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Huddersfield's Humanitarians: A history of the aims and origins of the Huddersfield and District Famine Relief Committee

Adam Joseph Millar

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of MA by Research in History

University of Huddersfield

August 2018

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Abstract

This thesis makes the contribution of an in-depth history of a small famine relief organisation in Huddersfield, providing a new case study to the historiography, whilst also contextualising this smaller organisation within the history of Oxfam, and famine relief in Greece and the wider world. The major actors within the organisation, such as Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson are analysed, and it will be expressed that they provided an incredible contribution to the survival of the organisation. For the first time, this thesis will put the famine of Bengal and Greece within the same frame of reference, highlighting how both were caused by British wartime policies, and how Hudfam interlinked the two to provide relief for both events. Furthermore, the importance of pacifism, Quakerism, and internationalism, to the origins of Hudfam will be stressed, all of which are features of a continued network of concern with Huddersfield since the First World War.

Dedications and Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank Rebecca Gill for her dedication and commitment to her supervisory role. Without her support, this study would never have got off the ground. I owe her a great debt and will forever be thankful for all her time.

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Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to all my lost loved ones. You have all inspired me greatly and I miss you all dearly.

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Introduction

On the 28th October 1943, the inaugural meeting of the Huddersfield and District Committee for Famine Relief (Hudfam) was held at the YWCA committee room on New North Road, Huddersfield.¹ At this meeting, the committee agreed that the objective of their organisation would be to 'relieve famine wherever possible', and with hundreds of similar committees forming across Britain the previous year, Huddersfield joined a growing movement that vowed to alleviate human suffering in Nazi-occupied Europe.² With Britain's wartime blockade of Europe well under way by 1940, the famine relief movement tirelessly challenged the unwavering commitment to the blockade policy from the war cabinet, and indeed, the majority of parliament, but the capacity for success was slight throughout the Second World War. Nonetheless, famine relief organisations developed throughout Britain, bound by a sense of moral or political obligation. For some, such as the Oxford committee, this obligation was established through Quaker morality and academic interest, particularly in Greece, which features heavily in the historiography. For others, such as the Manchester and Salford committee, the desperation of those suffering at the hands of the Nazis, especially European Jewry, compelled likeminded individuals to organise and act. To date, this history has received much less attention, and will receive coverage within this thesis. In the case of Hudfam, it was a fusion of conscientious individuals and ideologies concerned with suffering across the world that stirred the English town of Huddersfield into relief work, just as it had during the First World War.³ This thesis makes the contribution of an in depth history of a small famine relief organisation in Huddersfield,

¹ *Huddersfield and District Committee for Famine Relief (Hudfam), Annual Report, 1943-1944*. Hudfam Archive, West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS), KC547/4/1.

² *Hudfam Minute Book*, 28 October 1943. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

³ Gill, R. (2016). 'Brave little Belgium' arrives in Huddersfield ... voluntary action, local politics and the history of international relief work'. *Immigrants & Minorities*, vol.34, no.2, pp. 132-150.

providing a new case study to the historiography, whilst also contextualising this smaller organisation within the history of Oxfam, and famine relief in Greece and the wider world.

Today, with refugees arriving in Europe from Syria and Sub-Saharan Africa, many taking perilous journeys and risking their own lives, and the fear of famine spreading across Yemen and South Sudan, the world is currently facing the biggest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War.⁴

This has prompted questions surrounding international humanitarian action and the moral obligation of the European people, which have dominated contemporary media discussions. The focus of the contemporary media debate often focuses on the humanitarian responses by nation states, transnational organisations, and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), causing the actions of local government, communities, and faith groups to be side-lined. However, across the UK, a consortium of towns and cities of sanctuary have been created.⁵ The City of Sanctuary movement is a collective of councils and local communities which provides support to refugees settling in Britain and raises awareness of their plight. In June 2010, the Huddersfield Interfaith Council launched a successful campaign to promote Huddersfield as a Town of Sanctuary.⁶ Anne Bettys, a local Quaker, claims that the campaign “aims to change people's attitudes to those who are seeking sanctuary.”⁷ There has been a long history of Quaker involvement in charitable acts and voluntary action during the nineteenth and twentieth century, and this has continued into the modern day, as evidenced by Anne Bettys’ commitment to the sanctuary campaign.⁸ This type of campaign is not an irregularity in Huddersfield, and in fact, the West Yorkshire town has a long tradition of aiding and accommodating refugees, in addition to the support provided by the community for overseas relief. Since the First World War, Huddersfield has accommodated Belgian,

⁴ *The Guardian*, 10 March 2017.

⁵ *The Guardian*, 26 December 2015.

⁶ BBC Bradford & West Yorkshire. (2010). *Huddersfield aims to become a Town of Sanctuary*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bradford/hi/people_and_places/religion_and_ethics/newsid_8751000/8751571.stm.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Gill, R. (2013). *Calculating Compassion: Humanity and Relief in War, Britain 1870-1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. Pp. 201-203.

Czech, Basque, and Jewish refugees, and has provided famine relief to India, amongst many, through Hudfam.⁹ This is not to say Huddersfield and the UK more generally have had an open-door policy towards refugees, but rather there are small networks of concerned and compassionate individuals that have supported humanitarian causes, and it is within these networks of concern that the history of Hudfam sits. Whilst not identical to the concerns of the modern day, this thesis will uncover some of the earlier connections and networks of relief and voluntary action within Huddersfield and highlight the significant continuities that helps this thesis become an important contribution to the local history of Hudfam and the historiography of humanitarianism. To unearth the continuities of voluntary action in Huddersfield, this thesis will question the motivations and ideals of Hudfam, discover their methods of fundraising and wider aims, examine their strategies for survival and growth, and discuss the close relationship between Hudfam and Oxfam after the Second World War.

When interpreting the historiography of humanitarianism, it is important to acknowledge that there are a range of approaches to this past. There are many aspects of humanitarianism, from overseas aid to philanthropy at home, first aid during war to calls for public engagement. Some organisations work overseas on expeditions to support those in need, whereas others raise funds to support the work of more prominent humanitarian organisations working within the field. Thus, the historiography of humanitarianism encompasses many histories, and is a field that continues to burgeon. The emergence of humanitarianism as an expanding topic of historiographical inquiry has created an arena for interdisciplinary debate between historians and political scientists.

Historiographical debate has often focused on a range of issues, such as the origins of humanitarianism, the motivations of relief organisations and their approach, the politics of humanitarianism, and the contexts which influence and hinder humanitarian action. Whilst political scientists tend to look at this history broadly, focusing on key developments and change over the

⁹ Gill. "Brave Little Belgium' arrives in Huddersfield'. Pp. 132-150; Thank you to Frank Grombir for providing information on the support for Czech Refugees during the Second World War; See reference to accommodating Jewish Refugees in: Wilson, E. (1998). *Encounters on the Way*. York: William Sessions Limited. Pp. 2-3.

course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historians tend to focus on more nuanced case studies, often providing evidence of continuity between relief organisations. As a historical study, this thesis will provide a new, local case study to this field, focusing on the origins and motivations of Hudfam, offering evidence of both continuity and change from other relief organisations, such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Fund (SCF). This thesis offers an additional contribution beyond an institutional history of Hudfam by creating an organisational history, which looks at the means of survival within the organisation, but also offers a genealogical approach, uncovering the backstory of Hudfam, and mapping the network of connections with other humanitarian organisations. Thus, using new archival sources from the West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS), this thesis will begin with a deep understanding of the origins of Hudfam, mapping out the attitudes and beliefs that influence individuals to create the organisation, as opposed to viewing a crisis point such as the Second World War as the starting point of the organisation. Therefore, this origin story will offer an additional contribution to the historiography, emphasising the importance of the concerned networks that were involved in Hudfam's creation, creating a deeper, organisational case study. The connections between Oxfam and Hudfam are significant, and their continued cooperation throughout the twentieth century will feature heavily within this thesis. More surprisingly, there are interesting continuities of humanitarian origins between Hudfam and the SCF. Like Hudfam, the SCF's origins are heavily embedded within Quaker and pacifist networks, with writer and pacifist Vera Brittain playing a role in the creation and development of both organisations.¹⁰ As will be discussed in chapter one, Brittain's pacifist networking prompted the creation of Hudfam, and the interest of all three parties in Indian affairs led to the expansion of relief to those suffering from the Bengal famine in 1943.¹¹

¹⁰ Brittain, V. (1934). *Testament of Youth* (7th ed.). London: Victor Gollancz Ltd; Gill. *Calculating Compassion*. P. 203.

¹¹ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1943-1944*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1; *The World's Children*, Winter 1943. Save the Children Fund (SCF) Archive, University of Manchester Library (UML).

Whilst arguably historians have avoided writing a singular history of humanitarianism due to the complexities of the field, the political scientist Michael Barnett has attempted to create a historical framework for humanitarianism in *Empire of Humanity*. Michael Barnett is significant to the historiography, because his work offers a broad understanding of the history of humanitarianism, and inadvertently allows for historians to offer critique. In *Empire of Humanity*, Michael Barnett creates a rigid framework in which humanitarianism exists.¹² Due to his background in the social sciences, Barnett uses typology to create categorical variables of humanitarianism, identifying three distinctive ages of humanitarianism, each distinguished by what he sees as the defining global contexts of these ages, and the changing qualities of aid and organisation. The first is the age of imperial humanitarianism which covers the late eighteenth century to World War Two.¹³ This age, Barnett argues, is defined by colonialism, commerce and civilising missions.¹⁴ The second age, the age of Neo-Humanitarianism (from the end of World War Two to the end of the Cold War), is defined by the Cold War and nationalism, development and sovereignty.¹⁵ The last age within his structure of humanitarianism is Liberal Humanitarianism, an age defined by the liberal peace, globalisation, and human rights.¹⁶ Using this framework, Hudfam would transcend the first two of these ages, and more familiar organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Save the Children Fund (SCF) would cross all three. This would suggest this categorisation by Barnett is problematic, as the lines between each of these respective ages are more blurred than he allows, and continuities between these ages are apparent. Furthermore, whilst the approaches or the geographical focus of humanitarian organisations may change, attitudes and networks do not follow epochs. One example of a more nuanced approach to the history of humanitarian action across time would be Gill's *Calculating Compassion*, which maps out the

¹² Barnett, M. (2011). *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. New York: Cornell University Press.

¹³ *Ibid.* P. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* P.9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 7-9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 7-9.

networks of concern that are active at several crisis points, such as the Quakers and the SCF.¹⁷ That said, Barnett deserves credit for the analytical framework he creates, as historians have neglected to write a singular history of the field. This history that Barnett writes allows for a basic understanding of humanitarian action over time, which is beneficial to historians approaching this subject, and helps to provide structure to the debate. However, Barnett's framework has noticeable flaws, as Bronwen Everill has highlighted. Everill argues that his hypothesis is 'weakened in parts by the unevenness of its structure, and a non-historical approach to a historical topic.'¹⁸ Additionally, Everill suggests that his work is not methodically aligned with a historical approach, creating an imbalance in his work, with the major focus on the latter twenty years of his periodical attention.¹⁹

Nonetheless, one of the most significant observations within *Empire of Humanity* is the continuation of paternalism throughout its structure. Barnett suggests that 'Neo-Humanitarianism resembled Imperial Humanitarianism in one final way: paternalism', continuing to add that whilst this idea of paternalism may have evolved, 'humanitarianism was still something done for and to others, not with them'.²⁰ This argument by Barnett holds merit, and whilst Hudfam was internationalist in its outlook, imperial impulses of paternalism can be seen within the organisation, especially as post-war Hudfam began to work with organisations across the globe to help with development in various nations such as India and China (Hong Kong).²¹ Despite this, the thesis will evidence how individual organisations did not thoroughly comply with his historical construct, and will highlight why composing a rigid categorisation for humanitarianism over time, and simply focusing on larger agencies, is problematic.

¹⁷ Gill. *Calculating Compassion*. Pp. 98-100 and 201-207.

¹⁸ Everill, B. (2011). Humanitarianism and Humanitarian Intervention [Review of the books *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, by M. Barnett; *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*, by B. Simms and D. J. B. Trim]. *Reviews in History*, review no. 1141. [<https://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1141>, Accessed on 01/08/2018].

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Barnett. *Empire of Humanity*. P. 105.

²¹ Wilson, E. (Undated). Recording of Elizabeth Wilson [Describing the events of her life and Hudfam]. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/6/7.

Klose's edited collection of essays, *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention*, attempts to construct a typological history of humanitarian action, defining this as intervention over the last three centuries.²² Klose argues that there are three defining features of humanitarian intervention: 'the transboundary interference in the domestic affairs of a foreign state, the predominant humanitarian purposes, and the coercive nature of the engagement.'²³ He argues that this definition separates humanitarian intervention from other forms of humanitarian practice, such as aid or foreign relief, often carried out by UN organisations or NGOs such as CARE or Oxfam.²⁴ Similarly to Barnett, Klose takes a categorical approach to the history of humanitarian intervention, highlighting defining moments of crisis, and attempting to provide pure definitions and distinctions between different humanitarian practices. This approach is problematic, as he focuses the attention of humanitarian intervention solely onto the actions of states and gives this a militaristic meaning. However, the lines are often blurred between the actions of government, and the aid work of non-governmental organisations. National governments and non-governmental organisations were not dichotomised entities within the field of humanitarianism, rather, they were often cooperative on humanitarian matters. As Bocking-Welch argues, there was often integration between those that work with governments, and those that work with humanitarian campaigns, suggesting that ex-colonial administrators would often work with campaigns such as the Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FFHC), and those within humanitarian organisations would often work with or as governments officials.²⁵ Therefore, whilst it is helpful to historians that Barnett and Klose have attempted to write broad histories of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention over time, these histories become too categorical, and attempt to usher the changing nature of humanitarianism into epochs, as opposed to highlighting the continuities of humanitarian action,

²² Klose, F. (ed.) (2016). *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

²³ *Ibid.* P. 8.

²⁴ *Ibid.* Pp. 8-9.

²⁵ Bocking-Welch, A. (2012). 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses: British Involvement in the United Nations Freedom from Hunger Campaign, 1960–70'. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 40, No. 5, P. 882.

and the networks that were created. This thesis will challenge this approach, avoiding distinct categorisations of humanitarian ages, and instead, highlights the continuities of networks of concern. However, Barnett's acknowledgement of the continuation of paternalistic approaches to humanitarianism and development holds merit and will be used to assess Hudfam's outlook.

This thesis is particularly concerned with famine relief, which features heavily within humanitarian historiographical inquiry. This historiography focuses on famine in Greece and more broadly across Europe due to the British blockade, often ignoring the engagement of humanitarian organisations with issues of famine within the Global South. This thesis will challenge the historiographical absence of wider issues of famine, placing the Greek famine, and the Bengal famine of 1943 within the same frame of reference. In doing so, this thesis will attempt to reshape the historiographical framework, highlighting the concurrent issue of famine both in Europe and in India during the Second World War. Beaumont, Clogg, and Kazamias have all contributed to this subject, but their focus differs. Beaumont emphasises the politics of relief during the Second World War, arguing that the political success of famine relief organisations was minimal, but not entirely futile.²⁶ Beaumont assesses the success of these organisations based on how effective they were in breaking down Britain's blockade policy against occupied Europe, and therefore suggests they failed in their aims as there 'were only two major concessions in the blockade, Vichy France and Greece, and neither of these was obviously a victory for the protest movement'.²⁷ Instead, Beaumont suggests that this highlights the strength of defiance from the British government in the face of transnational protests against their blockade policy.²⁸ Whilst it is true that the protest movement struggled to meet their aims, it is problematic to suggest that the movement was a complete failure, as she acknowledges. In doing so, she offers a more sentimental conclusion that there was an endearing quality to the anti-blockade movement, and that the relief campaigners played a 'role essential in any democracy

²⁶ Beaumont, J. (2013). Starving for Democracy: Britain's Blockade of and Relief for Occupied Europe, 1939-1945. *War & Society*, Vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 57-82.

