

91436R



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## Level 3 History 2020

### 91436 Analyse evidence relating to an historical event of significance to New Zealanders

2.00 p.m. Thursday 19 November 2020  
Credits: Four

## RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for History 91436.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–8 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

## INTRODUCTION: Truby King: Plunket founder

Sir Frederic Truby King is one of New Zealand's significant figures. He was instrumental in the creation of the Society for the Promotion of the Health of Women and Children (known nowadays as the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society, or Plunket) in 1907. Plunket aimed to assist mothers in raising healthy newborn babies in New Zealand. It provided advice on nutrition, sleeping patterns, and hygiene.



Sir Frederic Truby King

Truby King was once the medical superintendent of Seacliff Asylum<sup>1</sup> near Dunedin before moving to Wellington. He revolutionised the way in which patients were treated for a host of illnesses. He developed the idea that mental health could be, in part, greatly helped with exercise, hobbies, and diet. However, his greatest legacy perhaps was setting up Plunket. This charity focuses on the health and nutrition of babies, and is still very influential today.

He also had views on eugenics, which are now deemed controversial. Eugenics is a set of beliefs and practices that aim to improve the genetic quality of a human population, typically by excluding people and groups judged to be inferior, and promoting those judged to be superior. It advocates for people with specific desirable hereditary traits having healthy children, and aims to remove disease, disabilities, and so-called undesirable characteristics from the human population.

<sup>1</sup>. asylum                      an institution for the care of the mentally ill

Image: <https://teara.govt.nz/en/node/223799>

## SOURCE A: Notes on Truby King

Truby King was, above all, an individualist ... and as superintendent of an isolated asylum aiming for self-sufficiency, he was able to develop his theories to the full .... He refused an early offer of an assistant, preferring to keep the whole of the medical treatment in his own hands. Seacliff became his personal fiefdom<sup>1</sup> in which he attempted to create a world based on the principle of "hygiene for the body, hygiene for the mind". This implied external improvements to the living conditions of the patients, and close attention to their moral welfare. The former could be achieved by improvements in plumbing, ventilation, and diet, while the latter relied on exercise, suitable recreation, rest, and the greatest amount of liberty consistent with safety.

<sup>1</sup>. fiefdom                      an area over which someone exercises control as or in the manner of a feudal lord

Source (adapted): Professor Barbara Brookes, 'Frederic Truby King and the Seacliff Asylum' in *New Perspectives on the History of Medicine* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 1990), quoted in Lloyd Chapman, *In a Strange Garden: The Life and Times of Truby King* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 56, <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-ChaStra-t1-body-d7.html>.

**SOURCE B: Seacliff Asylum**

Seacliff Mental Asylum, showing the main buildings and grounds.

Image: <https://sites.google.com/site/historyofseacliff/home/patient-treatment>

**SOURCE C: An analysis of a prescriptive ideology**

... King helped to elaborate a 'new religion of health' ... and played an influential role in presenting the medical profession's claim to novel forms of social authority. In the guise of reasserting traditional moral standards and the cults of true womanhood and domesticity, King propounded a new vision of the family. But his subordination of medical science to traditional morality, while enlisting the enthusiastic support of many Protestant activists, must not obscure the fact that he believed the family incapable of fulfilling its functions unless the wife-mother had been trained and supervised by scientific experts. Although not the first, King became the most influential advocate in New Zealand of an ideology of medical therapy which "from the beginning directed itself not merely against disease but against superstition, backwardness, and popular 'immorality'".

Source (adapted): Erik Olssen, 'Truby King and the Plunket Society, An Analysis of a Prescriptive Ideology', p. 22, [http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1981/NZJH\\_15\\_1\\_02.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1981/NZJH_15_1_02.pdf).

## **SOURCE D: Plunket's founder was an awful person obsessed with eugenics**

**Emily Writes, Parents Editor of *The Spinoff* website, speaks to researcher Leimomi Oakes about Plunket's dark past and the despicable views of its founder, Sir Frederic Truby King.**

Since becoming a parent six years ago and being introduced to our country's Plunket health service, I've been fascinated by the history of the organisation. By all accounts, its founder Frederic Truby King – generally known as Truby King – seemed to know very little about children while being very into giving newborn babies orange juice. He was also anti-hugging, and I've never much admired him for inflicting on generations of parents the idea that showing affection to your babies was coddling ....

Leimomi Oakes, a textile and fashion historian, Toi Whakaari costuming teacher and writer, has begun a fantastic series on her blog *The Dreamstress* ....

