewart's reports that the authorities kept track of the organisation's aims and views. This type of surveillance continued throughout the operational period of all three organisations, picking up notably during the Second World War. Monthly to bimonthly summaries were provided of the material, which was inspected for its political leanings and any connections to other individual or organisations that might be of interest.

The initial files by Special Branch on the Kibbo Kift were created due to two incidences in May 1925. One analysed the possibility that the Kibbo Kift was connected to "nudity cult literature" into which Special Branch inquired of the Metropolitan Police for more information.⁴⁴ As mentioned above, Hargrave had alluded in *The Great War Brings It Home*

⁴⁴ HO 45/24966, "Kibbo Kift Kindred, K.K.K." 20 May 1925 Disturbances minutes.

and once in *The Mark* to nudity, and there are pictures in the mid-1920s of nude Kinsmen on a hike. These pictures, however, were likely not known to the authorities as the conclusion to the nudity inquiry was that the Kibbo Kift was “sufficiently clean”.⁴⁵ From then on, inquiry into the Kibbo Kift focused on its political aims and evolving activities as it transformed into the Green Shirts.

The second file created in the same month contained a letter by G.W. Godden, who wrote into Special Branch to alert them to Kibbo Kift due to the Brockley Thing. The Brockley Thing, which resulted in the break between the Kibbo Kift and the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society and eventually formed the Woodcraft Folk, served to provide this initial internal information to Special Branch, and it was noted that the split should have served as an indicator “of the need of watching ‘K.K.’, on political grounds”.⁴⁶ The organisation appeared to Scott and Godden at this point to be anti-Christian and connected internationally to the Ku Klux Klan and the National League of Youth in Berlin and Soviet Russia. Scott’s concern was that the Kibbo Kift was “(a) a subversive movement, operating on the Continent from England, for the demoralising of adolescents” or “(b) a very skilfully plused Revolutionary Secret Movement” with communist connections. Godden was of the opinion that the Kibbo Kift represented more of “Theosophic lunacy mixed with animalism” with some concern that it could be connected to subversive revolutionary sentiment.⁴⁷ To Scott’s inquiry, the Metropolitan Police responded that the Kibbo Kift were led by “pacifist cranks” and that, while the organisation was noted for slight communist contact, it was not of immediate

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ HO 45/24966, “K.K.K. and Royal Arsenal Society”, 22 May 1925 letter.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, additional memo undated. The confusion of the KKK abbreviation was an ongoing issue for the organisation during its time and continues today.

concern.⁴⁸ The rest of the file is dedicated to a report by Godden on a meeting of the proposed Federation of Youth Movements in 1925. The Kibbo Kift did not attend this meeting, but the Royal Arsenal Society, which was related to the Woodcraft Folk, as well as the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry, did.

Scott and Godden's alarm with the Kibbo Kift is unusual; the general tone of surveillance did not usually go beyond curiosity until March 1933 when the organisation had transformed into the Green Shirts.⁴⁹ The politicisation of the group, along with its uniform change and marches in London, brought it back into both Special Branch and M.I.5's attention with connection to the Douglas Social Credit Movement. This file, which summarised the Kibbo Kift's changed aims and goals, was originally part of fascist surveillance and was likely separated into its own file as the Green Shirts developed a more distinct character. An M.I.5 analysis of the Kibbo Kift was taken in June 1933 when the organisation was in the major transition period between its life as the Kibbo Kift and fully assuming the political party nature of the Green Shirts. The M.I.5 analysis again maintained the label of a Boy Scout-like organisation but quickly brought up the Kibbo Kift's Advisory Council and some of its members, noting that it had some appeal. This differed from the earlier analyses in the Special Branch files, which did not include reference to the Advisory Council. It additionally noted that "the organisation makes a special appeal to the young by the promotion of camps sports, etc.", indicating that the appeal of the organisation was potentially multifaceted.⁵⁰ It would also indicate that, while the membership of youth to the Kibbo Kift and Green Shirts was

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 23 May 1925 letter.

⁴⁹ HO 45/24966, "K.K.K. and the Green Shirts".

⁵⁰ HO 45/25384, mixed file of associated papers with the British Union of Fascists, "Kibbo Kift Organisation or Green Shirt Movement" report, p. 2.

limited, the authorities were concerned that it could grow to reflect its label as a youth movement.

It was noted that “the activities of the Kibbo Kift were not of much note until the beginning of 1933 when it came out with a new name, i.e. ‘THE GREEN SHIRT MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL CREDIT’”.⁵¹ The file connected the change in name to the change in the general uniform of the organisation, efforts by its secretary treasurer, Joseph O’Neill, to receive permission to hold open air demonstrations in Manchester, and a meeting of the London United Workers Council held in conjunction with the Green Shirts. Communist affiliation was the primary concern for the observers because while “there is no direct affiliation between the Green Shirts (Kibbo Kift) and the Communist Party, but the Green Shirts attend all Communist demonstrations” and members were noted to be “individually [...] in touch with many communist Party members”.⁵² It also noted a connection between the Kibbo Kift and the Independent Labour Party Guild of Youth “and the Anti-War Movement” to conclude that “the Green Shirt Movement appears to be a semi-socialist organisation which co-operates politically with the revolution groups, whilst repudiating official communism”.⁵³ This assessment fitted into what the Green Shirts were at the time attempting to achieve, which was promotion of social credit through any means. The organisation was not afraid to take an uncommitted middle ground in an attempt to infiltrate other political movements in order to spread social credit ideology. This would lead eventually to alienation from other political organisations and movements.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵² *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵³ *ibid.*

Ultimately, the Green Shirts and the SCP failed to make popular appeal, which was not missed by the surveillance. A report in 1934 noted that “there is no doubt that the movement has failed to make a popular appeal, which is possibly due to the fact that the Douglas Credit System is so complicated that it is unintelligible except to a comparatively small number of people”.⁵⁴ What brought attention of the authorities to the Kibbo Kift and the early Green Shirts were its connections, even superficially, to communism as well as its connection to Major Douglas. The later Green Shirts and the SCP received much more attention in relation to the Black Shirts, particularly in the Second World War when Douglas split from the SCP to form the Social Credit Secretariat. Special Branch and M.I.5 had a fairly good understanding of both the Kibbo Kift in its limited political effectiveness and the activities and aims of the Green Shirts and SCP. Stewart’s position as secretary of the SCP was essential to this understanding, especially since she appears to have been able to provide detailed understanding of the rapidly changing personnel and goals of the organisations.

The concern of Special Branch and M.I.5 was justified in regards to the communist and fascist connections of the Green Shirts and SCP. These groups, while technically neither communist nor fascist, had specifically revolutionary ideals. The absorbing of the League of the Unemployed into the Green Shirts in 1932, Douglas’ growing anti-Semitic views expressed in publications not affiliated with the Green Shirts and SCP, and the paramilitary aesthetic of the Green Shirts and SCP would logically be concerning for national security. The potential social credit revolution was, however, hindered by the Green Shirts and SCP’s inability to make popular appeal due to the complexity of social credit theory and the organisations’ habit of burning their bridges.

⁵⁴ HO 45/24966, 12 June 1934, p. 2.

Douglas' anti-Semitism would also serve to drive an internal wedge within the organisations. Douglas was excommunicated from the SCP in 1941, which meant that he could no longer be in contact with the SCP nor claim connection. This event was noted alongside the knowledge that loss of Douglas' support did not appear to have changed the financial situation of the SCP, which was stable at the time based upon the number of leaflets produced and sent through the post.⁵⁵ The relationship between Douglas and the SCP had been strained, however, since 1935, when Douglas founded the Social Credit Secretariat. Douglas went onto form the Douglas Social Credit Association, which had a Sidmouth and a Midlands branch. These branches collaborated with the umbrella organisation, the Social Credit Secretariat in Liverpool. The Sidmouth Social Credit Association produced an inflammatory pamphlet entitled "Churchill's Record", which was of much concern to the authorities as it characterised Churchill as "a tool of the Jews".⁵⁶ The Midland branch of the Douglas Social Credit Association produced a similar tract on Churchill entitled "A Threat to Local Government (The Sieff Plan for Britain)". Both of these documents sought to discredit Churchill through his alleged connections to Jewish, American, and German organisations and persons. The main argument was that the war was being prolonged in order to benefit "the leading Jewish financiers of the world, who have guided the steps of Mr. Churchill since the day he entered Parliament are not prepared to envisage a speedy Peace Victory".⁵⁷ These documents served as evidence to put a special watch on the organisation's activities, and the

⁵⁵ HO 45/24966, 3 February 1941 report.