²⁷ *Ibid.* P. 77.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

at war: it kept before the government and strategists the values for which they were supposedly fighting.'²⁹

Like Beaumont, Kazamias offers insight into the politics of famine relief, focusing on Greek, British, and American relations. Kazamias takes a pragmatic approach to this issue, suggesting that both internal politics within Whitehall, and external pressure from several agencies within the USA caused a minor relaxation of Britain's blockade policy towards Greece.³⁰ He identifies the interdependence of politics in Britain and the United States, suggesting that Britain was only prepared to offer relief to Greece late on 'as a means to maintain its dominant position', as a 'progressive limitation of Britain's role' began to occur, and the 'seat of power was swiftly shifting westwards, across the Atlantic, to the United States'.³¹ In doing so, Kazamias is arguing that the politics involved in Greek famine relief was a precursor to the increased international domination of the United States, suggesting that the economic and geo-political strength of the USA led to the eventual relaxation of Britain's blockade policy, which had previously been unmoved from the hard-line approach of Dalton's Department for Economic Warfare. Furthermore, Kazamias identifies late 1941 as a turning point in the fight for famine relief, indicating that it was at this point that the seeds of blockade relaxation had been planted, as 50,000 tons of Turkish foodstuffs were shipped to Greece.³² Whilst this was denounced as 'unacceptable' by Dalton, some within the War Cabinet, including Clement Attlee and Anthony Eden, supported the measure and had manoeuvred to create a relaxation plan.³³ Kazamias' identification of late 1941 as a change of tact in blockade policy offers a damaging assessment of the British famine relief committees, most of which were established deep into 1942, suggesting that

²⁹ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. P.78.

³⁰ Kazamias, G (2008). *The Politics of Famine Relief for Occupied Europe*. In R. Clogg (Ed.) *Bearing Gifts to Greeks: Humanitarian Aid to Greece in the 1940s* (pp. 169-187). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

³¹ *Ibid.* Pp. 52-53.

³² *Ibid.* P 48.

³³ *Ibid.* P. 48.

Britain's greatest concessions to Greece had been developed before their existence, and thus, their role was weak.³⁴

Clogg's contribution to the historiography addresses the role of the Quakers in the famine relief movement and focuses on their relief work in Greece. Her approach looks at the origins of the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam), but also highlights the contributions of the Friends' Ambulance Unit (FAU) and Friends' Relief Service (FRS). She provides a useful paradigm of the network of connections that famine relief organisations had, evidencing the complex relations between prominent figures such as Edith Pye, Professor Gilbert Murray, and Vera Brittain.³⁵ Yet, Clogg falls short of an interrogative analysis of these relations, nor does she offer a decisive conclusion to the effectiveness of the famine relief movement. Instead, her writing remains informative, and an analytical approach is overlooked. Whilst this is troublesome for historians, this is useful for this thesis as her representation of the interconnectivity of famine relief campaigners offers insight into the complexities of humanitarian networks and their activities. Unfortunately, she takes an Oxford-centric approach to these connections, and therefore misses the local activism and networks of regional committees. This thesis attempts to bridge some of these regional committees, connecting the activism of Hudfam, Oxfam, and the Manchester and Salford committee.

The history of Oxfam, perhaps the most prominent NGO of the modern day, plays a significant role in understanding and contextualising Hudfam. After the Second World War, Hudfam worked alongside Oxfam, amongst other organisations, and having contributed to their humanitarian missions, Hudfam eventually became the official sister organisation of Oxfam during the 1970s, with 65% of funding going to Oxfam projects across the globe.³⁶ This intertwined history will become a dominant theme within my final chapter, underlining the continued cooperation and influence that

³⁴ Kazamias. *Politics of Famine Relief*. P. 47-52.

³⁵ Clogg, M.J. (2008). Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s. In R. Clogg (Ed.) *Bearing Gifts to Greeks: Humanitarian Aid to Greece in the 1940s* (pp. 169-187). London: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 169-173.

³⁶ Hudfam, Proposed heads of agreement between Hudfam and Oxfam for 6 Queen Street, Huddersfield, January 1977. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

Hudfam enjoyed. Partly due to the delayed release of their archives, Oxfam's history is not as renowned as one may expect. Maggie Black, a former fieldworker for Oxfam, provides an institutional approach to the study of Oxfam and their first fifty years of humanitarian action. This institutional history is the most prominent examination of Oxfam's history, and whilst this provides a substantial overview of the organisation, the methodologically institutional approach to *A Cause for our Times* can prove to be problematic.³⁷ Black was a former Oxfam worker, and therefore, *A Cause for our Times* is written by an insider which tells a story of Oxfam's work, from their origins to their 50th anniversary year. For this thesis, Black's work offers a contextual framework in which the history of Hudfam can be written. However, this story does not assert a wider analytical history, which would encompass the wider famine relief movement, therefore producing an Oxford-centric approach to this piece. That is not to say this is not a valuable contribution to the historiography, but instead, that networks with other famine relief organisations such as Hudfam and the Manchester committee are absent. This thesis will address this absence, using the archive of both Hudfam and the Manchester committee to construct an extended analysis of famine relief that goes beyond Oxford to focus on smaller, but significant contributors.

A more useful model for approaching the history of relief organisations is offered by Friberg. Friberg employs a heuristic-systematic model to the assessment of calls for engagement by humanitarian organisations. Whilst attempting to avoid generalising the success of individual cases, she argues that this model 'outlines a type-set of relevant agents (and their interrelations) that are likely to shape the dynamics of appeals', using the campaigns of the national famine relief organisation as an example.³⁸ These relevant agents are: information about the needs of those suffering, state policy and restrictions, values and approaches to relief of brokers of aid, and the proclaimed or perceived

³⁷ Black, M. (1992). *A Cause of our Times: Oxfam the First 50 Years*. Oxford: Oxfam Professional.

³⁸ Friberg, K. (2016 March-April). *Winning the Moral War: The construction and constraints of appeals during and after WWII*. Unpublished paper presented at Economic Social Science and History Conference, Valencia, Spain. P. 26.

motives of giving by donors.³⁹ Whilst this thesis will not follow this model directly, aspects of the model that Friberg deploys will influence the analysis of Hudfam's fundraising techniques, and their campaigning strategies. For Hudfam, some of these agents amalgamate, as Hudfam was both a broker of aid, and a donor, and so these aspects will be considered concurrently. Furthermore, Friberg argues that the attempts of famine relief organisations to provoke moral practices to win the peace contributed to a moral economy of humanitarian and food aid.⁴⁰ She proposes that 'Negotiating the moral economy of humanitarian aid implies balancing donor trust and activist engagement in a more or less regulated bureaucracy with little or changing information about those in need'.⁴¹ This argument is nuanced, as it connects the agents of her heuristic model, and suggests that components of this paradigm combine to provide a moral economy of aid. This thesis will consider how Hudfam's relief campaign contributes to this idea of a moral economy of food aid, by dissecting their strategic campaigning, and their complementary combination of humanitarian aid and political protesting. Part of this contribution to a moral economy was keeping alive the flames of pre-existing concerns and networks within Huddersfield, whereby Hudfam put into action their political, religious, and humanitarian ideals.

This thesis is situated within the local history of Huddersfield, as well as the wider history of humanitarianism. As previously mentioned, Huddersfield had a tradition of small, connected networks working within the town on matters of humanitarianism and compassion. Gill's article on Huddersfield's intake of Belgian refugees during the First World War affirms this history of compassion within the town. Within '*Brave little Belgium*', Gill implies that the reception from Huddersfield towards Belgian refugees was initially supportive and welcoming. Hopes that they could help inform of the 'continental techniques' of Belgian textile industries were used to support their acceptance. Furthermore, local newspapers such as the *Huddersfield Examiner, Chronicle* and

³⁹ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 27.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.* Pp. 22-27.

Colne Valley Guardian all offered their support to the Belgian refugees arriving in Huddersfield, arguing that they had bravely resisted the German autocratic bullying.⁴² Whilst she does acknowledge the change in attitudes from some within the town after the refugees back taking up paid work (there were fears about labour competition), she highlights that the networks of liberal internationalists such as Florence Lockwood helped keep alive the philanthropic nature of the town.⁴³ This article is particularly useful to the historiography because Gill maps out the connecting, and sometimes hostile networks that were working within Huddersfield at the time, highlighting the differing factions of internationalists. As her conclusion argues, local internationalist support for the concerns of refugees found common cause, but not common practical solution.⁴⁴ She proposes that several internationalisms existed, one that was ethically socialist, one liberal, and one radically trade unionist, the latter of which tied class politics to the struggles of the refugee man who was disadvantaged by the capitalist enforced war.⁴⁵ This range of internationalist interest in the sanctuary of Belgian refugees highlights the culture of compassion within the networks of concerned individuals within Huddersfield, a culture that continued into the inter-war period, and as will be evidenced by this thesis, beyond the Second World War.

Not only was humanitarianism a feature of Huddersfield's history, but so too was pacifism. Cyril Pearce, a local Huddersfield historian, looks at how Huddersfield was unique in their opposition to the Great War. Pearce argues that whilst opposition to the Great War was not limited to Huddersfield, there was something more substantial about the town's pacifism, and this was firmly rooted within Huddersfield's ethical and political traditions.⁴⁶ Much like with Gill's assessment of the acceptance of Belgian refugees within Huddersfield, Pearce argues that a combination of ethical socialism and liberal internationalism within the town created a space for the growth of opposition

⁴² Gill. "Brave Little Belgium' arrives in Huddersfield'. Pp. 133-135.

⁴³ *Ibid.* P. 142-143.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* P. 144-145.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Pearce, C. (2001). *Comrades in Conscience: The Story of an English Community's Opposition to the Great War*. London: Francis Boutle. P. 223.

to the war, and this had its roots within nineteenth century radicalism and nonconformist Christianity, all of which were attributes of the town's historic liberalism.⁴⁷ Again, Pearce indicates that there were networks of concerned and conscientious individuals within Huddersfield, and this pacifism grew once again during the Second World War in the form of Hudfam.

Reynolds and Laybourn have also contributed to the local history of Huddersfield with their assessment of the rise of Labour politics in West Yorkshire, highlighting Huddersfield as an exception that continued, for the most part, to adhere to liberalism until after the Second World War. They argue that as the rest of West Yorkshire gradually turned to the politics of Labour in the inter-war years, 'Huddersfield provides the most dramatic evidence of the value of the Liberal-Conservative alliance upon the survival of Liberalism'.⁴⁸ Furthermore, they suggest that 'The Liberal Party had been the largest political party on the Borough Council from 1868 to 1913 and, due to the alliance, remained so between 1921 and 1962. Indeed, by 1930 Huddersfield was the only English borough under Liberal control.'⁴⁹ Whilst it would be foolish to understate the impact of the Liberal-Conservative alliance in preserving liberalism in Huddersfield, the liberal internationalism that was present within the town was also significant. As highlighted by Reynolds and Laybourn, liberalism was, after all, the leading political light in the town for many years, and liberal internationalism cannot be underplayed.⁵⁰ This thesis will place Hudfam within the tradition of humanitarianism, pacifism, and liberalism of concerned individuals in Huddersfield, adding an important contribution to the historiography of local politics and voluntary action which is placed within the wider context of global issues.

This thesis will be making an original contribution to the historiography of humanitarianism by using previously unused qualitative and quantitative sources from the West Yorkshire Archive Service

⁴⁷ Pearce. *Comrades in Conscience*. P. 221-222.

⁴⁸ Reynolds, J. and Laybourn, K. (1987). *Labour Heartland: A History of the Labour Party in West Yorkshire during the interwar years 1918-1939*. Bradford: Bradford University Press. Pp. 48-49.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* P. 49.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* P. 49-50.

(WYAS). Situated in the local studies library in Huddersfield, the WYAS holds a thorough collection on both Hudfam as an organisation, but also the archive of Elizabeth Wilson, the most prominent member of the organisation. These sources have become critical to this thesis and will be drawn on heavily throughout. This thesis will also be drawing on the archive of the Manchester and Salford Famine Relief Committee (MSFRC) in the Lionel Cowan Collection, the SCF files, and the Labour Party archive among many, as well as utilising an oral history interview conducted with Peter Wilson (second son of Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson). Peter gave his permission for the interview to be used as research for this thesis, and he signed a consent form as evidence of this to adhere to the University of Huddersfield's ethics policy. The files of the MSFRC help to contextualise Hudfam within the wider framework of famine relief during the Second World War, but also offer insightful sources on cooperation between the two organisations. This archive also contains files on the Peace Pledge Union (PPU), as the founder of the MSFRC, Lionel Cowan, was a Conscientious Objector like Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson, and Lionel kept hold of much of the literature he had obtained as a member of the PPU. These documents often refer to the Food Relief Campaign of the PPU and will be drawn on in both the first and second chapter. The SCF files, in microfilm for at the University of Manchester, have proved critical to the analysis of relief for the Bengal Famine. These files feature within the second chapter of this thesis and has allowed for a reevaluation of how the Bengal Famine should be viewed with reference to wider famine relief movements.

During her time travelling as part of her role on the Asian Grants Committee of Oxfam, Wilson wrote about her experiences in the field, and these writings were eventually put together by her friends and put into a published memoir named *Encounters on the Way*.⁵¹ There is also an unpublished memoir within the collection of Elizabeth Wilson, titled *Further Encounters*, which is arguably more candid, and offers a greater insight into Wilson's attitudes and beliefs. These memoirs were written for commemorative purposes, to display the achievements of Hudfam, but also to offer insight into

⁵¹ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*.

her personal life, and her personal beliefs. These memoirs often draw on her events as a child, which influenced her worldviews, but also attends to her years travelling Asia, where she was assessing the development needs of countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, and Vietnam. In a sense, these memoirs are both life writings, but also incorporate travel writing too. These memoirs have a further purpose, in self-reflecting on her life to herself. In the final chapter of *Further Encounters*, titled *A Godless Unitarian Quaker Buddhist*, Wilson highlights how her experiences out in the field, and her interaction with a range of cultures not only educated her about religions, but made her question her own faith, and where her personal beliefs sat within the realm of religious thinking. By the time she came to write this memoir in 1999, she had concluded that Buddhism or its teachings does not 'conflict with Unitarianism or Quaker teaching, rather it endorses these.'⁵² This interweaving of reflecting on the self and representing the other is characteristic of travel writing. As Thompson says, 'More usual are narratives that seek to interweave the inner and outer worlds, mixing ostensibly factual, objective description of the people and places through which the traveller passes with a more openly subjective account of the traveller's own thoughts and feelings over the course of the journey.'⁵³ Thompson also points to how travel writers represent the 'other' within their work, offering two definitions of how 'othering' may occur. He suggests that, 'In a weaker, more general sense, 'othering' simply denotes the process by which the members of one culture identify and highlight the differences between themselves and the members of another culture. In a stronger sense, however, it has come to refer more specifically to the processes and strategies by which one culture depicts another culture as not only different but also inferior to itself. All travel writing must, arguably, engage in an act of othering in the first sense, since every travel account is premised on the assumption that it brings news of people and places that are to some degree unfamiliar and 'other' to the audience.'⁵⁴ In *Encounters on the Way*, it is certainly clear that Wilson represents the other in the first sense of Thompson's definitions. The second of these definitions

⁵² Wilson, E. (1999). *Further Encounters*. Unpublished Memoir. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/3/2.

⁵³ Thompson, C. (2011). *Travel Writing*. London: Routledge. P. 98.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* P. 132-133.

incorporates paternalistic representations such as the kind identified by Barnett, and these too occur within both Wilson's memoirs and other documentation that will be used within this thesis.⁵⁵ Thus, using these definitions proposed by Thompson, the memoirs of Elizabeth Wilson will be assessed, and her representation of the other will feature within the final chapter.

The Elizabeth Wilson collection also contains personal correspondence with indigenous development organisations across Asia, such as the Ky Quang Orphanage in Vietnam. This correspondence offers an insight into the way Hudfam conducted their business with indigenous organisations, and how the organisation carved out relationships to continue providing them with developmental aid. Additionally, the Hudfam archive also contains important correspondence, as well as the 'official' files of the organisation. These files include annual reports, minute books, financial accounts, and correspondence with Oxfam, which will be used extensively throughout this thesis.