I wanted to ask Leimomi about what she's uncovered about Truby King.

**First up, I loved your blog post about the Truby King Gardens. I had no idea about their history. What made you want to look into them?**

I read all the plaques at the gardens the first time I visited them, and thought "wow, this guy sounds amazing". I'm the kind of person who always wants to know *more* so I went home and looked up everything I could on Truby King – including searching him on Papers Past, where you can read pre-1940s New Zealand newspapers. And suddenly he wasn't so amazing.

**So who was Truby King?**

He was a health reformer, most famous for founding the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society. It was named for Lady Plunket, wife of the governor-general in 1907. The society's goal was to "Help the Mothers and Save the Babies", and was aimed at improving hygiene, health, and child-rearing practices. Which sounds lovely. But ... King was also a huge proponent<sup>1</sup> of eugenics, had some terrible ideas about women's ability to be both mothers and educated, and was a massive racist. And these ideas were heavily, heavily reflected in the early Plunket Society policies.

**The eugenics stuff is grim – as is the way the early Plunket Society was used as a vehicle for it. Can you tell me more about that?**

Early Plunket Society writings include phrases like "The Race marches forward on the feet of Little Children" and yeah, that totally, 100 % meant the white, European race.

Because King was really into eugenics, he believed that anyone who he viewed as defective shouldn't reproduce. Defectives, as described by a New Zealand politician of the time, included "alcoholics, imbeciles, illegitimate children (and their mothers), prostitutes, criminals, the feeble-minded, lunatics, epileptics, deaf-mutes, the unemployable, the tubercular, the immoral (e.g. homosexuals), anyone from another race, those with incurable diseases".

<sup>1</sup> proponent      a person who argues in favour of something



**SOURCE E: Karitane nurses and babies, 1929**

Karitane nurses holding babies and toddlers outside the Karitane Hospital, Whanganui, in 1929. The Karitane movement, like the Plunket Society, had been founded by the renowned health reformer Frederic Truby King, whose strong eugenic beliefs helped set the public health agenda in the 1920s. He urged New Zealanders to do all they could to breed an 'Imperial race', and condemned birth control and abortion as instruments of 'race suicide'.

Image: 'Karitane nurses and babies in 1929', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/karitane-nurses-and-babies-1929>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 29-Oct-2015.

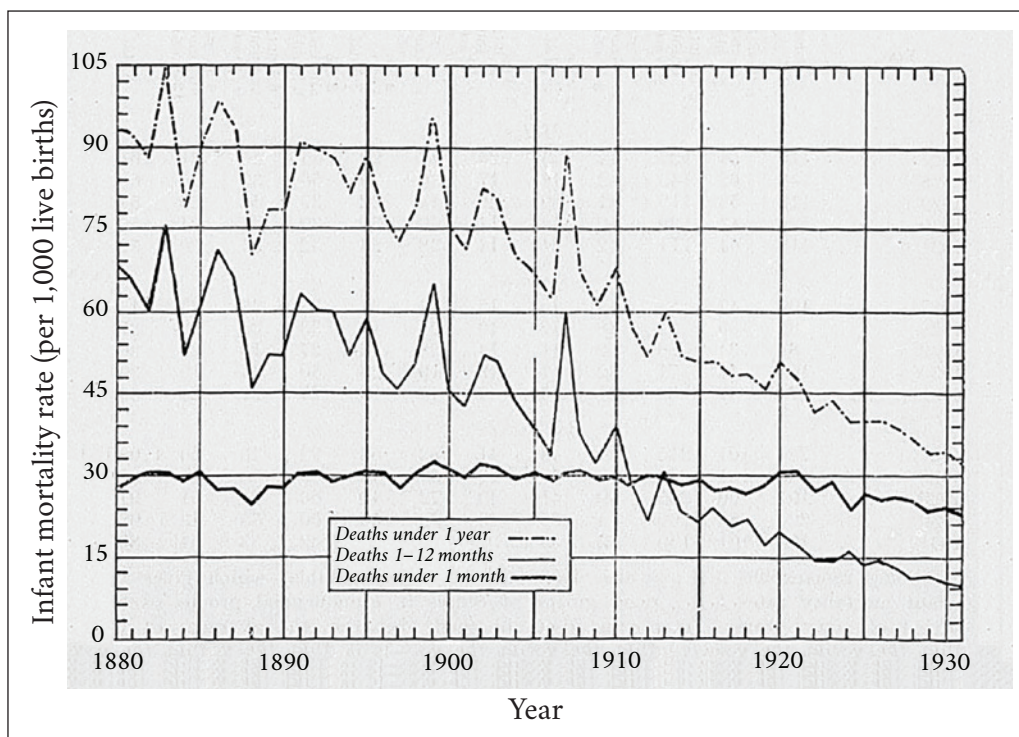
**SOURCE F: New Zealand infant mortality, 1880–1931**