⁵⁶ HO 45/24966, 26 June 1941 memo.

⁵⁷ HO 45/24966, "Churchill's Record", p. 4 (punctuation as in text).

organisations under Douglas' direct leadership were viewed as "mischievous and dangerous".⁵⁸

Hargrave's leadership over the SCP served, if nothing else, to differentiate it from Douglas' social credit organisations and activities. The SCP's continued activities during the Second World War kept it under surveillance as Special Branch collected copies of SCP circulars. A member of the SCP, Hugh Thornton, wrote into Special Branch in April 1942 with concerns about the party.⁵⁹ He provided literature from the SCP and expressing his concerns that the movement was potentially creating a shadow government. This was due to the continued secrecy of the SCP leadership, lead and elected by Hargrave. The SCP was already aware of this, understanding the SCP was run by "undemocratic lines" and also did not publically publish their accounts.⁶⁰ The authoritative conclusion was, however, "that the Hargrave Group, to which this letter informs, is more innocuous than the Social Credit Secretariat, or Douglas Group".⁶¹ In comparison to Douglas' activities, the SCP's methods were viewed as "rather childish" but with a singular "practical" application, which was the literature of the group.⁶²

This is reflected in Special Branch's extensive collection and analysis of the SCP circular *Message from Hargrave*, which was published throughout the war. *Message* as well as other leaflets were considered to be propaganda for social credit and Hargrave himself was watched through the post. Postal censorship would turn up the SCP's "Plans for action 'in

⁵⁸ HO 45/24966, 30 May 1941 memo.

⁵⁹ HO 45/24966, 8 April 1942 letter.

⁶⁰ HO 45/24966, "The Social Credit Party" 8 April 1942 file minutes.

⁶¹ *ibid.*

⁶² *ibid.*

crisis” from “War Emergency Instructions No.2” published in November 1941.⁶³ The original copy was sent to M.I.5 but analysis by authorities condensed down to “it sounds like a solemn game to distract the rank and file of the party from any discontent at the party’s failure to do anything at all”.⁶⁴ Overall, the authorities did not have a high opinion of Hargrave and his leadership and never really took the Kibbo Kift or its subsequent organisations particularly seriously. The surveillance served to give context to groups they considered to be more troublesome and directly subversive, such as the British Union of Fascists, the Social Credit Secretariat, and communists. These papers do, however, reveal that Special Branch and M.I.5 had a solid understanding of the political activities of the Green Shirts and SCP although they largely agreed with the Metropolitan Police’s assessment that the Kibbo Kift as a back to nature movement run by “pacifist cranks”. Regarding the back to nature views of the Kibbo Kift, Special Branch considered such views to be, by 1934, no longer relevant. It noted that, “as far as is known, the original ideals were abandoned” in favour of political aims.⁶⁵ This was largely true, although some members did hold onto memorabilia of the Kibbo Kift and the Kinlog was continued throughout the existence of the organisations.

There was a certain level of irony to these official assessments of the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisations. While each of these organisations had grand designs, it was to their benefit that they never seriously drew close to achieving them. While they were on the radar of the authorities, their ineffectiveness kept them from coming under closer surveillance and allowed them to continue to operate largely unfettered aside from some postal and

⁶³ HO 45/24966, Postal and Telegraph Censorship 16 November 1941.

⁶⁴ HO 45/24966, Social Credit Propaganda file minutes, 5 December 1941.

⁶⁵ HO 45/25384, mixed file of associated papers with the British Fascist Union, “Kibbo Kift Organisation or Green Shirt Movement” report, p. 5.

telegraph censorship. These files revealed that the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP were known but were considered less of a threat than the social credit organisation under Douglas. The information collected on the Green Shirts and SCP was used to inform the investigations into Douglas' operations as well as provide context to some investigations into the British Union of Fascists.

The Public Order Act of 1936 affected activities of individual members as the ban on militaristic uniforms went into place.⁶⁶ The advent of the Second World War put much of the visible activities of the SCP on hold despite attempts by Hargrave to keep communications going through publications. They were especially interested in the regular circular *A Message from Hargrave*, and a regular summary was made of that publication throughout the war.⁶⁷ The London main office was also damaged during the bombings of London. The Kinlog was moved from the office to save it as well as some other important papers. The public presence of the SCP decreased during the war and would never pick up again even though there was a second Social Credit Party active in the United Kingdom from 1965 to 1978, founded by C. J. Hunt, a member of the previous incarnation. This second SCP saw only limited membership and success. Hargrave was not involved, Milnes had died in 1942, and many other prominent members of the previous incarnations of the organisation such as Vera Chapman and the Dixon family did not return. The time for social credit, like the Kibbo Kift before it, had passed.

In many ways, the Green Shirts and the SCP suffered from the same problem that had plagued the Kibbo Kift: they were ambitious to their detriment. Aside from the central ideology of social credit, no singular activity or supporting ideology was able to take hold and

⁶⁶ YMA/KK/56.

⁶⁷ YMA/KK/183, full run of publication.

develop stably within the organisation. Ideas, approaches, and even the party name changed rapidly, which would have made it difficult for most members to keep up. While the uniform changed to promote a united and cohesive front and the people in leadership under Hargrave remained much the same, the organisation experienced constantly shifting approaches and ideas that were not easy to follow. The SCP also lost the support of Major Clifford H. Douglas, who increasingly distanced himself from the SCP over the course of the 1930s. While he had initially been supportive of the extra publicity gained from the Green Shirts' activities, he was of the opinion that social credit should not be a political party unto itself but rather a part of a party's policy.⁶⁸ Douglas' anti-Semitic views and their centrality to his iteration of social credit were also a source of contention for the SCP and served as valid reason to excommunicate him from the group during the Second World War. This fragmentation of social credit politics in Britain is likely to have contributed to its failure and would be a rich area of historical research in the future.

All in all, by the time the SCP ceased activities in 1951, it was a wholly different organisation from the early Kindred of 1921. The primitive utopianism and woodcraft mythology that drew primarily from Edwardian intellectual and gendered ideals had been superseded by social credit and broader changes to society. Its social and cultural impact was overall rather limited. The Kibbo Kift did not achieve its aims nor did the Green Shirts and SCP, but they did have personal value to members who were deeply involved. The legacy of the organisation lay in how it branched in its intellectual and mythological interests and inspired former members. The next section will discuss the Woodcraft Folk and how it may be the true successor to the original spirit and purpose of the Kibbo Kift.

⁶⁸ C. B. Macpherson, 'Douglas, Clifford Hugh (1879–1952)', rev. Mark Pottle. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004)

6.3 The Woodcraft Folk

The Woodcraft Folk was founded in 1925 following the 1924 Althing and the breakaway of the Brockley Thing from the Kibbo Kift. As discussed in previous chapters, the Brockley Thing was a group of members unhappy with Hargrave's leadership and lack of labour and socialist ideals in the Kindred. The Woodcraft Folk were successful where the Kibbo Kift failed for three reasons. Firstly, they kept camping outdoors central to the organisation. Secondly, they focused their camping ideology around youth education instead of splitting their attention between multiple causes and creating too many projects for a small membership base to coordinate and maintain. Thirdly, the Folk remained in tune with current political and cultural trends in a manner that the Kibbo Kift and its associated organisations did not. The Folk were, therefore, able to change and react to the world around them rather than constantly attempting to make the world react to them.