Through visiting the Hudfam archive and the Elizabeth Wilson collection, an opportunity arose to conduct an oral history interview with the second son of Elizabeth Wilson. Within the files was a note claiming that Robert Wilson had deposited these files after his mother's death. On finding this note, the archivist at the WYAS contacted Robert, however, they were passed on to Peter Wilson, the second son of Elizabeth and Hugh. Peter agreed to partake in an oral history interview, in which he was asked a wide range of questions about his childhood, his mother and father's politics, their involvement in Hudfam, and his general understanding of the organisation's practice. Whilst this thesis is not primarily based on oral testimony, the interview with Peter Wilson will play a vital role in plugging some of the gaps within the documentation and gives a deeper insight into the personal life and personal practices of his mother and father.

The first chapter of this thesis analyses the origins of Hudfam, arguing that a complex mixture of pacifism, internationalism, and Quakerism stirs the compassion of individuals within Huddersfield to

⁵⁵ Barnett. *Empire of Humanity*. P. 105.

create a local famine relief committee. The early lives of Elizabeth Wilson and Richard Hugh Wilson (usually referred to as Hugh) will be recounted in this chapter, and a study of their connections and influence on Hudfam as a charitable organisation takes place. As members of the PPU, and as registered Conscientious Objectors, their adherence to the peace effort will be analysed, and will be identified as the main origin for creating a famine relief organisation. Their connection with Labour politics and the internationalism of the Labour movement will also be addressed in this chapter, specifically focusing on relations with India. The interests of the peace movement and the labour movement in Indian affairs were wide-ranging, as independence and famine relief became a focus of their international work. Looking at Vera Brittain and her connections with the peace movement and India, Hudfam's early interest in famine relief in India will be identified as a combination of their pacifist origins, and their internationalist politics.

Chapter two scrutinises Hudfam within the context of the Second World War. Inspired by Friberg's model for assessing the appeals process of famine relief organisations, this chapter will argue that Hudfam used a three-pronged approach to their campaigning strategy, which combined lobbying tactics against the British government, fundraising and appeals for engagement, and cooperation with other relief organisations to successfully create a competent and combative organisation that continued to grow in stature. Using evidence from their fundraising for the victims of the 1943 Bengal Famine, their deputation to the Minister for Economic Warfare in 1944, and their support for Victor Gollancz's *Save Europe Now* campaign immediately after the war, this chapter will construct an argument that despite their modest size, Hudfam created an ideal model for how a charitable organisation could be both morally positioned and politically challenging in the face of humanitarian disasters. This chapter will also map out the networks of connections that Hudfam created, focusing on their cooperation with the SCF and the MSFRC.

The final chapter will focus on the post-war period, and Hudfam's progression from an emergency relief organisation to a charity providing development overseas. This chapter will place Hudfam's

post-war humanitarianism within the context of decolonisation and a perceived increase in liberal internationalism, suggesting that whilst they were not supporters of colonisation, paternalistic tendencies were suffused within the internationalism of the organisation. It will be argued that from the 1960s, Hudfam, influenced by the progression of Oxfam, evolved into a development organisation that focused their attention on challenges across Asia. The contribution of Hudfam to the global FFHC will be addressed, arguing that Hudfam's voluntary efforts during the Second World War once again ignited the humanitarian tendencies of Huddersfield, which led to an impressive engagement with this campaign. Additionally, this chapter discusses Hudfam's relationship with Oxfam, and the influence of Elizabeth Wilson over Hudfam's campaign and donation allocation. Using extracts from her travel writing, it will be demonstrated that Wilson had an affectionate bond with India, and more broadly Asia, and this directed Hudfam's development policy accordingly.

Overall, this thesis will create an organisational history of Hudfam, assessing their origins, aims, methods, and survival and growth. This thesis will avoid creating broad categorisations, instead offering evidence of continuities within the organisation, but also between the wider humanitarian sphere. The changing contexts of the world will be acknowledged, and the evolution of humanitarian provision from one of emergency relief to developmental and preventive strategies will be highlighted. However, this thesis will argue that attitudes and networks of concern do not follow epochs, and therefore Barnett's strict categorisation of humanitarian eras will be challenged. This thesis will make an original and important contribution to the historiography in several ways. Firstly, the thesis will use previously unused archival documents on Hudfam and Elizabeth Wilson, as well as utilising an original oral history interview with a Wilson family member. Secondly, this thesis will place both the Bengal Famine of 1943, and the impact of the British blockade of Europe, especially the threat of famine in Greece, within the same frame of reference. Previously, historians have separated the matters, however, as British government policy contributed to the cause of famine in both India and Europe, these events should be viewed as concurrent, as they were linked by contemporaries. Lastly, this thesis will add a new and original case study to the history of

humanitarianism in the shape of Hudfam. Unsurprisingly, the history of Hudfam has so far been ignored. Yet, it is significant in the sense that Hudfam further developed the network of connections that existed within the field of humanitarian organisations, and this local history of networks will reveal connections that are often missed in institutional histories.

Chapter One: The Origins of Hudfam: Pacifism, Internationalism, and the Wilson Family

In 1942, whilst touring local Peace Pledge Union (PPU) branches across the country, Vera Brittain visited Meltham Road, Lockwood, the home of the Wilson family.⁵⁶ Accommodated for that evening, Vera Brittain was the guest speaker for the Huddersfield branch of the PPU, the meetings of which were often held in the lounge of the Wilson family home.⁵⁷ At this meeting, Brittain, a writer and absolutist pacifist, promoted the Food Relief Campaign set up by herself and Roy Walker, a prominent London Quaker, under the counsel of the PPU.⁵⁸ During the First World War, the harrowing experience of her work as a VAD nurse and the loss of her closest friends and family influenced her greatly, and produced an eagerness to support absolutist pacifism.⁵⁹ In 1937, Brittain joined the PPU, a peace organisation that was created the previous year.⁶⁰ After giving a speech to a large crowd at an open-air peace gathering at the Dorchester natural amphitheatre in 1936, Vera Brittain became acquainted with the former Labour leader George Lansbury, and Dick Sheppard, the founder of the PPU.⁶¹ After hearing her speech, Sheppard knew Brittain's charisma and dynamic public engagement would be vital to the PPU, and wrote to her soon after to invite her to join his peace crusade.⁶² Brittain described this as a turning point in her life, suggesting that the challenge of becoming a driving force of the PPU would have 'momentous consequences' on her career.⁶³ When discussing her commitment to peace, and her contribution to the PPU in her autobiography, *Testament of Experience*, Brittain claimed that 'Its challenge, once accepted, was to carry me far

⁵⁶ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 3.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Brittain, V. (1957). *Testament of Experience* (2nd ed.). London: Virago Ltd. P. 299.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* Pp. 7-8.

⁶⁰ Bishop, A. (2004). 'Brittain [married name Catlin], Vera Mary (1893-1970)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [<https://doi-org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/32076>, accessed on 10/01/2018].

⁶¹ Brittain. *Testament of Experience*. Pp. 164-166.

⁶² *Ibid.* Pp. 166-167.

⁶³ *Ibid.* P. 167.

from the bright pinnacles of worldly success which I had just begun so hopefully to climb.'⁶⁴ Whilst her autobiography does romanticise many aspects of her life, this quote is striking, as it insists that Brittain was fully aware of the consequences of her unrelenting pacifism and was ready for the vilification that would come as war neared. In her memoirs, Elizabeth Wilson claimed that it was at the meeting of the Huddersfield branch of the PPU of which Vera Brittain attended that the creation of Hudfam was first proposed.⁶⁵ Whilst the exact details of that meeting were not disclosed, it would be sensible to suggest that the profile of Vera Brittain, and the connection that the Wilson family held to pacifism had a great influence over the decision to create Hudfam as an organisation in October 1943.⁶⁶

During the interwar period, internationalism, in several guises, was growing. Internationalism had existed before the Great War, often taking shape in relief or religious organisations such as the Quakers.⁶⁷ However, there was an upsurge in the thirst for a new, peaceful world order after the Great War, with internationalist ideals coming to the forefront of the political sphere, expressed through the proposal and creation of the League of Nations.⁶⁸ Under the umbrella of this increased internationalism was an increase in engagement with pacifism, a 'Quaker Renaissance', and a changing Labour Party.⁶⁹ It is within this milieu of the 1930s that the origin story of Hudfam sits. Despite the importance of pacifism, this was not the only ideal that was significant in Hudfam's creation, as socialist ideals, liberal internationalism, Quakerism, and personal faith were also evident within the origins of Hudfam. Given the nature of Hudfam as a small famine relief organisation, there are gaps in the source material on the origins of the organisation. Unfortunately, during the Second World War, many of the files of the PPU were destroyed or 'lost', and therefore official files

⁶⁴ Brittain. *Testament of Experience*. P. 164.

⁶⁵ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 3.

⁶⁶ Hudfam, Annual Report, 1943-1944. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

⁶⁷ Kennedy, T. C. (1984). 'The Quaker Renaissance and the Origins of the Modern British Peace Movement, 1895-1920'. *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 3, P. 272.

⁶⁸ Laqua, D. (2011) (Ed.) *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements Between the World Wars*. London: I.B. Tauris. Pp. 8-11.

⁶⁹ Ceadel, M. (1980). *Pacifism in Britain, 1914-1945: The Defining of a Faith*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. P. 1; Kennedy. 'The Quaker Renaissance...' P. 272.

with the PPU archive are limited, and often former members are not acknowledged or known. After contact was made with the archivist at the PPU archive, it was identified that neither Elizabeth or Hugh Wilson were known to the organisation, despite the claims of Elizabeth that both her and her husband were members of the PPU and registered Conscientious Objectors.⁷⁰ Furthermore, absent within the archive on the Huddersfield Society of Friends (Quakers) is the files during the Second World War. Whilst Elizabeth Wilson is mentioned in later accounts, it is not clear when she became an official member of the Society of Friends, and any influence that Elizabeth may have had in gathering support for Hudfam during wartime is absent. Lastly, despite the claim of the National Archive website that the Huddersfield Central Labour Party files are kept at Heritage Quay at the University of Huddersfield, Heritage Quay only holds the files of the Colne Valley Labour Party, and therefore, sources on Hugh Wilson's early involvement in the Labour Party in Huddersfield are missing. However, using the memoirs of Elizabeth Wilson, the autobiographies and works of Vera Brittain, and an oral history interview with Peter Wilson, this chapter will create an intellectual biography of Hudfam's origins, contextualising the organisation within the milieu of the time. This intellectual biography will map out the connections of the organisation's personnel, highlighting associations with pacifism, Quakerism, and the Labour Party. Furthermore, this chapter will highlight the dynastic nature of Hudfam and its origins, underlining the significance of the Wilson family to Hudfam's creation, and underpinning their prominence throughout the organisation's history.

From Richmond Park to Richmond Avenue

From a young age, Elizabeth Wilson envisaged travelling the world and teaching abroad. A geography teacher by profession, Elizabeth saw herself providing voluntary service overseas, but the difficulty of funding her travel hindered this aspiration.⁷¹ At the age of eighteen, Elizabeth Wilson left her family home in Richmond, Surrey, and spent an initial two years at Homerton Teacher Training

⁷⁰ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 170.

⁷¹ Wilson, E. (1999). *Further Encounters*. Unpublished Memoir. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/3/2.

College in Cambridge, before extending her stay by a further year to undertake the Cambridge Geography Diploma at the university.⁷² It was in Cambridge that she met Hugh Wilson, who was studying for a PhD in Chemistry at the university, at a Fellow of Youth committee meeting.⁷³ They became well acquainted, and bonded over matters of socialism, and found that their interests and political beliefs aligned significantly. This bond led to their marriage in 1936, upon which they moved to Fartown in the industrial town of Huddersfield in West Yorkshire.⁷⁴ Their move to Huddersfield was necessary, as Hugh had been offered a job upon his PhD graduation as a research chemist at ICI, a British chemical company that was for some time Britain's largest manufacturer.⁷⁵ When in Huddersfield, Elizabeth Wilson was quick to engage in compassionate activities, and offered a safe-haven to several refugees, and a prisoner of war.⁷⁶ Within her memoir, she recalled having two Jewish refugees stay with the family on separate occasions. The first, Joseph, was a young Polish Jewish refugee, and furrier by trade, who stayed with the Wilsons for around eighteen months, before moving on, at which time, contact between Elizabeth and Joseph was lost.⁷⁷ The second was a Jewish girl, Marlies, who was brought to Britain from Berlin by the Quakers in late 1939, and stayed with the Wilsons until 1941. Marlies and Elizabeth had a good relationship, and Marlies stayed in contact with the Wilson family and would occasionally visit.⁷⁸ Whilst it should be acknowledged that this is contained within Elizabeth Wilson's memoir, and is therefore likely to reflect well upon her actions, it can be said that there was a compassion to the Wilson family that was instilled through their pacifist morality and Elizabeth Wilson's spirituality. Even before Hudfam was created, Elizabeth Wilson had strived to help those suffering from war, and the intake of refugees during this time was the first step to her moral quest.

⁷² Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 168.

⁷³ Wilson, E. (1999). *Further Encounters*. Unpublished Memoir. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/3/2. Chapter 1, P. 14.

⁷⁴ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 169.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*. P. 2-3; Wilson, P. (2017, 20 July). Interview by Adam Millar [Dictaphone Recording]. Oral history interview for research for an MA by Research thesis.

⁷⁷ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. Pp. 2-3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*. P. 2.

Arguably, the experience of Elizabeth Wilson during her time in Cambridge had a significant impact on her life, and especially on her personal faith. Whilst staying in Cambridge, Elizabeth attended a Unitarian church, which according to her memoir enthused her inner spirituality.⁷⁹ In her memoir, *Encounters on the Way*, claims that 'To me the joy of evening service was that people such as Gandhi and Dr Rhadakrishnan, philosopher and president of India, who wrote *Recovery of Faith* and other books, and other people of spiritual standing who were visiting Cambridge, were invited to speak. I felt I had come home. I was glad to belong to this community... Comradeship, laughter, facing difficulties, contribute to one's spiritual growth and learning of 'the way'.⁸⁰ Whilst it is unclear whether Elizabeth Wilson met Gandhi or Dr Rhadakrishnan herself, this passage from her memoir reveals how significant open-minded spirituality was to her person, and this admiration of Gandhi and Dr Rhadakrishnan could, in part, have influenced Hudfam's eagerness to support India's fight against famine in 1943. According to the official Unitarian website, '*Unitarianism* is an open-minded and welcoming approach to faith that encourages individual freedom, equality for all and rational thought.'⁸¹ Whilst Elizabeth never claimed to be a Unitarian, this ideal of religious belief and the open-mindedness of this theology had a significant influence over her personal faith. In her unpublished memoir, the final chapter is titled '*A Godless Unitarian Quaker Buddhist*'. This chapter, written to highlight the influence of several religious faiths over her thoughts and beliefs, discusses the similarities between Unitarianism, Quakerism, and Buddhism, arguing that the teachings of all three faiths intertwine and overlap.⁸² Whilst this reflects her experience of these religions by 1999, towards the end of her life, it could be argued that the teachings and spiritual learning that was exposed to at the Unitarian church in Cambridge significantly opened her mind to wider cultural and religious beliefs, and led to her confusion as to where her personal faith stands in 1999.

⁷⁹ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 168.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*. P. 169.

⁸¹ The Unitarians. *Unitarianism explained*. Retrieved from <https://www.unitarian.org.uk/pages/unitarianism-explained>

⁸² Wilson, E. (1999). *Further Encounters*. Unpublished Memoir. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/3/2. Chapter 14, P. 2-3.