Image: [https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New\\_Zealand\\_Official\\_Yearbooks/1933/images/fig111\\_1.jpg](https://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/1933/images/fig111_1.jpg)

## SOURCE G: Plunket Society stamps



A stamp celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Plunket Society and showing founder Sir Truby King.

Image: <https://stamps.nzpost.co.nz/new-zealand/1957/plunket-society>

## SOURCE H: New rose named after Truby King

A pinky-red floribunda rose propagated<sup>1</sup> by amateur grower, Mrs L. M. Harris, of Kerikeri, has been named the Truby King Rose, in honour of the late Sir Truby King, the founder of the Plunket Society.

The rose will be available for the 1966 planting season, and royalties from the sale of each bush will go to the Plunket Society.

This news was announced by Mrs I. C. Horlon, Dominion Vice-President of the Plunket Society, at the recent Dominion Conference held in Wellington.

<sup>1</sup>. propagated      multiplied / reproduced

Source (adapted): *Upper Hutt Leader*, vol XXI, no 44 (25 November, 1964), p. 7.

## SOURCE I: Truby King House and Garden

### A hidden house and garden worth a visit

Welcome to Truby King House and Garden, a 1.9 hectare slice of history tucked into a beautiful corner of Wellington. This heritage-listed estate includes a unique house and garden nestled in Wellington's Melrose hills along the Southern Walkway. Though one of Wellington's lesser known gardens, this estate offers a special look at Wellington's past, as well as the ocean below.

### Headquarters for key historical figures

Truby King House and Garden has had several prominent residents over time – perhaps most notably Sir Truby King himself. Together, Sir Truby and Lady Isabella co-founded the Plunket Society in 1907. They later founded similar societies in England, Australia, South Africa, India, and Canada.

Sir Truby and Lady Isabella King are widely remembered for their contribution to improving the health of children and the mentally ill. Their work created refuge for recovering mothers and children. The estate serves as their final resting place today, with both interred in an on-site mausoleum.



A view of the garden surrounding the home of Frederic Truby King in Melrose, Wellington, April 1943. The house can just be seen above the trees at the top of the rise.

Source (adapted): <https://wellingtongardens.nz/our-gardens/truby-king-park/>

Image: Home and garden of Sir Truby King in Melrose, Wellington. Ref: 1/4-000437-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22574467.



## **SOURCE J: Childcare gurus<sup>1</sup> who have changed parenting**

**It's been 70 years since the idea of the “good enough mother” was popularised by psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott. Since then, there's been a plethora of parenting advice, with everything from the naughty step to a time limit on cuddling catching on.**

History has provided no shortage of “supernanny” figures with big ideas about how best to raise children.

Childcare advice is a multi-billion pound industry with an avalanche of books, magazines, and television shows competing for credibility.

Among the people who have had the biggest impact on parenting over the past 100 years is Sir Frederic Truby King.

The child welfare reformer is credited with drastically reducing infant mortality in his native New Zealand. His research also led to a radical improvement in childhood nutrition and he was knighted in 1925 for his contribution to society.

But for all of his laudable achievements, Truby King is undoubtedly best known as an early champion of enforcement parenting – with its emphasis on discipline and detachment.

<sup>1</sup>. guru                      an influential teacher

Source (adapted) : Alex Campbell, *BBC News*, 4 May, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22397457>.

## **SOURCE K: A quote about Truby King from George Bernard Shaw**

*George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) was an Irish playwright and literary critic, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1925. Shaw was also a prominent British socialist, with often contentious views; he promoted eugenics and alphabet reform, and opposed vaccination and organised religion.*

“Truby King was the greatest man in New Zealand, and should have the most imposing monument New Zealand can build to commemorate him.”

*George Bernard Shaw, (April 1934)*

Source: ‘The Melrose Library: Reflecting the Life and Works of Truby King’, an exhibition at the University of Otago, 2015, [https://www.otago.ac.nz/library/exhibitions/truby\\_king/](https://www.otago.ac.nz/library/exhibitions/truby_king/).