Leslie Paul was the founding leader of the Woodcraft Folk from 1925 until 1934. One of the younger members of the Kibbo Kift prior to the Brockley Thing, he had joined in 1923 at the age of 17. Paul would later characterize his time as part of the Kibbo Kift as fraught in his 1951 autobiography, *Angry Young Man*. Having joined due to admiration for Hargrave and enthusiasm for his woodcraft ideas, Paul fell out with the Kibbo Kift both as an organisation and on a personal level following a series of letters arguing about the formation of a new group in South London with Paul as the head.⁶⁹ Paul's leadership of a group of Kindred in South London was something he characterised as reluctant and "this quite premature promotion of mine was to be the cause of a serious split in Kibbo Kift, which had the consequence of destroying it".⁷⁰ This group was associated with the Royal Arsenal Co-

⁶⁹ Leslie A. Paul, *Angry Young Man* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1951), pp. 58-59.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 56.

operative Society for funding and attempted to carry the Kibbo Kift idea of the Great Spirit forward. By the Second World War, Paul had distanced himself from the Folk as he became an Anglican clergyman. It does not appear that Paul was on bad terms with the Folk later in life, since, as Prynne notes, he was known in the late 1980s as the “Old Man” of the movement.⁷¹

In 1985, Paul gave a speech on the beginnings of the Woodcraft Folk for the Co-operative History Workshop.⁷² The connection of the Kibbo Kift to the Woodcraft Folk here was curiously left out. While in 1951 Paul went out of his way in his autobiography to establish that, “having in my turn failed just as dismally to build a 'Labour Scout Movement' after years of effort just as intense, I cannot blame [Hargrave] for deciding in advance that it was not worth trying,” Paul gave no mention of the Kibbo Kift or Hargrave in his 1985 speech.⁷³ The speech covered how the Folk started in 1925 from about five girls and five boys “including me” led by Sydney Shaw; they originally called themselves the Wayfarer’s Fellowship.⁷⁴ Curiously, Paul referenced groups that were part of the Kibbo Kift like the Mossback Lodge but did not mention the Kibbo Kift itself. He characterised the start to the Folk as “small, young, penniless, [and] insignificant” with a lot of grand ideas that needed

⁷¹ David Prynne, “The Woodcraft Folk and the Labour Movement.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 18, no. 1 (1983): 79-95, p. 90.

⁷² *The Woodcraft Folk: The Beginning and Early Days*. Co-operative History Workshop. County Hall, London. 9 March 1985. <https://archive.org/details/WoodcraftFolkHistory>

⁷³ Paul, *Angry Young Man*, p. 60.

⁷⁴ *The Woodcraft Folk: The Beginning and Early Days*. Co-operative History Workshop. County Hall, London. 9 March 1985.

time to grow into as an independent organisation.⁷⁵ There were therefore two stories of the Folk from Paul's point of view. The Folk either represented a tale of a failed "Labour Scout Movement" or later a tale of success for an independent woodcraft youth group.⁷⁶ Both of these tales were relevant. The Folk were never a purely Labour or co-operative organisation as they engaged with their own unique ideas of youth education and a nature-based mythology that grew out of the nascent philosophy of the Kibbo Kift. This was what allowed the Folk to become a successful independent woodcraft youth group.

In some ways, the Woodcraft Folk kept the early flavour of the Kibbo Kift better than the Kibbo Kift itself. The early years of the Woodcraft Folk carried forward the Native American influences in symbolism and tent design as well as re-centred Seton's woodcraft philosophy for activities and environmental philosophy in the new group. Instead of moving towards social credit, however, the Woodcraft Folk fostered its pre-existing connection with the co-operative movement, socialism, and labour politics through the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society. Alongside the political awareness, the Woodcraft Folk focused on developing their own Charter, later renamed the Declaration, which focused on the development of the self and the welfare of the community. Jon Savage rightly noted that the Folk "were set up along the original socialist and utopian ideals that the Kibbo Kift professed: social reconstruction and spiritual regeneration allied with the teaching of practical woodcraft skills".⁷⁷ The practicality of the Folk took centre stage in comparison to the Kibbo Kift. Membership for the Folk started small but rose steadily "from forty in 1925 to 721 in 1930

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Paul, *Angry Young Man*, p. 60.

⁷⁷ Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture: 1875-1945* (London: Random House, 2007), p. 190.

and 4,321 in 1938”.⁷⁸ This steady increase reflected how the Folk did not experience the same tumultuous organisational changes as the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP, which always led to substantial numbers of members leaving the organisation.

The dependence upon Kibbo Kift language in the early years of the Folk showed. As W. Bruce Leslie pointed out, “when the young dissidents walked out of Hargrave's camp, there was no left-wing alternative to the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, and the other uniformed youth movements”.⁷⁹ Over the next couple of decades, the Folk would find their own flavour and dialogue. While conscious of its origins in the early, idealistic Kibbo Kift, the Folk moved forward to create a purposeful socialist and co-operative youth movement. Woodcraft names were carried forward from the Kibbo Kift and utilised within the Folk, which helped to foster a sense of identity and community. As Craven pointed out, woodcraft names were “a way of kin members reinventing themselves and then projecting themselves into a heroic, colourful and purposeful world”.⁸⁰ Woodcraft names brought along ideals that predated the Kibbo Kift as they were originally created by Seton. In the Folk, woodcraft names were earned by children through a series of well-defined tests of physical and mental abilities, such as trail tracking and nature drawing. This “central feature of the educational plan ‘of learning by doing’ have been the Tests which probably originate in the coups in Seton’s Woodcraft

⁷⁸ Stephen G. Jones, *Sport, Politics, and the Working Class: Organised Labour and Sport in Interwar Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 116.

⁷⁹ W. Bruce Leslie, “Creating a socialist scout movement: The Woodcraft Folk, 1924-42.” *History of Education* 13, no. 4 (1984), p. 301.

⁸⁰ Craven, “Redskins in Epping Forest”, p. 176.

Indians”.⁸¹ These tests had also influenced the early Kibbo Kift literature such as Hargrave’s *Tribal Training* along with other children’s adventure novel and scouting practises.

The Folk carried the Kibbo Kift iterations of these practises forward as well as going back to basics. Ceremonies from the Kibbo Kift, such theatre, song, and dance, continued as part of the Woodcraft Folk. While the Folk could not use the same songs as the Kibbo Kift, they were able to develop their own chants and ceremonies based upon the same material by Seton, Baden-Powell, and Hargrave’s pre-Kibbo Kift training manuals. Woodcraft served as the main philosophical background for the Folk, particularly the ideals of cooperation, friendship, and camaraderie.⁸² Adults did not use the woodcraft names in the same manner as they had in the Kibbo Kift. This reflected the overall more practical part of the Folk even in its early, just split from the Kibbo Kift years. Prynne noted that, “although the Folk in recent years has shed much of its mysticism, the ceremonies still play an important part in its life”.⁸³ The ceremonies and tests that children participated in created a sense of camaraderie and fun, allowing children to form positive bonds with their peers and with the outdoors. Woodcraft names, tests, and ceremonies fostered common ground and a sense of community in the woodcraft camp as well. The camp space became not only a teaching space but also a domestic and leisure space as members of the Folk grew up, started their own families, and returned to camp with other Woodcraft Folk.

Leisure and recreation were of increasing social and political importance during the interwar period as was the development of organisations that utilised leisure space. Stephen

⁸¹ Prynne, “The Woodcraft Folk and the Labour Movement.” p. 90.

⁸² Woodcraft Folk Film, “I’m a Member of a Family.” 1968. Yorkshire Film Archive.
<http://www.yorkshirefilmarchive.com/film/im-member-family>

⁸³ Prynne, “The Woodcraft Folk and the Labour Movement.” p. 91.