Pacifism and the Peace Pledge Union

In October 1934, an appeal sent out to national newspapers by Dick Sheppard asked for postcard declarations of support for pacifist principles, and after May 1936, this became the start-up membership of the PPU, a pacifist society which is still in existence today.⁸³ Having only initially invited men to join in denouncing war, 100,000 men had sent Sheppard postcards by 1935, and the cause was eventually extended to women in that year.⁸⁴ However, it was not until 1936 that the PPU as a pacifist organisation was created, with Sheppard at the helm. During the inter-war years, the cause of pacifism was viewed as noble, especially after the horrors of the First World War, however, as Ceadel suggests, there were several branches of pacifism that emerged, including quasi-pacifism, which took on only some of the elements of the creed of pacifism.⁸⁵ For the purpose of this chapter, pacifism will follow the definition proposed by Ceadel, that 'Pacifism is the personal conviction that it is wrong to take part in war or even, in an extreme version, to resist evil in any way. It thus has perfectionist implications for politics, since only a national policy of total (and, if necessary, unilateral) disarmament can prevent a sharp conflict arising between the pacifist's conscience and his duty as a citizen', further adding that pacifism is more concerned with moral creed as opposed to a political entity.⁸⁶ It is this pacifism, absolutist pacifism, that Sheppard's PPU prescribed to. As previously highlighted, Vera Brittain became a major figure within the PPU.⁸⁷ Perhaps Brittain's greatest contribution to the PPU and the peace movement generally during the Second World War was her Food Relief Campaign. The Food Relief Campaign, under the auspice of the PPU, became a prominent organisation in the fight against famine in Europe.⁸⁸ However, conflict with Edith Pye's National Famine Relief Committee on the aims and methods of promoting food relief often left Brittain's Food Relief Campaign isolated, as Pye looked to distance her national committee from the

⁸³ Ceadel. *Pacifism in Britain*. P. 1; *Manchester Guardian*, 23 October 1934.

⁸⁴ Ceadel. *Pacifism in Britain*. Pp. 222-223.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* P. 4.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Brittain. *Testament of Experience*. P. 164.

⁸⁸ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 14.

pacifism of Brittain.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Brittain still gained significant cooperation from local famine relief organisations, such as Hudfam and MSFRC.

Whilst there are gaps in the knowledge of Hudfam's relationship with Brittain, it is clear her visit to Huddersfield for the Huddersfield PPU meeting in 1942 was a significant factor in the decision to create a famine relief organisation in Huddersfield.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, a lack of minutes of this meeting means that the only testimony left from this event comes from Elizabeth Wilson, one of the founders of Hudfam, in her memoirs. The discussion of Brittain's visit is brief, but Elizabeth Wilson indicates that Brittain inspired Hudfam's creation.⁹¹ In a recording of Elizabeth Wilson (undated, but assumed to be late in her life), she claims that Brittain came to Huddersfield and 'spoke about the need for a committee to be set up to pressure the government to allow milk and vitaminised chocolate into Nazi occupied Greece, Belgium and Holland, where people, mothers and babies were suffering considerably from the British Blockade. As a result of this meeting, a committee was formed.'⁹² This passage of the recording would suggest that it was the pacifism of the Wilson family that stirred their conscience, and led to the creation of Hudfam in 1943, more so than faith. As Hudfam was devised a year later than most of the famine relief organisations, a question could be asked as to why the Wilsons waited longer than most to create their organisation. It was perhaps the immediacy of the Bengal Famine, and the connotations of Gandhi and India's non-violence movement to their ethos of pacifism that spurred them into action in 1943.

Prior to Brittain's guest appearance, Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson had registered as conscientious objectors.⁹³ According to their second son, Peter Wilson, Hugh was fortunate that he was a research chemist at ICI during this time, as this was deemed vital work in the eyes of the British government,

⁸⁹ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 14.

⁹⁰ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 170.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* P. 3.

⁹² Wilson, E. (Undated). Recording of Elizabeth Wilson [Describing the events of her life and Hudfam]. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/6/7.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

which prevented any adverse punishment for his conscientious objection.⁹⁴ Shortly after arriving in Huddersfield in 1936, Elizabeth Wilson was keen to get involved with the local community, and as she was active in the Huddersfield branch of the PPU, she began to sell *Peace News* across Huddersfield.⁹⁵ *Peace News* was the official print of the PPU, and often featured guest articles by the likes of Vera Brittain and George Lansbury, and therefore, even before meeting Brittain in 1942, Elizabeth Wilson was engaged in some of the works of leading pacifist thinkers and leaders.⁹⁶ As members of the PPU, the Wilsons also became connected to Lionel Cowan, who worked with Hudfam in 1944 on the deputation to the Minister of Economic Warfare of the Northern consortium of famine relief organisations.⁹⁷ Like the Wilsons, Lionel Cowan was a pacifist, and headed the Manchester branch of the PPU. Cowan was well known in Manchester for his compassion, and as Williams evidences, Cowan's pacifism spear-headed his compassion towards Jewish refugees, and he ran several organisations that represented his 'typical recognition of refugees as people in need of a safe community in which they might recreate their identities'.⁹⁸ In a similar vein to Elizabeth Wilson, Cowan moved in pacifist and Quaker circles, and was spurred on by the increased internationalism of the Labour Party and socialist politics during the 1930s.⁹⁹ Whilst Cowan was Jewish, and this influenced the focus of his cause to support and aid European Jewry for much of the Second World War, he did convert to Quakerism in 1929, which Williams argues made it easier for him to 'pursue a pacifist ideology not favoured by traditional Judaism'.¹⁰⁰ Whilst it should not be assumed that the Wilsons and Cowan were well acquainted, it is clear that there are striking similarities in both the politics, morality, and faith of Elizabeth Wilson and Lionel Cowan, and they were connected to the

⁹⁴ Wilson, P. (2017, 20 July). Interview by Adam Millar [Dictaphone Recording]. Oral history interview for research for an MA by Research thesis.

⁹⁵ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 170.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 3.

⁹⁷ *Report of a deputation from North of England to Lord Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare*. Lionel Cowan Collection, Manchester Archive and Local Studies (MALS), M599/4/5/2.

⁹⁸ Williams, B. (2011). *'Jews and other Foreigners': Manchester and the Rescue of the Victims of European Fascism, 1933-1940*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. Pp. 388-389.

⁹⁹ *Application for registration as a Conscientious Objector, 29 November 1940*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/1/11.

¹⁰⁰ Williams. *'Jews and other Foreigners'*. P. 384.

same humanitarian and pacifist circles. This enabled them to use these networks to cooperate during the Second World War through their respective famine relief committees, highlighting how pacifism was a vital aspect of Hudfam's origins.

In her book *Humiliation with Honour*, which discusses the vilification that came with being a pacifist during the Second World War, Brittain sums up the reasoning behind the pacifist ethos of all three of these humanitarian actors, suggesting that 'Pacifists are people who want to fight the disease [war], instead of wasting life, time, and energy in attacking the symptoms. They have come by different roads – the best, perhaps, being actual experience of warfare – to the realisation that modern war never achieves even the ends for which it is ostensibly waged, let alone a stable world and a peaceful society. Believing this, they would be false to themselves and their faith in man's capacity for redemption if they supported the present War and collaborated with its leaders.'¹⁰¹

Quakerism

Hudfam's engagement with Quakerism, and faith more generally, is a curious one. Officially, Hudfam was a secular organisation, that was open to all those that wished to fight famine across the world.¹⁰² However, represented within the organisation was several religious organisations and associations, including the Quakers, the Salvation Army, and the Huddersfield Free Church Council.¹⁰³ Elizabeth Wilson, the organisation's most prominent figure, officially became a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in the later 1940s, after ten years attending meetings.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, Miss Hill, the first chairman of Hudfam, and the headteacher of Greenhead High School, and Miss Moore, a bank worker and the first treasurer of Hudfam, were Quakers, and these three women played significant roles in shaping Hudfam's organisation during the early years.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Brittain, V. (1942). *Humiliation with Honour*. London: Andrew Dakers. P. 48.

¹⁰² Hudfam Minute Book, 28 October 1943. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

¹⁰³ Hudfam Annual Report, 1959-1960. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

¹⁰⁴ Wilson, E. (Undated). Recording of Elizabeth Wilson [Describing the events of her life and Hudfam]. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/6/7.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

Kennedy argues that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that Quakerism went through a renaissance, in which it was rejuvenated to align itself with pacifist ideologies.¹⁰⁶ He suggests that 'made pacifism central to both the image and practice of modern Quakerism. Revival of the peace testimony in the years immediately prior to the Great War, especially among younger Friends, not only strengthened and deepened Quaker war resistance during the First World War but also ensured that the Society of Friends would assume a vital role in the development of the post-war British peace movement.'¹⁰⁷ Here, Kennedy is aligning Quakerism of the Twentieth Century in the same sphere as the pacifist movement. Whilst they appear a decade later as propagators of this idea, Wilson and Cowan are indicative of Kennedy's merge of Quakerism and pacifism. They both networked within the circles of pacifist Quakerism, and arguably, it is this connection that offered them a workable relationship in the fight against the British blockade.

Quaker relief has been a feature of humanitarian discourse since the nineteenth century. More prominent, though, is the work carried out by Quakers in the twentieth century. As Gill evidences, Quakerism was heavily influential in the creation of the SCF, and argues that 'Quakers saw relief work as a way of building the international friendships which would result in a durable peace'.¹⁰⁸ Roger Wilson, once a prominent London Quaker, and member of the National Famine Relief Committee, suggests that Quakers are bound by duty to act upon emergency relief.¹⁰⁹ However, he argues that the Society of Friends has no permanent machinery by which disaster relief, or social work at home can be built upon, and therefore, Quaker relief is bound by personal moral purpose.¹¹⁰ It is difficult to assess the influence of Quakerism, as a faith, to the creation of Hudfam due to Elizabeth Wilson's confusion around her own faith.¹¹¹ However, it is clear that the networks of

¹⁰⁶ Kennedy. 'The Quaker Renaissance...'. Pp. 243-272.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* P. 272.

¹⁰⁸ Gill. *Calculating Compassion*. P. 201.

¹⁰⁹ Wilson, R.C. (1952). *Quaker Relief: An account of the relief work of the Society of Friends, 1940-1948*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. P. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* P. 1.

¹¹¹ Wilson, E. (1999). *Further Encounters*. Unpublished Memoir. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/3/2. Chapter 14, P. 2-3.

connections that grew out of the circles of Quakerism were invaluable, and the ideals of Quakerism bared heavily upon the pacifism of Hudfam as an organisation. As a propagator of non-violence, Gandhi was a friend of Quaker circles, and has inspired a branch of Quakerism known as Gandhist Quakers.¹¹² Thus, one could conclude that Quakerism on the whole had a large influence on Elizabeth Wilson's motives for contributing to Hudfam, but that the greater contribution of Quaker thinking was the adoration of Gandhi and his non-violent movement, which too is evident within Wilson's memoirs.¹¹³

The Labour Party and Internationalism

During the interwar period, the British Labour Party went through a period of distinct change. After the decline of the Liberal Party after the First World War, a wave of liberal internationalist thinkers joined the Labour Party, which led to an increased interest in foreign policy and international affairs.¹¹⁴ In a previous study by the author of this thesis, the increased internationalism of the Labour Party has been assessed at length.¹¹⁵ This study argues that 'Liberal intellectuals with an interest in foreign affairs and international politics turned to the left after the Great War, and many became members of the Labour Party or joined factions of the party such as the Independent Labour Party.¹¹⁶ Some of these intellectuals joined the advisory committees on imperial and international questions, alongside socialist intellectuals, as well as a number of Labour MPs with international interests and 'expert' guest members.¹¹⁷ By combining intellectual approaches from both liberal and socialist thinkers, the Labour Party hoped to mould a cohesive policy for foreign affairs. Hence, through the advisory committees, the Labour Party was able to create an international policy based

¹¹² Sykes, M. (Undated). 'Gandhi's Legacy' in Sykes, M. et al (eds.) *Quaker Approaches to Development*. London: Society of Friends.

¹¹³ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. Pp. 168-169.

¹¹⁴ Adelman, P. (1972). *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945*. London: Longman. Pp. 39-46.

¹¹⁵ Millar, A. (2016). *The Labour Party, Socialism and India: A study of the 'commitment' of the Labour Party to support responsible self-government for India between 1933 and 1945* (BA Degree dissertation). University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield.

¹¹⁶ Sylvest, C. (2004). 'Interwar Internationalism, the British Labour Party, and the Historiography of International Relations'. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48 (2). P. 413.

¹¹⁷ Gupta, P.S. (1975). *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964*. London: Macmillan. P. 228.

on the common ground of internationalism, an ideal of both liberal and socialist intellectualism, which led to the creation of a pragmatic internationalism within the Labour Party.¹¹⁸ It is within this milieu of a pragmatic internationalism that Hugh Wilson joins the Huddersfield Central Labour Party in the 1930s.

From a young age, Hugh Wilson was active in Labour politics and Labour activism in Newcastle.¹¹⁹

After completing his PhD at the University of Cambridge, and subsequently taking up a role at ICI in Huddersfield, Hugh once again became involved in local politics.¹²⁰ Having moved to Huddersfield in 1936, Hugh Wilson arrived at a time when internationalism was at its peak, with support for a League of Nations that would create a sustainable international peace growing substantially.¹²¹

Unfortunately, the lack of source material on the Huddersfield Central Labour Party makes it difficult to ascertain the extent of Hugh's Labour activities during the 1930s. However, Hugh Wilson did become a Labour Councillor in 1957 for the Fartown Ward.¹²² During his time as a councillor, Hugh Wilson was a prominent figure on the council's education committees, and continued to be so until his eventual retirement in 1974 holding the position of Chair of the Education Committee as his most prominent role.¹²³ Whilst the lack of sources on Hugh's Labour activity make it difficult to conclude on the influence of Labour politics to the origins of Hudfam, it could be argued that when placing Hugh's socialist ideals within the milieu of internationalism of the 1930s that it is likely that Labour politics played a role in the moral decision for Hugh to support the creation of Hudfam. This chapter, whilst limited in primary source material, has created an intellectual biography of the origins of Hudfam. Placed within the milieu of interwar pacifism, Quakerism, and internationalism, this chapter has proposed that an amalgamation of these interconnecting ideals led to the creation of Hudfam in

¹¹⁸ Laqua, D. (2015). Democratic Politics and the League of Nations: The Labour and Socialist International as a Protagonist of Interwar Internationalism. *Contemporary European History*. 24 (2), 175-192; Millar, A. *The Labour Party, Socialism and India*. P. 13; Sylvest. 'Interwar Internationalism...' P. 413.

¹¹⁹ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 170.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Sylvest. 'Interwar Internationalism...' P. 413

¹²² *County Borough of Huddersfield Yearbook*. Huddersfield Local Studies Library (HLSL). B352.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

1943. Furthermore, Elizabeth Wilson's adoration of Gandhi's non-violence ethos and Gandhist Quakerism led to India becoming a significant beneficiary of aid from Hudfam during the course of the organisations history.

Chapter Two: War Relief, Campaigning, and Community

Engagement

By 1943, the British blockade of Europe had become a robust strategic weapon. The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was adamant that the government's blockade policy would be critical to Britain's chances of winning the war and the blockade became essential to Britain's war strategy, coinciding with the efforts of the armed forces.¹²⁴ As historians such as Beaumont and Hindley have acknowledged, this blockade policy and the subsequent threat of starvation of civilians in mainland Europe caused a reaction amongst Quakers and like-minded individuals across Britain, which led to the creation of hundreds of famine relief committees.¹²⁵ These included a committee in Oxford, now the modern-day Oxfam, and a national Famine Relief Committee based in London with Edith Pye, a well-known Quaker and humanitarian of the First World War.¹²⁶ As evidenced in chapter one, there were clear overlaps between Hudfam and Oxfam in their aims and motivations, however, there were also distinct differences between the two organisations, especially in their origin stories. Arguably, Hudfam complicated the origin stories of the famine relief movement. Hudfam was not simply challenging Britain's blockade of Europe but fought famine on several fronts. After hearing of the 'immediate horror' of the 1943 Bengal Famine in the *Manchester Guardian*, the conscience of the members of Hudfam was stirred and this became the priority of the organisation from the outset.¹²⁷ This chapter will approach Hudfam's actions during the Second World War by creating an organisational history which contextualises the committee's strategies, their survival and growth, and their personnel. This technical history of the organisation will display how Hudfam chose to not just challenge famine in Europe, but also looked to issues within wider global contexts of

¹²⁴ Hansard, HC Deb 11 April 1940 vol. 359 cc733-64

¹²⁵ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*; Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 2; Hindley, M. (2007). *Blockade before Bread: Allied Relief for Nazi Europe, 1939-1945* (PhD Thesis). American University, Washington, D. C.