Jones' history of leisure in the interwar period identified that "there were also a number of youth organisations catering specifically for girl's leisure".⁸⁴ These included the Girls' Friendly Society, YWCA, and Girl Guides. The Folk unusually sought to fill this gap and, while they did not have a large membership, their appeal catered to the niche that the Kibbo Kift no longer filled after it transformed into the Green Shirts. As Jones had identified in his book on sport, politics, and the working class, the Folk's association with the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society placed it both within the socialist and the recreational context.⁸⁵ This allowed the Folk to do what the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent organisation could not: it successfully combined political activism with youth education and adult enrichment in the outdoors.

Mary Davis' history of the Woodcraft Folk firmly situated it in the history of labour and co-operative movements of the twentieth century in Britain.⁸⁶ Sarah Mills and Peter Kraftl's essay collection situated the Woodcraft Folk in changing ideas of education, childhood, and youth during the interwar period.⁸⁷ Mills argued "that indoor spaces (and practises that crossed indoor/outdoor boundaries) were vitally important".⁸⁸ As not all of the

⁸⁴ Stephen G. Jones, *Workers at Play: A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 68.

⁸⁵ Stephen G. Jones, *Sport, Politics, and the Working Class: Organised Labour and Sport in Interwar Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 115.

⁸⁶ Mary Davis, *Fashioning a New World: A History of the Woodcraft Folk* (Loughborough: Holyoake Books, 2000).

⁸⁷ Sarah Mills and Peter Kraftl, eds. *Informal Education, Childhood and Youth: Geographies, Histories, and Practices* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillian, 2014).

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 66.

activities could take place outdoors, due either to the nature of the activity or the weather, the indoors life of the Woodcraft Folk was equally important. The Folk were at heart focused on youth and education, which gave its activities clear goals. As the Kibbo Kift before, “the Folk sought to forge a 'powerful educational instrument' but did so through often artistic and cultural practises *alongside* direct engagements with nature on camp”.⁸⁹ Rather than divide youth education from the rest of the group’s life, education was the focal point that connected art, culture, and nature. Children alongside adults lived and experienced together within the Folk’s camp.

The contested domestic ideology of the Kibbo Kift did not transfer explicitly to the Folk. The Folk did not focus as heavily upon adult education as the Kibbo Kift attempted to with its lecture series nor did the Folk attempt to restructure the family unit into roof trees. Rather, the Folk looked to adults to serve as educators of the young. By not separating education from the other activities of the Folk as the Kibbo Kift had with the Teacher’s Guild, the Folk avoided the fragmentation issues that plagued the Kibbo Kift. Education’s centrality guided how the Folk operated and its co-educational system as implemented by the Folk in its original Charter. It did have aspects of domestic ideology as “one of our points of criticism of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides that the sexes were too sharply separated: one could not have a movement, those in feeling to the family or the tribe, without freedom for both sexes within it”.⁹⁰ As with the Kibbo Kift before, both sexes were seen to be in partnership, and the co-education system was necessary to fully address the issues that the Folk were concerned with. The Folk’s camp, both as an educational institution and as a leisure space, therefore served as

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p. 75.

⁹⁰ Paul, *Angry Young Man*, p. 62.

a domestic space to a certain extent in which the lifestyle and ideology of the Folk could be performed.

The Woodcraft Folk kept much of the artistic symbolism of the Kibbo Kift in its early years, and some has survived into the present day. The aesthetic influence remains particularly in the logo and green colouring of children's uniforms. The prominence of green in the uniforms has less to do with the Green Shirts and far more to do with the Kibbo Kift's original outdoors philosophy and back to nature connections of Seton's woodcraft ideology. The current circular logo of the Woodcraft Folk continues to reflect the original Kibbo Kift utopian world vision for the organisation. As stated by the Folk itself, "our logo is round to symbolize equality and democracy, with two trees representing young people. It is set against a rising sun, to show the young people growing into the new world based on equality, justice and peace".⁹¹ This logo has not changed since the 1920s when the Folk broke away from the Kibbo Kift, and it represents part of the continuity of the organisation over the past ninety years.⁹²

Currently, the Woodcraft Folk operate through the United Kingdom as a charitable organisation focused on the coeducation of youth. It has maintained its cooperative values as "a movement for children and young people, open to everyone from birth to adult".⁹³ Unlike the Kibbo Kift, which struggled to achieve youth membership and eventually became an adult-orientated organisation when it became the Green Shirts, the Woodcraft Folk have realised the original vision of a coeducational youth movement. Youth education is the central focus as

⁹¹ "History | Woodcraft Folk." Woodcraft.org.uk

⁹² *The Woodcraft Folk: The Beginning and Early Days*. Co-operative History Workshop. County Hall, London. 9 March 1985.

⁹³ Woodcraft Folk. Woodcraft.org.uk

the Woodcraft Folk aim to “offer a place where children will grow in confidence, learn about the world and start to understand how to value our planet and each other”.⁹⁴ To do this, camping out with adult supervision and regular group activities enhance the child’s learning experience, and some camps are designed to be family experiences where several generations of Woodcraft Folk can participate in activities and socialise. The Woodcraft Folk have remained politically active, participating in campaigns for refugees and the preservation of the environment through their campaign hub.⁹⁵

Overall, the Folk have survived by avoiding the intense divisions and rapid top-down changes that the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP suffered. As the SCP fell out of tune with the political and social climate of post-Second World War Britain, the Folk were able to adjust while maintaining woodcraft and socialist ideals. The Folk today proclaim that it “still bears a strong resemblance to the first groups that were set up in 1924-1925 in south London”.⁹⁶ This is true: the Woodcraft Folk has kept its original focus on camping in the outdoors, youth education, and the cultivation of a peaceful world vision.

6.4 Conclusions

Overall, the legacy of the Kibbo Kift is as mixed and ambiguous as the organisation itself. The organisation is not commonly remembered, but it is not wholly forgotten. There was a rock musical by Chris Judge Smith presented at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1976 at the

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ “Woodcraft Folk Campaign Hub.” Woodcraftfolk.org.uk.

⁹⁶ “History | The Woodcraft Folk.” Woodcraftfolk.org.uk.

Traverse Theatre, which Hargrave approved of and attended.⁹⁷ Recent studies by Annabella Pollen and Cathy Ross have made use of the collected art and papers of the organisation. The colourful totems and costumes as well as photographs and a mixture of other ephemera were deposited at the Museum of London in the Social and Working History Collection. The collected papers of the Kibbo Kift, Green Shirts, and SCP were deposited at Cardiff before being moved to the London School of Economics' Youth Movement Archive. Also in the Youth Movement Archive are papers of the Woodcraft Folk and those from John Hargrave and Charles A. Tracey.

The Woodcraft Folk have grown far beyond its origins in the Kibbo Kift, and, in many ways, they are the closest successors to the original ideology and philosophy of the Kibbo Kift. The Green Shirts and both incarnations of the SCP had only short-term effects upon British society and culture. None of these groups had long-term effects on politics or society. The organisations have, like the Kibbo Kift, passed out of common knowledge, but social credit ideology has some relevance in recent debates about universal income. The Woodcraft Folk itself would also benefit from further examination, both of current and past practise. The Folk's continuing activity in the United Kingdom reflects that there is still a desire to camp out and explore both for youth education and for the fun of it. Its educational model still bears resemblance to the original model in the Kibbo Kift, with younger children being taught by older children. While this is common across outdoors youth groups, the Woodcraft Folk's model, with its long history, offers possibly unique historical insight into the development of outdoors education in Britain over the twentieth century to current day.

⁹⁷ Chris Judge Smith. "John Hargrave – 'White Fox': A Biographical Note."