¹²⁶ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s*. P. 170.

¹²⁷ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*, P. 170.

imperialism. Rather than simply an origin story or a biography of an organisation, such as Maggie Black's *A Cause for our Times*, this chapter will take an analytical approach and focus on how Hudfam's strategic methods helped keep the organisation alive after the Second World War, both through the networks of connections that they infiltrated, but also by riding on the coattails of organisations such as the SCF and Oxfam, and campaigns such as Save Europe Now.

Hudfam took a three-pronged approach to fighting famine during the Second World War, and it is this approach that will be the focus of this chapter. The first approach was fundraising, collections, and engagement with the Huddersfield community.¹²⁸ Unsurprisingly, after the outbreak of war in 1939, the British population overwhelmingly accepted the war against fascism.¹²⁹ Support for relief on the home front was much easier to come by, indeed seen as patriotic, but Hudfam's aims were deemed contentious to the war objectives of Britain.¹³⁰ As Hudfam's fundraising focused on relief abroad, gathering popular support amongst the people of Huddersfield was a practical obstacle the committee struggled to overcome, especially in the early stages. Furthermore, their pacifist origins were a topic of controversy during the Second World War, and these views unsurprisingly imposed restrictions on the success of the organisation. The second approach was political campaigning, and in the context of wartime Britain, this consisted of challenging the government's blockade policy against Europe. Hudfam opposed Britain's blockade policy in Europe on the grounds of pacifism and attempted to influence the British government through political lobbying. The last approach that Hudfam took was cooperating with like-minded relief organisations. Whilst this may seem like an obvious approach to take for relief organisations, the lack of cooperation between relief organisations was often a stumbling block during the Second World War, and the strained relationship between the national Famine Relief Committee set up by Edith Pye and Vera Brittain's

¹²⁸ Hudfam, Minute Book, 28 October 1943, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

¹²⁹ Wybrow, R. (1989) *Britain Speaks Out 1937–1987*. London: Macmillan. P. 13.

¹³⁰ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 2.

Food Relief Campaign was the most notable example of this.¹³¹ This chapter will address the network of affiliations that Hudfam created, highlighting their cooperation with organisations such as the Save the Children Fund through internationalist and imperialist synthesis, and their liaison with other famine relief organisations, helping to create a northern consortium of committees that lobbied the government on a unified front.

Friberg's analysis of the construction and constraints of appeals during and immediately after the Second World War offers a helpful model to which these campaigns can be scrutinised. Friberg assesses the combination of appeals for donations, political lobbying campaigns, and cooperation between organisations as the three key strategies that created a moral economy of food aid. This model of relief campaigning will be employed within this chapter, and it will be argued that the latter of these strategies was a technique used for survival and growth. Friberg highlights the difficulties in appealing for donations during the Second World War, claiming that government restrictions on campaigning at this time often caused barriers for overseas relief. She suggests that 'Appeals... have two relevant audiences. On the one hand, there is the wartime state, which must at least allow and accept the appeal as legitimate; on the other hand, there is a community of potential donors which must be moved to support it. Some causes were unproblematic enough. Supporting relief to victims on the home front, to British soldiers, and non-occupied allies was seen as a patriotic act, just as it was during WWI. Hence, calls for engagement and fundraising campaigns for these purposes met with little difficulties.'¹³² Friberg also addresses how in some cases, relief organisations were competing for funds and supporters, whilst in other cases, cooperation was evident between relief groups. She states that 'These organisations competed with each other for funds and members/supporters. But they could cooperate in campaigns for a specific cause, or in defending

¹³¹ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. Pp. 3-4; *Letter from the National Famine Relief Campaign to the Manchester and Salford Famine Relief Committee, February 1944*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/5.

¹³² Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P 7.

voluntary action in relation to state organised or purely commercial activities.’¹³³ The cooperation that she identifies here was one of the key aspects of Hudfam’s campaign strategy. As a small organisation, they needed to situate themselves in a position where they could benefit from the knowledge and experience of larger organisations. This allowed them to generate connections which would continue throughout their history, their relationship with Oxfam being a prime example.

Baughan provides a nuanced theoretical methodology when examining the campaigns of relief organisations. Whilst solely focusing on the SCF, Baughan appropriately analyses the intertwined ideologies of internationalism and imperialism within the organisation, a theoretical approach that can be utilised to assess Hudfam’s attitudes and ideals. Baughan’s argument is that the internationalism of the Save the Children Fund was imbedded within the imperial context of the interwar years, and thus, was promoting an ideal of imperial civilised responsibility to protect the children of the world, and not anti-imperialism.¹³⁴ Baughan believes that despite the internationalist outlook of the SCF, the organisation was aware that romanticising the British empire would appeal to the public. This argument is highlighted in her article ‘*Every Citizen of Empire...*’ when she states that ‘any charitable organization must tailor its appeals to fit the concerns and prejudices of its potential donors. The case of the British S.C.F. is, nevertheless, particularly interesting. Despite being part of a wider international network of child welfare organizations which shared fundraising resources and publications printed in Geneva, the British S.C.F. was the only fund which elected to maintain a separate, national propaganda office. The British S.C.F. published appeals specifically targeted to the British public and the British dominions, believing that nationalist and imperialist narratives would be crucial in awakening notions of international humanitarian responsibility.’¹³⁵ Given that at times, Hudfam would ride on the coattails of the SCF, especially with their appeals for donations, and supporting SCF led campaigns, Hudfam’s view on these imperialist connotations will

¹³³ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 2.

¹³⁴ Baughan, E. (2013) ‘Every Citizen of Empire Implored to Save the Children!’ *Empire, Internationalism and the Save the Children Fund in inter-war Britain*. *Historical Research*, 86 (231), p. 116.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* Pp. 117-118.

be assessed within this thesis. Furthermore, this approach by Baughan has provoked an assessment of the intersection of internationalist and imperialist discourse within Hudfam's Bengal famine relief campaign (featuring also in chapter three).

Bengal Famine of 1943

Whilst previously disassociated with the famine relief movement of the Second World War, the Bengal Famine of 1943 was a significant event in the history of Hudfam. It was this famine that devastated the Bengali population that became the focus of Hudfam's first fundraising campaign, stimulating a humanitarian adherence to India that continued throughout the organisations history. The motivations of the famine relief movement are usually attributed to the British blockade of Europe, and the subsequent starvation on the continent. However, famine occurred across Britain's empire as well as in Europe, with one of the worst cases ravaging the people of Bengal. These events are related, in that it was British wartime policy that was one of the major causes of famine in both cases. However, the issue of famine in Bengal and Europe have been separated within the historiography, despite them having happened concurrently. The history of Hudfam places both events within the same frame of reference and shows how there is an interlink between the causes of both famines. Thus, this history of Hudfam reshapes the historiography of famine relief and stresses the relation between issues of famine in both cases.

The major historiographical debate that surrounds the Bengal Famine is the question of the causes of the famine in 1943. The economist Amartya Sen has been prominent within this debate, and has influenced much of the discourse on Indian famine since the 1980s. Sen's argument proposed that market failures that occurred within the context of war were to blame for the famine in Bengal that killed over two million people, and not food shortages itself.¹³⁶ Furthermore, Sen suggests that despite a minor shortfall in food supplies, enough food was available to feed the Bengali people, but

¹³⁶ Sen, A. K. (1981). *Poverty and famines: an essay on entitlements and deprivation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

the failure to distribute these supplies caused a preventable famine.¹³⁷ Ó Gráda develops this argument further, suggesting that whilst there was some evidence of a decline of food availability, the imperial British powers failed to protect Bengal from a 'harvest shortfall that would have been manageable during peacetime'.¹³⁸ Influenced by Sen's theory on the cause of the Bengal famine, Ó Gráda accentuates the political causes of this famine, insinuating that Britain's colonial policy towards India heightened this disaster.¹³⁹ A more vociferous critique of the British Empire, and more specifically of the attitudes and actions of Winston Churchill is expressed by Mukerjee. In *Churchill's Secret War*, Mukerjee accuses Churchill of hoarding food supplies, particularly wheat, which she believes could have been distributed across Bengal to alleviate the threat of famine in the region.¹⁴⁰ Mukerjee argues that the distribution of '360,000 tons of wheat and rice [in Bengal relief camps]... would have saved almost 2 million', however, Churchill was instead imposing restrictions on imports to India, and continuing to demand grotesque quantities of exports, 'a net 360,000 tons during the fiscal year April 1, 1942, to March 31, 1943.'¹⁴¹ Given that information was being fed to Churchill about the possibility of famine within India at this time, these figures begin to justify Mukerjee's scathing attack on Churchill. She adds that the combination of Britain cutting Indian Ocean shipping, and the continued expectation of India to provide for Ceylon, Arabia, and South Africa (conditions in which were reportedly better than those in India itself), meant 'the prime minister exported as much as possible of Britain's future economic risk to the colonies – where it precipitated immediate catastrophe.'¹⁴² Essentially, Mukerjee believes Churchill systematically stripped India of its food stocks, which intensified the suffering of the Bengali populations, and created a political famine in which Britain was responsible for the deaths of millions of its own 'subjects'.¹⁴³ Whilst the causes of

¹³⁷ Sen. *Poverty and famines*.

¹³⁸ Ó Gráda, C. (2010). 'Sufficiency and sufficiency and sufficiency': *Revisiting the Bengal Famine of 1943-44*. Paper presented at a conference on twentieth-century famines, University of Melbourne P. 35.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Mukerjee, M. (2010). *Churchill's Secret War: The British Empire and the Ravaging of India During World War II*. Chennai: Tranquebar Press.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* Pp. 131-132.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* Pp. 126 – 132.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

the Bengal Famine were unknown to relief organisations in 1943, the deaths of Britain's 'subjects' ignited the moral impulses of a number of organisations, including Hudfam, and a Bengal Assistance Fund was created in 1943 to reduce the impact on the Bengali population.¹⁴⁴

Whilst starvation in Europe was the major focus of relief organisations during the Second World War, organisations such as the Friends' Ambulance Unit (FAU) and the Save the Children Fund (SCF) were also conscious of famine across the globe and had been working in India during the war.¹⁴⁵ The FAU had developed permanent canteens for the people of Bengal and Calcutta who had been suffering from the effects of global food shortages, whilst the SCF set up temporary medical clinics and pop-up canteens in Bengal for those most in need.¹⁴⁶ Thus, when starvation began to ravage the people of Bengal in 1943, these organisations were fully aware of the horrors that the Bengali people faced, and thereafter, set up a Bengal Assistance Fund to thwart the possibility of starvation. A letter was written to *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* in October of 1943, signed jointly by Mr H.D. Watson and Captain George F. Gracey on behalf of the SCF and by Mr. Paul. S. Cadbury and Mr. A. Tegla Davies on behalf of the FAU.¹⁴⁷ The contents of the letter stated that:

One of the most pressing needs for combating the famine in Bengal is the provision of a greater number of canteens for children. The Indian Red Cross is concentrating on feeding numbers of infants, but the Friends' Ambulance Unit workers are dealing with the three-to-twelve age group. The existing eleven canteens are pitifully inadequate but they have proved the high value of this kind of work. We need funds for its expansion. This service has the merit that the overheads are very low, for premises are loaned free of rent, serving is undertaken by volunteers, each child brings its own plate and mug, cooking utensils are often borrowed and the cooking is done by mothers who receive free meals in return. This task of serving the children has, moreover, great

¹⁴⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 11 October 1943.

¹⁴⁵ *The World's Children*, Winter 1943, P. 79. SCF Archive, UML.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 11 October 1943; *The Times*, 11 October 1943; *The World's Children*, Winter 1943, P. 79. SCF Archive, UML.

value as a gesture of friendship between Britain and their fellow subjects in India. On behalf of the Save the Children Fund and the Friends' Ambulance Unit, we appeal to your readers to make this gesture as great and as generous as possible.¹⁴⁸

This appeal was typical of the techniques employed by relief organisations, especially that of the SCF. Baughan argues that the SCF's literature and propaganda interacted both imperialism and internationalism to widen the scope of reaction.¹⁴⁹ Despite the ambivalence of some of the SCF members to British imperialism, imperialism was interwoven into many of the SCF's appeals to the British public, due to the connection that the British people generally felt towards the empire.¹⁵⁰ The SCF may not have supported British Imperialism, but they recognised that the British people resonated with imperial discourse, and as a result, imperialism infiltrated the fund's campaigns. As Barnett identifies, paternalism was a theme that transcended the changing contexts of humanitarian provision, and often paternalism was an extension of the moral responsibility that was associated with imperialism at this time.¹⁵¹ Thus, the SCF struck a tone of imperial benevolence within its message, portraying their relief in India as a 'gesture of friendship' to those suffering. This is a curious message from the SCF, and aligns with their 'establishment', almost conservative, stance during the Second World War. Shortly after the First World War, the SCF were perceived to be providing a radical challenge through their humanitarian provision, and internationalist political attitudes. However, during the Second World War, the SCF supported the British war effort, focusing their relief on the home front, and rejecting calls to join the campaign against Britain's blockade of Europe, despite mounting pressure from members within the organisation.¹⁵² As a British colony, India remained of interest to the SCF, as the relief they were providing in camps in Bengal could be deemed to be patriotic, and an essential extension of the war effort. Thus, the SCF was continuing to

¹⁴⁸ *The World's Children*, Winter 1943, P. 79. SCF Archive, UML.

¹⁴⁹ Baughan. *Empire, Internationalism and the Save the Children Fund*. P. 136.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Barnett. *Empire of Humanity*. P. 105.

¹⁵² *Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Save the Children Fund, 1944-1945*. P. 3. S

provide international relief during the war, but was abstaining from controversy, simply towing the establishment line. This is evident within this appeal, as absent within the content of their message is an acknowledgement of the cause of the Bengal famine. It could quite possibly be that the SCF believed this famine to be due to food shortages during the war, however, it is striking that neither the SCF or Hudfam criticise the British government for not providing funds or further food aid for the starving Bengali people. Despite the connotations of imperial paternalism within the letter, the message of the suffering of the Bengali children still resonated with the moral impulses of the Hudfam members, and they answered this call with several fundraising measures. For Hudfam, the Bengal Assistance Fund provided an opportunity to express and affirm their internationalism and pacifism. However, it was perhaps also an extension of a paternalistic impulse, concerned with those suffering in the British Raj.

As discussed in Chapter One, Hudfam developed out of an amalgamation of pacifism, Quakerism, and liberal internationalism, and were heavily influenced by Vera Brittain to eventually create a local famine relief organisation in Huddersfield.¹⁵³ Brittain, a friend of India, and an admirer of Gandhi, was an influential figure within the pacifist movement, and given the Wilson's adherence to pacifism, Brittain's presence in the creation of Hudfam is unsurprising.¹⁵⁴ It could be assumed that the correlation between the international pacifism of Brittain and Gandhi's non-violence independence movement within India had a significant impact on Hudfam's decision to support the Bengal Assistance Fund, as their internationalist interests aligned with the needs of those suffering from famine in the region.¹⁵⁵ After their first meeting in October of 1943, Hudfam discussed fundraising means to support the Bengal Assistance Fund.¹⁵⁶ Hudfam developed an Indian Famine Relief Fund, the proceeds of which were handed over to the FAU and SCF led Bengal Assistance

¹⁵³ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 3.