There is also room to examine the Kibbo Kift's connections to groups throughout Europe, particularly in Belgium as well as the social credit connection to Alberta, Canada. There is a body of historical analysis of social credit's affects in Alberta as the party enjoyed success in the interwar period that the SCP did not. Jon Finley's 1972 book on the English origins of social credit situated the story of social credit in England in relationship to the Canadian context, examining how social credit could originate in England but not take hold.⁹⁸ Social credit in Alberta has, however, a mixed legacy. Edward Bell's analysis of social credit and social class argued that, rather than being a conservative, capitalist movement in Alberta, social credit was radical and worked against the status quo.⁹⁹ The Alberta social credit movement under William Aberhart from 1935-1942 was connected to anti-Semitism and clashed with the Canadian Jewish Congress. Aberhart reflected Douglas's conviction that Jewish financiers throughout the world were manipulating the political and economic market for "world domination".¹⁰⁰ Douglas's legacy as an early contributor to *New Age* to his anti-Semitic views has also yet to be fully examined as there is yet no full biography of him or a historical examination of the organisations that he headed as head of the Social Credit Secretariat.¹⁰¹ The organisations under the Secretariat's umbrella could provide a rich study in

⁹⁸ John L. Finley, *Social Credit: The English Origins* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972).

⁹⁹ Edward Bell, *Social Classes and Social Credit in Alberta* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

¹⁰⁰ Janine Stingel, *Social Discredit: Anti-Semitism, Social Credit, and the Jewish Response* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), p. 16.

¹⁰¹ C. B. Macpherson, 'Douglas, Clifford Hugh (1879–1952)', rev. Mark Pottle. *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004)

social credit's legacy in England and potentially throughout Britain. It would also be an area to examine whether and how anti-Semitism was disseminated within Britain during the Second World War as these organisations became mouthpieces for Douglas' increasing anti-Semitism.

At the heart of it, members of the Green Shirts, SCP, and the Woodcraft Folk had to believe in the organisations that they joined. In the case of the Green Shirts and SCP, members were constantly tested to both adjust to the internal changes of the groups and to the rapid changes in society with the Second World War. In comparison, the Woodcraft Folk adapted to external social changes but also kept recognisable aspects in this concentration on youth education and woodcraft activities within the organisation. This allowed for the Folk to develop continuity in its ideology and offered stability to its membership. The Folk's continued success has not been solely due to its rejection of social credit. Its on-going association with Labour and co-operative movements has kept it current, and the Folk has also very much grown into its own. Its relationship with the Kibbo Kift is somewhat ambivalent, but, in recent years, the Folk has referenced its origins in the Kibbo Kift although has been equally quick to point out that it has moved beyond those fraught and somewhat confusing beginnings. Although the Folk are not Paul's original vision of a "Labour Scout Movement," the Woodcraft Folk has become what the Kibbo Kift originally intended: a peace-orientated youth movement based in and around the outdoors.¹⁰²

The Kibbo Kift, as discussed further in the last chapter to this thesis, was hampered not only by a small and constantly changing membership but also its numerous and overly ambitious organisation-wide changes. While there was a small loyal core of members that remained with the organisation through its transformations, it also alienated and confused its

¹⁰² Paul, *Angry Young Man*, p. 60.

existing membership with each major change in policy. It was ultimately out of tune not only with bigger movements of its time in relation to the Labour movement as well as communism and fascism but also with its own membership. The Green Shirts and the SCP continued in this vein, and the movement, with Hargrave as its authoritarian head and with its complicated and ultimately alienating ideology, failed to have a broader social impact. Its legacy however, has had wider impact in the Woodcraft Folk and social credit in Great Britain.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1 “Something Radically Wrong Somewhere”: The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift, 1920 to 1931

The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift attempted throughout its existence to address multiple issues in British society. It wanted, ultimately, to influence and shape culture and to change how the British people lived. It began in August 1920 as an outdoors organisation with roots in the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and it gradually changed into the Green Shirts Movement for Social Credit in January 1932. On the surface, this transformation appeared to be profoundly different from how the organisation began. This thesis examined how members of the Kibbo Kift brought their intellectual thought to influence and shape the organisation’s unique mythology and its domestic ideology over the course of the Kibbo Kift’s existence. Its transformation into a political party for the promotion of social credit was in reaction both to internal organisational shifts as well as the notion that, in British society and culture in general, there was “Something Radically Wrong Somewhere”.¹ The transformation into the Green Shirts signalled that the solution to what was so critically wrong had been found in social credit. The scouting and woodcraft of the Kibbo Kift was not enough to address the radical wrongs. What exactly all these wrongs were as well as where exactly they were

¹ YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 9 (1931; capitalisation as in original text).

remained fairly ill-defined. This ambiguity was deliberate so that the Green Shirts could potentially address and apply the “remedy” of social credit across the nation.²

The organisation had sought from its earliest days a remedy to the ills of society. This was best seen in the writings of members both in Kibbo Kift publications and in private logbooks, like that of Kathleen Milnes'. The London spring of 1923 was, by all meteorological accounts, rather cold and dull. Kathleen Milnes, who was then twenty-three years old, would later recount in her logbook how, dressed for the outdoors and carrying a sketchbook, she went camping out from the city twice during this fairly uninspiring weather.³ She camped alone and in silence with her own thoughts. She spent the day making sketches of flora and fauna. She also, in this time out on her own, channelled her mental energy into philosophical contemplation. A keen reader and regular attender of public lectures in London, Milnes was preoccupied with non-Darwinist theories of evolution. She was particularly interested at that time in Henri Bergson's theory of creative evolution and Samuel Butler's rejection of natural selection and how, at this point in time, human civilisation appeared to be at an eugenic tipping point. Camping and evolution were two of the major issues on Milnes' mind as she sat outdoors, giving richer philosophical colours to her experience of that otherwise cold and dull spring.

Spring 1923 also marked Kathleen Milnes' introduction to the then independent, brightly coloured, and philosophically rich Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. Milnes signed her copy of the Kibbo Kift Covenant, the governing document of the organisation, and attended her first camp with Kinsman W.S. Horlock's Dryad Tribe, which was a local contingent of the larger outdoors camping organisation. This first Kin camping experience coincided with Milnes'

² *ibid.*, p. 12.

³ MOL/SWHC/L198/C2, Blue Falcon's Logbook, p. 1.

study of philosophy in London and occasionally camping out on her own. These camping experiences, both with the Kibbo Kift and by herself, were highly personalised. She painted a new tent in “pale blue [with] green trees round it” and spent time sketching and observing her fellow Kindred.⁴ Her initial weekend camping experiences did not leave Milnes impressed with the personality of the Kibbo Kift. “Somewhat futile and cranky” in personality, the Kibbo Kift’s Covenant, which iterated the organisation’s seven guiding points for world peace, was “so sound it was probably worth going on with”.⁵ Milnes was worried and preoccupied by the decline of civilisation and desired a chance to save it. She came to the conclusion that the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift had the right idea as John Hargrave “appeared (judging from the *Nomad* and other literature) to be out for reality, (too keen on Darwin, though.)”⁶

Although she did not agree with all of the Kibbo Kift or Hargrave’s views, Milnes’ account of how she became involved with the Kibbo Kift revealed two important factors behind the organisation’s early appeal. Firstly, the Kibbo Kift spoke to continuing late Victorian and Edwardian fears of degeneration of civilisation. Evolution, Darwinist and otherwise, was not just a scientific but a social concern. Evolution debates came up against established ideas of religion, class, and race. Although the dialogue of the Kibbo Kift was couched as a reaction to the First World War with its early anti-militarist and anti-technology commentary, it addressed anxieties regarding physical and mental degeneration connected to empire and technology that had been present prior to the war. The Kibbo Kift was concerned with life in Britain and how the citizenry seemed to have fallen behind physically since the

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

start of the industrial age and was consequently degenerating mentally. Its solution in the early years of the 1920s lay in bringing people back to the land. The organisation aimed to get men, women, and children together, and to revitalise the British citizenry through camping out in the fresh air. Together, everyone regardless of gender and age would engage in rigorous physical and mental exercise. Through this, people would reconnect both to each other and to the land itself.

Secondly, the Kibbo Kift was a highly social organisation. Unique for its time, it was coeducational, and its early years focused on recruitment of adults simply interested in or who were already involved in camping, scouting, and woodcraft. In the early 1920s, the Kibbo Kift offered opportunities for new social connections for those like Milnes who were interested in and passionate about camping out but were not yet a member of other related organisations and societies. At the same time, the Kibbo Kift attempted to draw potential members from existing organisations. The Kibbo Kift was therefore both a social opportunity as well as an invasive and reactive element in interwar British outdoors organisations. There was also an underlying element of elitism; while anyone could sign the Covenant to preliminarily join the Kibbo Kift, social acceptance within the organisation was a much more nebulous factor. While new social connections did not always make the best first impression, the two factors of potentially enriching intellectual exchange and broader social connections balanced each other out with the members who chose to stay.

Milnes was one such member. In many ways, she would become the quintessential member as she was one of the few who stayed in the Kibbo Kift throughout its lifetime and through its transformation in the 1930s into the Green Shirt Movement for Social Credit and the Social Credit Party of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The idea of camping out for physical, mental, and emotional fitness combined with the Kibbo Kift's philosophical and educational ideals appealed to Milnes, even though it required a great amount of physical

dedication in time and body as well as acceptance of John Hargrave's leadership. The latter point would prove crucial for Milnes' success and eventual centrality to the Kibbo Kift and its subsequent movements. Hargrave's leadership style did not allow for major compromises. He was, as noted by both members and outsiders, including in Special Branch, authoritarian and, especially as the years progressed, non-democratic.⁷ The paths that Hargrave chose were those of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift and, ultimately, would lead to the dissolution and failure of it and its subsequent organisations.

Individual members could, however, influence Hargrave and therefore the Kibbo Kift's ideological and philosophical life. Milnes brought to the organisation two important philosophical topics: her knowledge of Norse mythology and Bergson's theory of creative evolution. Norse mythology became more prominent in the Kibbo Kift's spiritual life and creative evolution, while eventually eclipsed by Darwin, influenced its ideas about physical fitness and adult education in the mid-1920s. The Kibbo Kift attempted to address the whole by commenting in its publications on a plethora of subjects including science and technology, gender and sexuality, religion and spirituality, empire and race, education and childhood. Often, these topics were intermingled, conglomerated, and occasionally became confused. Although the discussions and debates of the Kibbo Kift attempted to be all-encompassing, it was limited by a relatively small membership and readership of its non-fiction publications.

The main argument of this thesis is that the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift may not have had a long life as an organisation, but it did have lasting impact on dedicated members and produced unique interwar British cultural artefacts. For its dedicated members such as John Hargrave and Kathleen Milnes, the Kibbo Kift's social camping and philosophical exchange had substantial and lifelong impact. Its small but dedicated membership intellectually and

⁷ HO 45/24966, "The Social Credit Party" 8 April 1942 file minutes.

spiritually flourished from its founding in 1921 until the end of 1931. Recent research, as discussed in the introduction of this thesis, focused primarily upon the visual and aesthetic life of the Kibbo Kift as envisioned and directed by John Hargrave; philosophical ideas of members who were already and who would become famous were mentioned in passing. While recent research searched for ways that the Kibbo Kift could be radical and relevant to today, it potentially situated the organisation as one divorced from its more questionable aspects, such as members' enthusiasm for eugenics and how the organisation ultimately enforced a stringent gender binary and domestic distribution of familial duties. The breadth of the Kindred's unique mixture of ideals and influences was readily acknowledged in scholarship, but until this thesis had been rarely discussed in a critical manner when analysing the discourse of the intellectual and gendered thought of the organisation.

While this thesis does not argue that Hargrave's influence was anything but central, it has discussed how other members within the Kibbo Kift, including Kathleen M. Milnes, Vera Chapman, and Arthur C. Garrad, contributed to and influenced the Kibbo Kift. The Kibbo Kift did not exist in a vacuum but rather spoke to multiple issues preoccupying post-First World War British society. It drew from woodcraft, primitivism, futurism, and modernism as well as taking ideological and spiritual inspiration from eugenic theory, mythology, and world religions. On the whole, the Kibbo Kift was guided by Hargrave and he was the main public voice, but, internally, there was much more fluctuation in ideology and personal belief. While certain aspects such as costume and art were progressive, the actual attitude and impact of the Kibbo Kift was at best ambiguous. Its vision of a revitalised, primitive, and tribal British society run by Robin Hoods, Beowulfs, and a supporting cast of fit men and women lives only in the past.

The cultural artefacts of the Kibbo Kift, from its magazines to music, imbued the Kibbo Kift with a rich mythology and visual character. These publications actively reflected

how the Kibbo Kift adjusted its views to contemporary event as well as how it attempted to carry forward anachronistic ideas about the British past and present. Its attempt to create a medieval and woodcraft-flavoured Britain was met with limited success outside the organisation. The Kibbo Kift therefore has an ambiguous legacy that places it both within and outside of the social and cultural milieu of interwar Britain.

The Kibbo Kift is, however, a fascinating and eclectic relic of the interwar period, an ostensibly British but mostly English vision of the world going back to nature where the fire never burned out. There is much still to be done regarding the Kibbo Kift, including the writing of biographies of photographer Angus McBean, Woodcraft Folk founder Leslie Paul, Kinlog scriptor Kathleen Milnes, and author and founder of the Tolkien Society Vera Chapman. Hargrave's later life after the SCP was first dissolved also merits examination. He became involved in a lengthy court battle with Concorde over the design of an automatic map and navigator for aircraft which culminated in a 1976 Public Inquiry.⁸ He was also involved in the 1960s onwards in popular hypnotism, mysticism, and alternative medical practise. The legacy of the organisation is rich and vast and merits examination in future studies.

This thesis sought to give a comprehensive and holistic history of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift from 1920 to 1932 by examining the organisation as an ambitious and reactive product of the First World War. It surveyed how the Kibbo Kift addressed the world around it through first a mixture of Edwardian anxieties, scouting and woodcraft, and eugenic ideology before gradually switching over the second half of the 1920s to C. H. Douglas' social credit. While the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift attempted to influence and shape British society, it was never able to establish a cohesive argument and approach as an organisation. This was due in part to the rapid membership and ideological shifts the organisation went through in 1924-25

⁸ YMA/Hargrave/44, *The Facts of the Case Concerning the Hargrave Automatic Navigator for Aircraft* (1969).

following the Brockley Thing and in 1930-31 as it became the Green Shirts Movement. It was also due to the Kibbo Kift's constantly fluctuating focus; it moved between youth and adult education, physical fitness, nature philosophy, and artistic and spiritual development. This thesis examined the ways that the Kibbo Kift attempted to address these social and cultural preoccupations. It analysed in what ways the organisation reacted to events during the 1920s and therefore how it was a continuation of late Victorian and Edwardian anxiety about physical and mental degeneration. It also illuminated the most unique aspect of the Kibbo Kift as an organisation: its attempt to create a new British mythology centred on the Great Spirit, a nebulous and all-encompassing entity that drew inspiration from world mythologies and religions. The Great Spirit and its mythology, combined with the material culture of the Kibbo Kift, were the most mature aspects of the organisation as a cultural movement in its own right.

Organisation-wide changes were brought about officially by John Hargrave. While Hargrave's style of leadership did prove to be divisive as evidenced most clearly by the breakaway of the Brockley Thing, his choices for the organisation also had their inspiration and support in a small core group of members, which, after 1924, included Kathleen Milnes among others. This small core changed what type of mythology was the main spiritual focus of the Kibbo Kift, from Native American-inspired woodcraft lore to Norse mythology. These changes were, however, not entirely divorced from social and cultural preoccupations of interwar Britain. The Kibbo Kift had elements of an interwar youth moment and adult education organisation, but it was not able to create an approach to education and youth activities that had wide appeal. The Kibbo Kift suffered, perhaps most of all, from an inability to consistently focus and develop singular aspects of its philosophy. The organisation changed rapidly and constantly not only in the makeup of its membership but in ideological and philosophical focus.