¹⁵⁴ Brittain. *Testament of Experience*.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Hudfam Minute Book, 28 October 1943. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

Fund.¹⁵⁷ This allowed Hudfam to align itself with the traditional liberal internationalist stance of a much larger relief organisation in the SCF, strengthening their authority by creating a network of humanitarian interest with greater distinction. By contributing to the Bengal Assistance Fund and utilising the appeals of the FAU and the SCF, Hudfam were riding on the coattails of these two organisations to promote their interests. At this time, the SCF already had a presence in Huddersfield in the shape of a local branch that met at the Quaker meeting house. As much larger organisations, the FAU and the SCF had a greater authority than Hudfam, and therefore a campaign that could boast of the contribution they were making to more prominent humanitarian partners were likely to have a greater appeal to the public.

One of Hudfam's most prominent fundraising techniques was hosting flag days, the first of which was organised to help contribute to the Bengal Assistance Fund, and this technique was continued throughout their forty-eight-year history. Despite an initial set back, caused by a scout boy who had volunteered to set up the flag day and create flags for the event, the first major fundraising campaign for Hudfam was a moderate success. After the inaugural meeting of the organisation, a young scout boy approached Elizabeth Wilson, at the time the organising and appeals secretary, about contributing to the flag day. Despite his initial keenness to assist in organising the event, a week before the flag day was due to take place in the January of 1944, Wilson had a difficult conversation with the young boy's father who revealed that his son had done no preparation for the event. In her published memoir, Elizabeth recalls how she feared that this would be the end of Hudfam before it had even started.¹⁵⁸ To prevent this from happening, Wilson, along with the help of some Quaker friends, rallied around in the week leading up to the event, creating flags, renting collection tins, and handing out leaflets to potential attendees.¹⁵⁹ Fortunately, Wilson's perseverance paid off and the flag day raised around £200.¹⁶⁰ In the context of wartime, this was a

¹⁵⁷ Hudfam, Annual Report, 1943-44. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

¹⁵⁸ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. Pp. 170-171.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

valiant effort by the organisation, especially for a one day event. Of course, it is a modest amount when compared with more renowned organisations, but arguably Hudfam had succeeded, not in raising funds, but in spreading knowledge of their organisation and the need for famine relief. By the end of the financial year of 1943-1944, Hudfam had raised £391 for the Bengal Assistance Fund, and in addition to their flag day, raised this through special collections, church collections, publicity of events in the *Huddersfield Examiner* and a performance of 'Lady Precious Stream' by the students of Avery Hill College, an institution that had evacuated to Huddersfield from London during the war.¹⁶¹

Given the meagre funds generated from this inaugural event, and the manner in which the flag day was organised, an underlying importance of this fundraising can be detected. As an organisation that was comprised of predominantly pacifist and Quaker members, the outlook of the committee was not one shared with the general public, and instead, their campaign for famine relief was built on the foundations of an unpopular moral position. As expressed by Vera Brittain, those with pacifist views during the Second World War were heavily vilified by both the public, and distinguished individuals, especially high-level politicians.¹⁶² Thus, gaining popular support for their famine relief campaign proved difficult, as evidenced by the low sums generated. Of course, given the traditions of pacifism and internationalism within Huddersfield, Hudfam benefited from the existence of a network of individuals that would support their movement, but to gain further support during the war was a futile task. Therefore, Hudfam used this flag day to instead reaffirm their unpopular moral standpoints of pacifism to themselves and presented a display of defiance through this event. In her memoir, *Encounters on the Way*, Elizabeth Wilson herself claims that this campaign not only helped victims of the Bengal Famine, 'but also established Hudfam as a working group of people who knew they could rely on each other. This is a valuable asset.'¹⁶³ By culminating like-minded individuals at

¹⁶¹ Hudfam, Annual Report, 1943-1944. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, K547/2/1.

¹⁶² Brittain. *Testament of Experience*.

¹⁶³ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 171.

this event, the members of Hudfam validated their moral purpose in the face of vilification, and utilised famine relief in Bengal as an obligation of their pacifism and internationalism.¹⁶⁴

The British Blockade of Europe

In a speech on 20 August 1940, Winston Churchill set out a plan of winning the Second World War.¹⁶⁵

Significant within this strategic plan, was an intensification of Britain's blockade policy, in which Britain would use its naval and diplomatic power to prevent the import of food to the countries of occupied Europe.¹⁶⁶ Whilst some within the House of Commons, such as the Quaker T. Edmund Harvey, believed food to be an absolute necessity, and therefore should be exempt from Britain's blockade policy, the British wartime government believed that food was both a peaceful and militaristic commodity, and that allowing food to pass through the blockade would strengthen the hand of the Nazis.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, according to Churchill, any food shortages that occurred within occupied Europe were the responsibility of Germany, given that they were the occupying nation. Churchill argued that 'the only agencies which can create famine in any part of Europe now and during the coming winter, will be German exactions or German failure to distribute the supplies which they command.'¹⁶⁸ This quote from Churchill highlights the unwavering position of the British wartime government on blockade policy, and is evidence that Churchill and many of his ministers were unmoved by calls for famine relief, or claims of humanitarian responsibility. For Churchill, first and foremost was winning the militaristic war. The fight for peace and a stable Europe after the war took a backseat, at least in his approach. This policy of blockade by Britain raised tensions with its allies, and the French foreign minister became especially vocal against Britain's plans. The French Minister accused Churchill and his blockade policy of 'foreboding of famine'.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, he suggested that 'We members of a Europe which is engaged in a dark struggle must organise soon if

¹⁶⁴ Hudfam, Annual Report, 1943-44. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1

¹⁶⁵ Black. *A Cause for our Times*. P. 2.

¹⁶⁶ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. P. 57.

¹⁶⁷ *Hansard*, HC Deb 10 November 1943, vol. 393, Series 5; Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. P. 57.

¹⁶⁸ Quote from Winston Churchill in Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. P. 61.

¹⁶⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 23 August 1940.

we wish to seize the splendid opportunities which we have not yet desired or dared to put into full operation... By forbidding a great part of Europe to appease its hunger Mr. Winston Churchill excludes Britain from this necessary solidarity which alone will allow of the creation of a more just, a more charitable, and a more peaceful world.¹⁷⁰ Here, the French minister aligned himself with those in Britain arguing for a moral rethink of Britain's blockade policy, and also hints at the peace at the end of the war, which the famine relief movement, Hudfam included, advocated for.

The impact of Britain's blockade is a controversial one. In the winter of 1941-1942, famine broke out in Greece, causing brutal starvation to the Greek population.¹⁷¹ There were calls for a relaxation of the blockade on Greece, however, they were ignored by Churchill. Instead, the British government turned the focus of the Greek famine onto the barbarity of the Nazis, claiming that it was those that controlled occupied Europe that caused the mass starvations within Greece.¹⁷² Issues of food shortages and starvation also occurred in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Vichy France, however, Britain persisted with their blockade policy with little relaxation until 1942, when the British government allowed for a major concession for Greece.¹⁷³ It is not a coincidence that Greece was the major beneficiary of any relaxation of the blockade. In the eyes of some MPs, Greece was an exemplary nation, which gallantly fought the Nazis until they fell in 1941, and often cited as the 'cradle of European civilisation.'¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, the famine relief movement, and the Oxford committee especially, were particularly focused on the issue of Greece, as opposed to Europe generally. The support from Oxford academics to the famine relief cause led to a fixation on helping Greece by the Oxford committee.¹⁷⁵ Gilbert Murray, an Oxford classicist, was one of the major actors within the Oxford committee, and often played a vital role in public events and lobbying

¹⁷⁰ *Manchester Guardian*, 23 August 1940.

¹⁷¹ Clogg, R. (Ed.) (2008). *Bearing Gifts to Greeks: Humanitarian Aid to Greece in the 1940s*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 3

¹⁷² Hindley. *Blockade before Bread*. P. 175

¹⁷³ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. P. 67.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* P. 66.

¹⁷⁵ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s*. Pp. 170-171.

strategies.¹⁷⁶ The nature of his academic profession made Greece a high priority. As a classicist, Murray was a well-versed scholar on the topic of civilisation, and therefore Greece had a hold on his humanitarian response.¹⁷⁷ Stray argues that 'Where other scholars saw classical Greece as an eternal exemplar, Murray sought to reconstruct Hellenism as a progress toward perfection: a progress which involved constant struggle against opposing forces. More than anyone else he embodied a lifelong commitment to this ideal, in which for him Greece, liberalism, and international peace were equally involved.'¹⁷⁸ This indicates that Greece was part of Murray's ideal of internationalism, and not just a beneficiary. This obsession with Greece by contemporaries has influenced the historiography of the British blockade, with the major focus being on Greece, and other parts of occupied Europe such as the Netherlands receive little to no attention. Furthermore, this has contributed to the separation of the Bengal famine and the Greek famine within the literature, as scholarly attention tends to steer towards the latter event.

The British Blockade of Europe has received extensive scholarly attention. The focus of historians is often to look at the humanitarian response to the British blockade, and how Britain contributed to famine relief in Greece, especially. As previously stated, Beaumont, Clogg, and Kazamias have all contributed to this historiography.¹⁷⁹ The predominant argument that materialises from Beaumont and Kazamias is that there was little success in overturning Britain's blockade of Europe, and that it was American pressure and opposition to the British blockade that forced concessions from the British government, and not that of the British famine relief movement.¹⁸⁰ Such argument is summarised by Beaumont when she claims that:

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* P. 170-171.

¹⁷⁷ Stray, C. (2008). 'Murray, (George) Gilbert Aimé (1866-1957). *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35159>, Accessed on 10/01/2018].

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*; Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s*; Kazamias. *The Politics of Famine Relief*.

¹⁸⁰ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. Pp. 77-78; Kazamias. *The Politics of Famine Relief*. P. 39-57.

The war in Europe therefore drew to a close with the British position on the food blockade substantially as it was in early 1942. There were only two major concessions in the blockade, Vichy France and Greece, and neither of these were obviously a victory for the protest movement. For all their agitation in 1942-44, and the concern this caused the Ministry of Economic Warfare, the influence of relief activists on British policy was very limited. This was partly because Churchill and, in the earlier years of the war, Dalton were so deeply committed to economic warfare. The prime minister's historical appreciation of the Royal Navy, his preference for the 'British way in warfare' and his failure to identify emotionally with the victims of war combined and made him stubborn on the issue of food relief. So far as he was concerned, the blockade was not to become a victim of 'psalm singing uniformed defeatists' (to use the phrase he employed when enthusiastically advocating the 'drenching' of German cities with poison gas in July 1944).¹⁸¹

This indictment of the famine relief movement's contribution during the Second World War is merciless and is too narrow in its definition of success. Here, Beaumont is quantifying the success of the famine relief movement purely based on how many concessions the British government were willing to provide to the blockade of Europe. However, what Beaumont misses in doing so, is the wider importance of the campaign against the blockade. For many, the famine relief movement was as much about reaffirming their ideals as it was about imposing a serious challenge to the blockade. After all, the movement was made up of a wide range of individuals from intellectuals and academics, to clergy and religious pacifists, all of which were not naïve enough to think the British government would simply give up on their wartime policy.¹⁸² Therefore, the famine relief movement had to educate and enthuse the public on humanitarian matters, and by fundraising and creating

¹⁸¹ Beaumont. *Starving for Democracy*. Pp. 77-78.

¹⁸² *Report of the Famine Relief Committee Delegate Conference, 3 January 1944*. Lionel Cowan Collection, Manchester Archives and Local Studies (MALS), M599/4/5/1.

political campaigns, these committees spread their message through media reports and created a wider public understanding of the conditions in Greece.¹⁸³

Whilst fundraising for relief in Europe was an important strategy in the fight against famine, the British blockade meant that attempts to fund food aid to Europe were futile without concessions. Therefore, famine relief organisations had to fight the government on a political level, and lobbying techniques became a significant procedure for the movement. Negotiating and compromising with the government was perhaps more difficult for Hudfam than other famine relief committees, because their pacifism was at odds with the war efforts of the British government. Of course, other famine relief organisations were opposing the government, but they did not all take a pacifist stance on the matter, and Pye was actively discouraging Quaker pacifist connotations to the national famine relief committee.¹⁸⁴ Friberg suggests that for famine relief organisations, 'it was a necessity to convince the government that such aid [for Europe] constituted a part in an effort to win not just the war but the peace'.¹⁸⁵ For Hudfam, it was the peace that they wished to seek, but to do so, they had to accept that war was the reality of the time. This was not to say they had to support it, but as a small relief organisation, it would be naïve to believe they could persuade the government to halt the blockade. After all, to request the complete departure from the government's blockade policy would have represented sightless idealism. Therefore, Hudfam had to be strategic in their approach to their fight against the blockade, and the politics of empathy and morality were at the forefront of the campaign.

Political campaigning and strategic lobbying are techniques that have been employed by relief organisations such as the SCF. During the First World War, when the British government was employing a similar strategic blockade on Germany, the SCF were 'conceived as the charitable wing

¹⁸³ *Manchester Guardian*, 16 June 1943 and 3 January 1944; *Oxford Times*, 24 March 1944; *Peace News*, 24 March 1944.

¹⁸⁴ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s*. Pp. 170-171.

¹⁸⁵ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 2.

of the anti-blockade... protest'.¹⁸⁶ Alongside Quaker activists, the SCF exhibited the suffering of German civilians through photographs and pamphlets.¹⁸⁷ This was not only a strategic attempt to expose the British population to the horrors of war, but also to appeal to the moral compass of government officials. Similar strategic campaigning methods were deployed by famine relief organisations during the Second World War, but additionally, famine relief organisations lobbied their local MPs to gain access to meetings with high profile individuals. In early 1944, famine relief organisations across the country stepped up their lobbying efforts significantly, and in Oxford, articles on the need for famine relief were spread widely in the *Oxford Times*.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, a petition that was delivered to the Minister for Economic Warfare was distributed across the city, gaining 8,000 signatures, and the support of 75 per cent of Oxford City Council members, across a range of political parties.¹⁸⁹ This petition requested a relaxing of the blockade in Greece at a minimum, to alleviate the suffering of the starving Greek population. A deputation with the Minister for Economic Warfare, Lord Selbourne, took place on 3 January 1944, in which members from fifteen famine relief organisations met with the minister to discuss matters of humanitarian importance regarding Greece and Europe more generally.¹⁹⁰ Hudfam, however, did not have a representative at this deputation. Instead, Reverend Adams was sent to represent Hudfam at the national famine relief delegation that was set up to coincide with the deputation to the Minister of Economic Warfare.¹⁹¹ On returning from the deputation, the representatives involved offered an upbeat message that suggested whilst no major concessions would be made, they could feel the tides of opinion beginning to change. The report of the deputation states that Lord Selbourne had confessed to being 'as humanitarian in this matter as we ourselves', further adding that they believed 'Lord Selbourne's whole attitude suggested... that he would rather have been on our side of the table than

¹⁸⁶ Gill. *Calculating Compassion*. Pp. 201-203.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Oxford Times*. January 1944.

¹⁸⁹ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks*. P. 173.

¹⁹⁰ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s*. P. 173; *Manchester Guardian*, 3 January 1944.

¹⁹¹ *Report of the Famine Relief Committee Delegate Conference, 3 January 1944*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/1.

his. He was giving the official case.¹⁹² The conference concluded with a message of defiance and ambition. The chairman, George Bell, the Bishop of Chichester delivered this message to the delegates from 82 famine relief groups:

I personally feel intensely relieved that the Minister has shown that he has nothing up his sleeve which he has not disclosed before. He has brought forward the same old arguments which we have countered and which the Manchester Guardian has countered with great regularity... I am more convinced than I was yesterday that our right policy is to go on hammering away until the British public can convince sufficient Members of Parliament that something has got to be done. The moment sufficient Members of the House of Commons are convinced, then something will be done.¹⁹³

According to Clogg, shortly after this deputation, an additional 900 tons per month of food was permitted to Greece.¹⁹⁴ In this case, the political lobbying of the government was beginning to work, and the Minister for Economic Warfare was clearly becoming more sympathetic to the cause of the famine relief movement.