The membership of the Kibbo Kift went through two distinct schisms in 1924 and 1930-31. Both of these membership schisms were related to the introduction and growing prominence of social credit in the organisation. The association of figures who made up the Advisory Council lasted until the mid-1920s when the Advisory Council was gradually removed from use following the introduction of social credit to the Kibbo Kift. August 1924 marked the split between the Kibbo Kift and the Brockley Thing, which became the Woodcraft Folk. The second schism occurred over the last two years of the Kibbo Kift's lifetime as the organisation turned increasingly towards a political goal, aiming to actively promote social credit instead of camping out and practising woodcraft. Arguably, the second membership schism marked the end of the Kibbo Kift rather than a transformation into the Green Shirts. Both schisms were directly connected to political and economic shifts in the interwar period. Although, as has been argued, the Kibbo Kift was not forgotten, much of it was no longer relevant to the fight to bring social credit about in Great Britain.

The schisms in membership were directly related to changes in the Kibbo Kift's social and philosophical preoccupations as well as by the growing influence of social credit. While there has been scholarly discussion of Hargrave's influence on the Kibbo Kift, the organisation was also inspired and influenced by the intellectual thought and aspirations of members such as Kathleen Milnes, Vera Chapman, and Cecil Mumford. The intellectual thought of the organisation was firmly rooted in Edwardian sensibilities, although it was often termed in reaction to the First World War. The Kibbo Kift in its early days was particularly concerned with eugenic science and different theories of evolution, and they placed it uniquely through the lens of camping and physical culture. The Kibbo Kift's idea of regeneration encapsulated Edwardian character building and physical culture, but it also remained intimately connected to an older and so-called "primitive" aesthetic of physical and spiritual renewal. Although coeducational, the masculine concept of the Kinsman developed from the

beginning of the organisation, but it took much longer for the feminine concept of the Kinswoman to develop. The Kinswoman never became as conceptually complete as her male counterpart. This was reflected in the intellectual baggage of the Kibbo Kift, which maintained patriarchal divisions, particularly within the family. The organisation's intellectual thought has been preserved in a variety of published tracts, including newsletters which featured philosophical and artistic contributions by active members such as Arthur Garrad, Kathleen Milnes, and Vera Chapman.

The mythology and spiritual life of the group shifted and evolved with each membership shift as did the Kibbo Kift's ideological construction of gender roles and domestic life. On one hand, the mythology of the Kibbo Kift was the most unique aspects of the Kibbo Kift. The mythology of the Kibbo Kift was highly personalised and evolved constantly with inspiration and information from new members. The Great Spirit, as discussed by Hargrave and Margaret A. Ormrod, was an amalgamation of both ancient and contemporary religious and mythological beings including the Christian God, Odin, and Ra as well as a catch-all nature spirit. Communing with the Great Spirit hypothetically necessitated only an individual's ability to camp outdoors and to appreciate natural phenomena. It was from the mythology that the richest and most original aspects of the Kibbo Kift, the Kinlog and individual members' totems, were based. On the other, the spiritual ideology of the Kibbo Kift remained rooted in Victorian and Edwardian superstition and religious values. The Great Spirit of the Kibbo Kift, while unique in the way it was constructed an all-inclusive spiritual philosophy, drew from pre-First World War trends in interest in world religions and couched this interest within a specifically imperial dialogue. In practise, the Great Spirit was a Christian God-like being that existed above all other religions and mythologies. This may be seen clearly in music as well as the plays created for the Kibbo Kift.

The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift, despite reformist aspects to its intellectual thought and highly contemporary visual elements that drew both from folklore tradition and modernism, was ultimately a continuation of Edwardian sensibilities regarding masculinity, femininity, and the family. On one hand, it was a coeducational outdoors organisation and therefore unique for its time in form. The Kibbo Kift did not, however, aim to change the roles of men and women within the public or the domestic sphere. The Kibbo Kift eventually rejected the early feminist support and women's right to vote, instead promoting women's control over the domestic sphere and men's control of the political arena. The family was the central aspect of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift when it was founded in 1921. In *The Great War Brings It Home*, Hargrave put forward the idea of reconstructing the post-First World War family into a roof tree. The roof tree maintained a self-contained, heterosexual family unit but had aspects of communal living in relation to the larger Kibbo Kift camp. In the roof tree and the Kibbo Kift camp, the organisation aimed to influence domestic life and gendered roles. Discussion of the roof tree continued throughout the Kibbo Kift's lifetime and was, alongside the organisation's mythological narrative, one of the richest aspects of Kibbo Kift social commentary. Although the Kibbo Kift has been consistently described in previous secondary literature as a youth movement, studying the roof tree reveals that the organisation was equally if not more so an adult education movement. The roof tree rooted the Kibbo Kift in debate around gender and family in post-First World War Britain. Eventually Hargrave and Garrad's roof tree family fell out of favour, but the debate around the family and gender roles continued in member's publications such as Vera Chapman's women's magazines, *Hearthfire* (1926) and *The Distaff* (1928), and Hargrave's *The Confession of the Kibbo Kift* (1927).

The Kibbo Kift's governing Covenant, created in 1921 and which attracted early members like Milnes, was eventually eclipsed by social credit. The rise of social credit and political activity by the organisation attracted more attention from authorities, and the

presence of a regular spy in the group as well as increasing surveillance as it transformed into the Green Shirts situates the Kibbo Kift firmly in the trend of political radicalisation over the course of the interwar period. The Green Shirts and the SCP were watched closely but were, perhaps, not taken seriously as an organisation. From the regular summaries of “A Message From Hargrave” from the 1930s through the Second World War, it appeared that it was Hargrave who was primarily considered a possible problem rather than the membership of the SCP as a whole. Overall, the “organisational adjustments” that transformed the Kibbo Kift into a political movement and party not only served to change the organisation’s purpose but also caused the Kibbo Kift itself to become obscure in comparison to the subsequent organisations.⁹ The Green Shirts and SCP were very different from their parent organisation, a fact that was not missed internally by members or externally by surveillance. The Kibbo Kift was, however, not entirely disconnected as the Kinlog continued to be updated to reflect the organisation’s continuing narrative. The entries changed in tone, leaving behind the pseudo-medieval language of the entries about the Kibbo Kift, but the community text itself lived on until Hargrave himself died in 1982.

The internal narrative of the organisation was not readily accessible to the public, and, ultimately, the legacy of the Kibbo Kift has become fragmented. On one hand, there are the stories of its successor groups, the Green Shirts, the Social Credit Party, and the Woodcraft Folk. The Green Shirts and the Social Credit Party were the immediate successors to the Kibbo Kift. While not as politically successful as the Alberta Social Credit Party of the same period, they did not suffer from the anti-Semitism that plagued that party’s policies and legacy. The Woodcraft Folk are, perhaps, the successors to the Kibbo Kift’s original purpose. They largely shed the Kibbo Kift’s early regenerative and eugenic theories and focused upon

⁹ YMA/KK/168, July 1931.

socialist and cooperative values. Eventually, they evolved into the current charitable youth movement, coeducational and peace-orientated.

On the other hand, there are the remnants of the Kibbo Kift in its surviving costumes, totems, and written materials. The aesthetic life of the Kibbo Kift has been of much recent interest and examined by Cathy Ross and Annebella Pollen, but the focus on the aesthetic occasionally becomes divorced from the complex and often divisive philosophical debates within the organisation. Membership schisms produced a legacy of, on one hand, a paramilitary political group in the Green Shirts and later the Social Credit Party and, on the other, an aesthetic legacy in the art and costume of the original Kibbo Kift. By the late 1950s, social credit was ideologically divorced from the mythological aspirations of the Kibbo Kift. Mythology and folk belief in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been irrevocably interconnected with ideas about contemporary society. They either reflect the belief that society has degraded in continuing to believe superstition or as attempts to shape conceptualisations of national and local traditions.¹⁰ The gradual phasing out of the mythology and spiritualism that had been the central feature of the organisation in the 1920s created a greater disconnect between the Kibbo Kift and the subsequent organisation than between the Green Shirts and the SCP.

Therefore, the greatest difficulty with placing the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift in a historical perspective originates from its internally contested philosophy and outlook. The Kibbo Kift's philosophical and spiritual life did not survive and has been written off as part of the arcane, esoteric, and occult. The rich and complex mythology, which mixed woodcraft, Norse myth, and popular science among other elements attracted early members to the group,

¹⁰ Lizanne Henderson, *Fantastical Imaginations: The Supernatural in Scottish History and Culture* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2009), p. xiv.

but its memory has become a fragmented and often confusing. There has been very little distillation of its heavily gendered philosophical ideas and cultural ideology. This thesis has sought to remedy this by demonstrating that the Kibbo Kift is a distinctive and nuanced lens into the rapidly shifting social and cultural milieu of interwar Britain. At the same time, it examined how the Kibbo Kift was a continuation of pre-First World War social sensibilities in how it viewed gender roles and the family. While the Kibbo Kift was coeducational in its membership, participation in the group was divided in relation to ideas about gender and became increasingly patriarchal. The roof tree family unit, while different inasmuch as the setting of the family was in the outdoors, was ultimately a patriarchal family unit that maintained Victorian and Edwardian sensibilities of gender roles with the man as the father and provider and the woman as the mother and keeper of the domestic space of the tent and hearth. The roof tree was also only nominally put into practice, and it, like the large standing camps that Hargrave imagined, remained mostly a fantasy until these were eventually set aside so that members could further focus on how to promote social credit.

The Kibbo Kift desired a world that was healthy, imaginative, and, to a certain extent, fantastic, but it was not removed from reality. Its members desired something better than what had come before and hoped to avoid the violence of the First World War that all had experienced. It was not a youth movement but rather a creation for adults to go into the outdoors and craft, if only for a day on the weekend, ideas, trappings, and aesthetics that were inspired by books, myth, and fellow members. The prevailing feeling that there was “Something Radically Wrong Somewhere” kept dedicated members coming back and working hard to hopefully bring about a better world.¹¹

¹¹ YMA/KK/70, *Kibbo Kift*, p. 9.

Appendix

Totem House Roster

This appendix covers the roster of the Totem House, the official membership list used by the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift in 1928.¹ The Totem House compiled proper names and woodcraft names of members who paid their membership dues and agreed to be part of the Totem House. Each member was given a number, which would be changed if the member decided to change their woodcraft name. The records of the Totem House are missing members numbered 92 to 100, 119, and 131. This list does not include members who left prior to the Totem House's formation nor those who may have been active but did not pay into the Totem House scheme.

NUMBER	NAME	WOODCRAFT NAME	ADDITIONAL NOTES
1	G.T. Gregory	Wanderer	
2	V. Gregory	Romany	
3	Raymond J. Dixon	Eagle	
4	Cecil Paul Jones	Old Mole	
5	John Hargrave	White Fox	
6	H.G. Russell	Konu	
7	Ruth (Clark) Hargrave	Minobi	
8	M. Jowitt	Kootima	
9	Joyce Reason	Sea Otter	
10	Kathleen M. Milnes	Blue Falcon	

¹ YMA/KK/115, Totem House membership list.

11	D. Jowitt	Marama	
12	K. Bushnell	Kittiwake	
13	Stanley Paul Dixon	Hawk	
14	Ian Ross	Kee-mo Sah-bee	
15	I. Thomson	Watanopa	
16	Arthur B. Allen	Lone Wolf	
17	F. Jackson	Gray Heron	
18	L. Southcombe	Corax	
19	I.O. Evans	Blue Swift	
20	Alice Marshall	Owaissa	
21	Marjorie Lodge	Songan	
22	H. Field	Wontolla	
23	R. Parrott	Lone Crow	
24	George C. Morrish	Batwing	
25	C.C. Lawrence	Chibiabos	
26	-	Silent Beaver	Name protected
27	Winifred Tuckfield	Iarmailteach	
28	R. Dollimore	Firefly	
29	G. D. Capp	Lone Otter	
30	Carole S. Griffiths	Dione	
31	E. Palmer	Red Fox	
32	A. Simpson	Hawkeye	Under 18 (uncertain)
33	Mrs. Hutchins	April	
34	J.W. Lesie	Green Flame	
35	H.T. Webb	Kestrel	
36	Mrs. Webb	Sunray	
37	Mrs. Allen	Willow	
38	Charles A. Tracey	Will Scarlet	Under 18
39	Muriel C. Gray	Gray Squirrel	
40	F. Laing	Wah-da-ga	
41	B.F. Bushnell	Mingan	
42	J.C. Wright	Owl	
43	Joan Hutchins	Oenone	Under 18
44	Gerald Ross	Addax	
45	W.T. Wilson	Lapwing	
46	Ruth Beedham	Beech	Under 18
47	H.T. Hughes	Buffalo	
48	K.H. Travers	Crana	
49	Mrs. Morrish	Raven	
50	Mrs. Devenish	Bracken	
51	Doris Smith	Lone Pine	

52	Everett Palmer	Black Bow	Under 18 (uncertain)
53	E.C. Sergeant	Gray Falcon	
54	A.J. Cordell	Woodpecker	
55	K. Burkill	Windy Leaf	
56	Trevor Sutton	Bagheera	
57	H.N. Whitaker	Pine Cone	
58	Joy Clark	Gazelle	
59	H. Hassan	Black Arrow	
60	Walken	Tatonka-Wombles	
61	Wulcko	Wolf of the Yoke	
62	Reed	Kototen	
63	R.G. Rance	Pathfinder	Out of Kin
64	J.A.B. Magson	Hodin	Out of Kin
65	H. King	Cuchullain	Out of Kin
66	Mrs. Kimberley	Badger	
67	Mrs. McBean	Sycamore	
68	Angus McBean	Angus Og	
69	Coates	Fellwender	
70	Brown	Haelga	
71	Rowan McBean	Rowan	
72	Warren	Grimstock	
73	M. Barker	Ken Ea	
74	Mrs. Tucker	Storm	
75	K. Tucker	Corin	
76	Miss W. Hesse	Celandine	
77	Mrs. Platten	Hetork	
78	G. Bisset-Smith	Kuska	
79	Gummuson	Hazel	
80	Wilson	Chikadee	
81	F.V. Peart	Tishuan	
82	R. Nimon	Flying Gull	
83	John Wright	Redwing	
84	Vera Chapman	Lavengri	
85	Gladys Ledger	Oaken Leaves	
86	G.K. Tasken	Wayland	
87	Parrot	Korbo	Master Printer
88	F. R. Dixon	Quonat	
89	L.J. Lowther	Merlin	
90	Mrs. Kimberley	Chetowaik	
91	Jos. O'Neil	Laughing Kingfisher	
101	Hubert Lays	Duimstuart	
102	David Chubb	Screechowl	
103	Miss G. Watson	Libra	
104	C.H. Browne	Cougar	Under 18 (uncertain)
105	R.C. Syme	Elk	

106	H.de Romntree	Penguin	
107	E. Jungerman	Lynn	
108	Walker	Kraken	
109	Rumaizen	Gray Wolf	
110	Miss Fowell	Heather	
111	Mr. Cooper	Leopard	
112	C.S. Harris	Delphinus	
113	K. Cainer	Eothen	
114	C. Issacs	Dormouse	
115	M. Nokes	Starling	
116	D.M. Frost	Vega	
117	D.E. Wright	Tawny Owl	
118	Mrs. Holmes	Sorrel	Formerly Miss Clark
120	H.A.G. Cooper	Laverok	
121	Miss Hurley	Moth	
122	Miss Niman	Coral	
123	Miss Robinson	Holly	
124	Mis. Hughes	Bron	
125	W. Foster	Rock Panther	
126	H.Q. Stephens	Keego	
127	V.M. Milnes	Hawthorn	
128	D.W.G.G. Parsons	Insimbi	
129	Mrs. Taylor	Dolphin	
130	H. Field	Mouse	Changed name
132	D.P. Hamon	Flying Squirrel	

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