Hudfam's involvement in political lobbying did not end with simply attending the famine relief delegation, and in May 1944, an unofficial Northern consortium of famine relief organisations came together for another deputation to the Minister of Economic Warfare. What is significant about this deputation is not the lobbying itself, but the networks of concern that were extended across the Northern relief organisations for this deputation to take place. Led by Lionel Cowan, the founder of the MSFRC, this northern consortium represented 29 famine relief committees across the North, from Liverpool to Hull.¹⁹⁵ Lionel Cowan was a prominent figure within the famine relief movement,

¹⁹² *Ibid.* P. 13.

¹⁹³ *Report of the Famine Relief Committee Delegate Conference, 3 January 1944.* Lionel Cowan Collection, Manchester Archives and Local Studies (MALS), M599/4/5/1. P. 16.

¹⁹⁴ Clogg. *Quakers and Greeks in the 1940s.* P. 173.

¹⁹⁵ *Report of a deputation from the Manchester and Salford Famine Relief Committee received by Lord Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare.* Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/2.

and was well known within pacifist circles, as he led the Manchester branch of the PPU which assumed responsibility of the PPU in the North.¹⁹⁶ Whilst it is not known if Lionel Cowan and Elizabeth Wilson had met, they were both connected to a similar milieu, and therefore, it is unsurprising that the MSFRC and Hudfam cooperated on this deputation. At this deputation, Hudfam was represented by Reverend Wilkinson, the President of the Huddersfield Free Church Federal Council.¹⁹⁷ Reverend Wilkinson's contribution to the deputation was built in sentiment, as opposed to any expertise, in which he applauded the 'strength of feeling engendered by Famine Relief Committees in the North of England'.¹⁹⁸ Due to the inexperience of Hudfam as an organisation, they largely took a backseat, and allowed the prominent Lionel Cowan, and Dr Frank Chattaway, to take the lead. As a nutritionist researcher at the University of Leeds, Dr Chattaway was able to offer a deep, scientific analysis of the scarcity of food conditions in Europe. Cowan and Dr Chattaway were promoting the ideal of food aid based on the lines of the Kershner Plan. The Kershner Plan, created by Dr Howard E. Kershner, head of the American Friends Service Committee's operations in Marseille, envisaged food aid that would provide for 10,000,000 women and children across Western Europe.¹⁹⁹ Dr Chattaway argued that their 'moderate' adaptation of the Kershner Plan would be viable, and meet the required 'nutritional need' of those suffering, suggesting the scheme should provide '1 oz. protein, less than 1 oz. fat, 3 oz. carbohydrates (starch) per day to each person fed, made up from cereals, meat, fat and powdered milk, to a total of 51,000 tons monthly.'²⁰⁰ This food aid scheme, based on the Kershner proposals, was still less than half of the protein and a third of the carbohydrates required, according to Chattaway.²⁰¹ Unfortunately, the Minister of Economic

¹⁹⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 3 January 1938.

¹⁹⁷ *Report of a deputation from the Manchester and Salford Famine Relief Committee received by Lord Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/2.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Friberg. *Winning the Moral War*. P. 11; *Report of a deputation from the Manchester and Salford Famine Relief Committee received by Lord Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/2.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Warfare rejected these proposals almost immediately, arguing that the distribution of food relief to as many as 10,000,000 was both impractical and impossible.²⁰²

This deputation inspired Hudfam to push for a deputation of their own, and on 21 August 1944, they were granted a deputation with Dingle Foot, an under minister to Lord Selbourne, the Minister for Economic Warfare.²⁰³ In their minute book, the displeasure of the committee that Lord Selbourne himself would not attend this deputation was noted, however, they were 'thankful for the time offered to them by Dingle Foot'.²⁰⁴ Discussion of the exact details of this deputation are scarce within the minute book, however, it was proposed by Elizabeth Wilson and Dr Hugh Wilson that the British government support the Swedish authorities in their aid policy, which was to provide 500 tonnes of food aid to Norway.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, Hudfam requested that the government support the transportation of European refugees from Occupied countries to neutral nations such as Sweden, and provide them with a safe haven.²⁰⁶ Again, absent from the minute book is any suggestion of how successful the deputation to Dingle Foot was, but it was remarked that he seemed sympathetic to their cause if nothing else.²⁰⁷ Here, Hudfam were expressing their concern not only for famine, but also for refugees, who were fleeing because of the impacts of war in Europe. Given the lack of success of the previous deputations, and the fact the blockade was still in place as Europe was being liberated, it can be assumed that Hudfam's solo efforts were also insufficient to change Britain's policy.

Despite this out right refusal from the Minister of Economic Warfare, and the suspected refusal from Dingle Foot, these deputations were not completely futile. Rather, there is something to be said for how these Northern famine relief committees coordinated and cooperated to take on the British

²⁰² *Report of a deputation from North of England to Lord Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare*. Lionel Cowan Collection, MALS, M599/4/5/2.

²⁰³ *Hudfam Minute Book*, 21 August 1944. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

government. In many ways, these deputations were as much about exposing the morality of their opposition to war, and to offering hope to those suffering in Europe, as it was to expect any substantial relaxation of the British blockade. As politicians overseas, such as the French Foreign Minister, were crying out for help from Britain, these famine relief organisations, including Hudfam and the MSFRC, were providing a hope and proving that some within Britain were hearing their calls. Whilst it appears that Hudfam's contribution to the larger deputations was minimal, they were able to use their pacifist and PPU connections to ensure that Lionel Cowan considered them for participation in the second deputation, and they gained scientific nutritional expertise on the conditions in Europe from Dr Chattaway, something that they had previously lacked.²⁰⁸

At the end of the Second World War, and after the liberation of occupied Europe, the famine relief committees across Britain began to disperse once more, as there was a belief that Europe's liberation would alleviate the suffering on the continent. The Oxford committee, Hudfam, and the MSFRC continued into the post-war period, all of which offered support to Victor Gollancz's Save Europe Now campaign, which was based upon a need for pacifist ideals to look beyond Germany's crimes during the war, and to offer refuge and liberation to every citizen suffering as a result of war.²⁰⁹ In Hudfam's case, immediately after the war, the source material becomes scarce, and the accounts of the organisation are excluded from the temporary written annual reports of the organisation.²¹⁰ This absence of the accounts leads to an assumption that Hudfam lost their way towards the end of the Second World War, and that supporting Gollancz's *Save Europe Now* Campaign was of paramount importance to the organisation.

This chapter has offered an important contribution to the historiography of humanitarianism, and of local history in Huddersfield. This chapter has placed the famines of Bengal and Greece within the same frame of reference for the first time within the historiography, arguing that there is an interlink

²⁰⁸ *Hudfam Minute Book*, 21 August 1944. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/1/1.

²⁰⁹ 'What can you do to help Europe?' Save Europe Now Pamphlet. Lionel Cowan Collection. M599/4/5/2

²¹⁰ *Hudfam Annual Reports, 1948-1949*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

with these two events, both caused by political actions of the British government. Furthermore, this chapter has mapped out Hudfarn's networks of connections, highlighting their interconnectivity with large humanitarian organisations such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Fund.

Chapter Three: Local Charity, Global Challenges, and International Development

During the 1960s, the decolonisation of over twenty-five British colonies coincided with an increasingly professionalised ideal of international development.²¹¹ As Barnett argues, the nature and geographical focus of humanitarianism was changing.²¹² The world of humanitarianism was moving from a field of emergency relief, to a developmental strategy of prevention.²¹³ However, there were significant continuities, such as paternalism, that continued to feature within humanitarian discourse. Furthermore, in the case of Hudfam, there were continuities of dynastic influence and family connections. Hodge argues that post-war humanitarianism and development became increasingly professionalised and describes this period as the 'triumph of the expert.'²¹⁴ This meant that large non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Oxfam, CARE, and Christian Aid had to adapt to this professionalisation of the field, creating a globalisation of humanitarian concern as the decolonised nations became internationalised. This caused the newly independent nations to become objects of concern to the 'developed' nations, as opposed to objects of colonialism.²¹⁵ This did not mean that imperial discourse did not exist, but instead, imperial desires became infused with the internationalisation of humanitarian development, as will be discussed within this chapter. In 1960, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation set up the FFHC, aimed at creating agricultural development projects across the world, with the newly independent states in Africa, the Caribbean, and across the Indian Ocean viewed as those most in need.²¹⁶ This campaign hoped to acquire engagement and donations from communities within United Nations (UN) member states,

²¹¹ Cooper, F. (2002). *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 84.

²¹² Barnett. *Empire of Humanity*. Pp. 98-99.

²¹³ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 880.

²¹⁴ Hodge, J. M. (2007). *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*. Ohio: Ohio University Press. P. 19.

²¹⁵ Cooper. *Africa since 1940*. P. 84

²¹⁶ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. Pp. 880-882.

but also with NGOs, of which the likes of Oxfam made a considerable contribution.²¹⁷ As Bocking-Welch suggests, whilst the FFHC had a global scope, the ideals of the movement were developed from British imperial benevolence.²¹⁸ Vernon furthers this idea, arguing that it was in Britain that hunger was first deemed a worldwide issue, much due to its imperial role in the world.²¹⁹ Therefore, Vernon suggests, philanthropic means of thwarting hunger were developed in Britain, through social campaigns and movements, and the statecraft of internationalist politicians.²²⁰

As discussed in chapter two, Hudfam had a fight to keep their organisation running after the Second World War, and arguably, the persistence of Elizabeth Wilson allowed the organisation to survive. To do so, the organisation had to create a business model that would allow them to stay afloat and evolve into a developmental committee from the emergency relief organisation that it once was. Campaigns such as the UN's FFHC offered organisations such as Hudfam a greater authority to express the necessity for donations for those in need, as this campaign encompassed over 100 countries, and became a media sensation.²²¹ It also allowed smaller organisations to feel like they were contributing to the expanding humanitarian and development field, as the prominence of established NGOs such as Oxfam increased significantly during this period.²²² In 1961, a heads of agreement was written up for Hudfam, in collaboration with Oxfam, in which the Huddersfield committee vowed to send two thirds of its income to Oxfam, either through a direct monetary payment, or by donating to an Oxfam sponsored development project.²²³ In return, Oxfam would offer to pay the rent on the famine relief shop in Huddersfield, which was opened in 1963, and provided them with Oxfam literature to distribute to the Huddersfield community.²²⁴ Nevertheless, from the conception of a constitution in 1961, Hudfam had been an unofficial sister organisation to

²¹⁷ Oxfam Publication. (1962). *Freedom from Hunger Conference Invitation*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/5/2.

²¹⁸ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 880.

²¹⁹ Vernon, J. (2002). *Hunger: A Modern History*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. P. 4.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *New York Times*, 2 July 1960.

²²² *The Observer*, 4 August 1963.

²²³ *Heads of Agreement between Hudfam and Oxfam*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

Oxfam and around 65 per cent of their income was already going to Oxfam sponsored projects.²²⁵

This was strategic pragmatism from Hudfam, as they tried to shape and publicise their organisation as the sister of Oxfam, allowing them an increased media exposure and a greater authority within the network of development. Yet, Hudfam was not simply amalgamated into Oxfam, nor did it become a local branch of Oxfam. It became a quasi-independent organisation, that continued to control and influence its donations and project focus, ensuring that connections and relationships with indigenous development organisations made previously remained fruitful, and in some cases, influenced Oxfam to support their cause. Additionally, the dynastic nature of the organisation continued, and Elizabeth Wilson remained an influential figure within the organisation even after she had stepped down from her official roles on the committee to take up a position on Oxfam's Asian Grants Committee.

This chapter will discuss the evolution of Hudfam in the post-war period, focusing on their contribution to the global FFHC, their sponsoring of development projects across Asia, and their ever-closer union with Oxfam. It will be argued that the organisations efforts during the Second World War to alleviate India and Europe from famine provoked a humanitarian engagement from the people of Huddersfield, as it was not just the committee that fundraised for the FFHC, but also the wider community in the West Yorkshire town. Furthermore, Hudfam's focus on development across Asia in the post-war period will be assessed, highlighting development projects and partnerships that occurred in India, Vietnam, and Hong Kong. Considerable attention will be given to the Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association (NAWA) set up in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. This welfare clinic was a longstanding beneficiary of Hudfam's donations, not least because John Wilson, son of Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson, was a nurse and agricultural worker at the clinic.²²⁶ Lastly, some attention will be given to Hudfam's evolution into a development organisation. Their relationship

²²⁵ *Draft Constitution of Hudfam*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2; Hudfam, *Annual Report, 1962-63*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

²²⁶ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 88.

with Oxfam will be explored, and Elizabeth Wilson's influence over the organisation through her humanitarian fieldwork will be addressed. It will be argued that Wilson's work as a member of Oxfam's Asian Grants Committee helped to develop her understanding of humanitarian and development work across Asia, and this directed Hudfam's focus onto providing donations to Asia after the 1960s. Hudfam's efforts during the post-war period will be assessed in the context of decolonisation and an increase in a perceived liberal internationalist consensus, arguing that Hudfam's humanitarian relief was not free from connotations of imperialism, and like many relief organisations during this period, a paternalistic approach was still lurking within their internationalist world view of development.²²⁷

Freedom from Hunger Campaign

The FFHC of the 1960s was a global movement that encompassed over 100 UN member states. In Britain, this resulted in almost seven million pounds being raised by 1964, of which organisations such as Oxfam, CARE, and Hudfam all contributed.²²⁸ Although there was a National FFHC Committee in the United Kingdom, the FFHC in Britain was run in association with Oxfam, as by the 1960s, Oxfam was carving itself into the conscience of the British public through campaigning, so that when world hunger was a topic of discussion, people associated this with Oxfam.²²⁹ As Oxfam evolved from an emergency relief committee to a developmental organisation, Oxfam's prominence continued to grow, and became one of the world's most renowned NGOs.²³⁰ Hudfam, on the other hand, continued to be a local, dynastic organisation that cooperated with larger organisations such as Oxfam and the SCF, but also kept the Huddersfield link within their developmental practices abroad. After the initial struggle for survival after the Second World War, Hudfam gained a greater significance within the community of Huddersfield. The *Huddersfield Examiner*, a local liberal

²²⁷ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 893.

²²⁸ *The Guardian*, 20 November 1964.

²²⁹ Black. *A Cause of Our Times*. Pp. 35-36.

²³⁰ *Ibid.* Pp. 291-292.

internationalist newspaper began to offer the organisation some media attention, and their campaigns and work within the local community became more eagerly publicised.²³¹ One of the significant campaigns that Hudfam worked on, the FFHC, gained major media traction across Britain, and the *Huddersfield Examiner* followed suit.²³² This greater exposure of the committee's campaigning, and the fact that the mayor of Huddersfield was the honorary president of the organisation led to the launch of a community-wide appeal for the FFHC. In November 1962, the Mayor of Huddersfield, Alderman John A. Bray, set out a challenge to the Huddersfield community to raise £20,000 for the FFHC in one year.²³³ On announcing his appeal, the mayor stated that 'The first purpose of our campaign is to educate and bring to the realisation of every person an acute awareness of the problem [of hunger]. The second purpose is to secure the active participation of every man, woman and child in the effort.'²³⁴ Hudfam had donated £1,380 to Oxfam for FFHC projects by the end of 1963, however, Elizabeth Wilson was keen for the organisation to further connect with their community, and have a significant role in the mayor's appeal.²³⁵ Through the connections she had made during her role in Hudfam, Wilson managed to involve the local branch of the SCF, Oxfam, and the United Nations Association (UNA) in this local fundraising campaign.²³⁶ Headed by the Vicar of Huddersfield, Canon A. G. W. Hunter, a Huddersfield Committee of the United Kingdom Campaign for Freedom from Hunger was created, of which, Elizabeth Wilson and Hudfam worked under the auspice of (for the purpose of the FFHC).²³⁷

The *Huddersfield Examiner* was a significant tool for Hudfam and the Huddersfield committee of the FFHC during the 1960s, publishing a weekly article written by a different relief organisation. The purpose of these publications was to underline the work being undertaken by organisations such as

²³¹ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 26 January 1963.

²³² *Hudfam Annual Report*, 1961-1962. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1; *Freedom from Hunger Campaign 1962 Scrapbook*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/5/2.

²³³ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 13 November 1962.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ *Hudfam Annual Report*, 1962-1963. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

²³⁶ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 27 September 1963.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

the Quakers, the SCF, the UNA, and Inter-Church Aid, all of which had been previous beneficiaries of donations from Hudfam. In doing so, the Huddersfield Examiner, on behalf of Hudfam and the Huddersfield FFHC committee, exposed the people of Huddersfield to the positive work that their donations were contributing to, and hoped to increase the fundraising activities of the local community.²³⁸ In an article published on 20 December 1962, the *Huddersfield Examiner* focused their attention on the development work being undertaken by the Quakers in rural India.²³⁹ As Hudfam had previously campaigned against the famine in Bengal in 1943, the Huddersfield community were aware of the concerns around potential famine outbreaks in India, however, this article details some of the development work that was carried out in an attempt to prevent further outbreaks.²⁴⁰ Described in the article as 'down-to-earth projects', the Quaker work, that had begun several years before the Second World War, included creating a rural community centre in Rasullia, Central India.²⁴¹ Additionally, the article claims that 'Quaker workers have been helping Indian villagers to raise their living standards by water conservation, improved husbandry, a basic school of the Gandhian type, the provision of clinics, and education in the matters of health and hygiene.'²⁴² This article promotes what could have been viewed by the people of Huddersfield as positive and cooperative means of development in India, and provides distinct details of how their donations were being distributed. This helped to meet the aims of the mayor's appeal, as these articles were educating the public about how the Quakers were tackling hunger in India. However, what this article does not offer is an education of some of the causes of famine, which are often political.²⁴³ Nevertheless, this exposure by the *Huddersfield Examiner* of the work carried out by relief organisations across the world offered the community in Huddersfield a greater connection to the needs of those suffering from hunger and helped start up fundraising projects across the town.

²³⁸ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1962-1963*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

²³⁹ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 20 December 1962.

²⁴⁰ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1943-1944*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

²⁴¹ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 20 December 1962.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Mukerjee. *Churchill's Secret War*. P. 275

Perhaps the most positive element of the campaign was the fundraising that was undertaken by local Huddersfield schools. Elizabeth Wilson and the Mayor of Huddersfield were regular attendees at schools and colleges throughout Huddersfield, as they looked to promote the FFHC.²⁴⁴ As a former teacher, Wilson was not averse to educating children, and saw this as a way of promoting and instilling humanitarian ethos at a young age.²⁴⁵ The fundraising schemes created in local Huddersfield schools set up a sense of friendly competition as to which school could raise the most money, as schools right across Huddersfield became involved. Whilst in some cases only meagre funds could be generated, some schools were fruitful in their fundraising aims. Fartown County Secondary School raised £116, whilst Holmfirth Secondary Modern School raised £200.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, the Catering Department at the Huddersfield College of Technology raised £525 for the FFHC, citing the importance of 'nutrition to all'.²⁴⁷ Whilst the funds raised by these schools were not ground-breaking, they were adding to a community-wide spirit that was growing during the 1960s, to tackle issues of hunger across the world. Bocking-Welch succinctly sums up the contribution that media outlets such as the *Huddersfield Examiner* were making to the campaigns of Hudfam and the global wide FFHC when she suggests that 'In a reflection of the international frameworks of the campaign most of the press within Britain focused not on the paternalistic potential of the British government as a national (imperial) power but on the networked fundraising efforts of individuals, community groups and international charities.'²⁴⁸ For the purpose of the FFHC, paternalism was avoided by both Hudfam and the *Huddersfield Examiner*, and messages of the 'marvellous work' of the community, such as an FFHC exhibition, were promoted.²⁴⁹ Arguably, Hudfam's efforts during the Second World War, and their promotion of a humanitarian climate within Huddersfield were beginning to take effect. Their cooperation and support with the

²⁴⁴ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 13 February 1963.

²⁴⁵ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 194-195.

²⁴⁶ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 20 March 1963 and 5 July 1963.

²⁴⁷ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 1 April 1963.

²⁴⁸ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 890.

²⁴⁹ *Huddersfield Examiner*, 26 January 1963.

Huddersfield FFHC committee helped to raise their profile, by gaining invaluable exposure from the *Huddersfield Examiner* (which continued after the mayor's appeal ceased to exist), and by attaching itself to a local committee of a global campaign. As Handy suggests, organisations that can associate themselves with large and successful campaigns can often use this to help their organisation grow and succeed.²⁵⁰ This is an extension to traditional networking that organisations do, and allows smaller organisations to connect with larger organisations, exposing them to new and wider donors.²⁵¹

The Sister of Oxfam

After the Second World War, it was vital for Hudfam to create a sustainable business model if they were to continue to make a humanitarian contribution. Due to the voluntary nature of the organisation, there was no money to be afforded to put in place a full time, rigorous system of management, and therefore, the organisation continued in its dynastic nature, often relying on Elizabeth Wilson to be the pivotal organ of the committee. Of course, for Elizabeth Wilson, this was an opportunity that was relished, and between the years of the Second World War and the FFHC campaign, she essentially became a de facto leader.²⁵² However, for Hudfam to continue with its work on famine relief and development, greater support both from within the committee, but also from external connections was needed. This support came from Oxfam, when in the late 1950s, the much larger relief organisation made a clear indication of their intention to offer Hudfam support, providing literature, posters, and news bulletins for their counterparts in Huddersfield, in the hope that the organisation would survive.²⁵³ Though no official agreement was made at this point, Hudfam, in return, provided around 65 per cent of their donations to Oxfam sponsored development projects across the globe.²⁵⁴ At a later stage, in the 1970s, an official agreement was

²⁵⁰ Handy, C. (1988). *Understanding Voluntary Organisations*. London: Penguin Books. P. 109.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* Pp. 52-53.

²⁵² Evidence of this dynastic control can be seen in several annual reports. See *Hudfam Annual Reports, 1945-1962*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

²⁵³ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1957-1958*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/4/1.

²⁵⁴ *Draft Constitution of Hudfam*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2.

made between the two organisations for this cooperation to continue, but this agreement also required Oxfam to pay the rent on the famine relief shop in Huddersfield.²⁵⁵ Hudfam were happy to acknowledge the contribution Oxfam were making to its survival, and in the 1957-1958 annual report, Oxfam were thanked for their support:

The Huddersfield Committee is deeply indebted to the Oxford Famine Relief Committee for its leaflets, posters, contacts with relief organisations, and for its news bulletin, which gives up-to-date information, seasoned with humour, on projects that need help, on the many people the world over who are working with selfless devotion and striking originality.

This support from Oxfam gave Hudfam the opportunity to survive and grow, and whilst they were riding on the coattails of their sister organisation, they were able to differentiate themselves from Oxfam based on the connections to their locality, and their wider connections in areas such as Hong Kong, from which Wilson was importing dolls made by Chinese refugees under the stewardship of a businessman known as Pastor Stumpf.²⁵⁶ In doing so, Hudfam became a quasi-independent organisation that relied on Oxfam's presence and association to drive its agenda. This can be evidenced by the increase in donations to the Huddersfield committee in the 1960s. In the financial year 1957-1958, Hudfam received donations of just over £748, however, by the end of the 1960s, the organisation was boasting of donations of over £6,600.²⁵⁷ Whilst this turnover was still modest in compared to the fiscal strength of Oxfam which could offer single development projects donations of over £100,000, this sharp increase in donations can certainly be attributed, to a large extent, to Hudfam's sisterhood association with Oxfam.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ *Heads of Agreement between Hudfam and Oxfam*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

²⁵⁶ Wilson, E. (Undated). Recording of Elizabeth Wilson [Describing the events of her life and Hudfam]. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/6/7.

²⁵⁷ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1957-1958*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1; *Hudfam Annual Report, 1969-1970*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

²⁵⁸ Black. *A Cause of our Times*. P. 136.

As Oxfam began to expand during the 1960s, small committees and sub-committees were created, which individually focused on geographical locations, with a specific focus on development in former imperial spaces.²⁵⁹ As a reward for her commitment to famine relief and due to her cooperation with Oxfam previously, Elizabeth Wilson was offered the chance to join the Oxfam executive, where she was offered a role in a committee of her preference. Elizabeth Wilson chose a position on the Asian Grants Committee of Oxfam, claiming that most of the executive were scrambling for positions on the African Grants Committee.²⁶⁰ This claim connotes that there was a 'new' scramble for Africa amongst humanitarians, as development organisations attempted to fill the voids of imperial space opened by the decolonisation of African nations during this period.²⁶¹ Wilson, however, had a romantic attachment to Asia, and more specifically to India. It was not until January 1966 that Elizabeth Wilson first visited India, however, her admiration for the place and the politics of Gandhi's non-violence movement were laid bare within her memoirs.²⁶² As Wilson expresses, the fieldworkers did not set up their own development projects; instead, they would visit ongoing projects and agencies within the field to determine their needs and potential donations.²⁶³ They could, however, recommend funds to development projects deemed to be 'worthy enterprises' that were not currently on Oxfam's radar.²⁶⁴ In *Encounters on the Way*, Wilson sentimentalises her position on the Oxfam Asian Grants Committee, as it was under the auspice of Oxfam she first began to travel, and visit India. When referring to receiving her committee position, Wilson states that 'Naturally, I then began to follow up the contacts I had with Gandhian Quakers, Asian students and my friend in Assam, who gave me further contacts with the Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta, and a whole web of glistening threads came to light connecting me with those who served their fellow men and women.'²⁶⁵ This statement from Wilson's memoir encapsulates the bond that she had with India,

²⁵⁹ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 890.

²⁶⁰ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 25.

²⁶¹ Bocking-Welch. 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses...'. P. 890.

²⁶² Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P. 25 and 169.

²⁶³ *Ibid.* P. 25

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* P. 26.

despite not having previously visited. This closeness that she felt to India appears to be due to both her network of connections across India, but also the admiration that she has for Gandhian non-violence as suggested in chapter one. As will be further discussed, this led to one of her sons, John Wilson, adhering to a Gandhian-inspired Quakerism, and led to his development work within India which was supported by Hudfam.²⁶⁶ For Hudfam, the relationship, between themselves and Oxfam, harmonised by Elizabeth Wilson's efforts for both organisations, was fruitful. For Hudfam, they were offered financial assurance in return for the distribution of Oxfam literature, and the promotion of Oxfam sponsored development schemes, many of which Hudfam were already supporting. Furthermore, Elizabeth Wilson's cooperation with both organisations meant that Hudfam became more widely connected, especially within Asia, and this led to an increased interest in this continent in the 1960s and beyond.

Granting Relief to Asia

Elizabeth Wilson's appointment to Oxfam's Asian Grants Committee opened new development opportunities for Hudfam. Whilst the organisation previously had a humanitarian interest in Asia, such as through Hudfam's fundraising for the Bengal Famine in 1943, a reconfiguration of the focus of the organisation took place during the 1960s.²⁶⁷ This reconfiguration saw Hudfam donating to more indigenous development projects than they had been previously, when they were solely donating to large relief organisations such as the SCF and the Salvation Army.²⁶⁸ One of the major beneficiaries of this evolving approach to development donations was the NAWA, an indigenous welfare clinic in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Founded by Dr Narasimhan in 1958, the aim of this welfare clinic was to provide an integrated safe-haven for the six Nilgiris tribes who had fled their livelihoods after the invasion and destruction of their forests.²⁶⁹ One of these tribes was the

²⁶⁶ Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. Pp. 88-89.

²⁶⁷ *Hudfam Annual Report, 1967-1968*. Hudfam Archive, WYAS, KC547/2/1.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ Armstrong, V. (1995). 'A Tribal Welfare Project in Tamil Nadu.' *Development in Practice*, 5 (3), Pp. 244-247.

Paniyas, an ethnic group within Tamil Nadu. Dr Narasimhan managed to get the support of the Indian government in 1965 to build twenty-five homes for the tribes to integrate, and farm colonies were created with funds from Oxfam (recommended by Elizabeth Wilson) where food plants, seeds, and tea were planted.²⁷⁰ This welfare clinic had a special connection with Hudfam, as during the 1970s, John Wilson, son of Elizabeth and Hugh Wilson travelled to India to work alongside Dr Narasimhan at the NAWA, and helped to set up a medical dispensary at the Paniya Rehabilitation Farm Colony that was created in association with the NAWA in 1966.²⁷¹ As a qualified nurse, who had previously worked at the Quaker Retreat in York, John went to the state of Tamil Nadu to provide nursing expertise on the request of Dr Narasimhan, who he had been connected to through Marjorie Sykes, a Gandhian Quaker and friend of Elizabeth Wilson.²⁷² However, due to the nature of the Nilgiris hills, and the scarcity of food stocks in the area, much of John's time was taken up as an agriculturalist, where he worked alongside the Paniyas to cultivate their land.²⁷³ Hudfam had been helping to fund the NAWA since 1967, however, these donations were further enthused after John joined the NAWA in the 1970s. Arguably, this was humanitarian nepotism on behalf of Elizabeth Wilson, who knew that the NAWA was scarcely getting by due to lack of donations, and she was therefore propping up her son's employment, just as much as she was providing humanitarian aid. In 1978, Elizabeth Wilson made a gift contribution to the NAWA for the specific purpose of the Paniya Farm Dispensary of £527.80.²⁷⁴ Whilst there is nothing to suggest any wrongdoing on Elizabeth Wilson's part, it could be suggested that this gift is purposely directed at the Paniya Farm Dispensary, as this was the section of the NAWA that John Wilson led, and therefore, her son's humanitarian livelihood seems to have skewed her moral impulse to provide a nepotistic donation.

²⁷⁰ *Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association (NAWA) Annual Report, 1978-1979*. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/1/2.

²⁷¹ *NAWA Annual Report, 1977-1978*. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/1/2.

²⁷² Wilson. *Encounters on the Way*. P 88.

²⁷³ Wilson, P. (2017, 20 July). Interview by Adam Millar [Dictaphone Recording]. Oral history interview for research for an MA by Research thesis.

²⁷⁴ *NAWA Annual Report, 1977-1978*. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/1/2.

As part of her fieldwork on Oxfam's Asian Grants Committee, Wilson also visited Vietnam, where her focus was on orphanages after the Vietnam War and Buddhist schools for social services. The American invasion of Vietnam, and the subsequent Vietnam war that ended in 1975 was one of the most brutal conflicts during the age of the Cold War and is seen by Lowe as the 'most traumatic... since the Second World War.'²⁷⁵ During the conflict, over 600,000 civilians from North and South Vietnam were killed, which consequently led to an increase in orphans by 1975. According to the South Vietnamese Ministry of Social Welfare, there were over 800,000 war orphans by 1973, and it was predicted this would rise.²⁷⁶ The Ky Quang Orphanage in South Vietnam was just one example of the orphanages that were taking in these children, and under Elizabeth Wilson's influence, Hudfam agreed to sponsor the wellbeing of 8 orphaned children in Vietnam.²⁷⁷ Wilson was keen to reaffirm her pacifist stance against the American invasion of Vietnam, and alongside the sponsoring of these orphan children which provided a moral objection to the war, a political campaign was led through Huddersfield in 1967, where Hudfam were calling for support for the peace efforts of U Thant, the third General Secretary of the UN, to bring an end to the war.²⁷⁸

Despite this renewed international focus, Wilson's attitudes to internationalism and her new development role were not completely free from imperial discourse, as a sense of paternalism crept into some of her representations of people from across Asia. In postcolonial approaches to history and knowledge production, scholars have pointed to a process of 'othering' by the West. According to Edward Said, a prominent postcolonial scholar, this process denotes that the West saw itself as an exemplar model for modernity, creating a discourse between the Orient and the Occident.²⁷⁹ This discourse subalternates the voice and culture of those in the Global South, rendering them to the

²⁷⁵ Lowe, P. (1998) (Ed.) *The Vietnam War*. Basingstoke: MacMillan. P. 1.

²⁷⁶ *Letter from the Ky Quang Orphanage in Vietnam to Elizabeth Wilson, 19 July 1974*. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/1/3.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Banner projecting the message 'We Support U Thant's Peace Efforts to End War in Vietnam'*. [Undated, assumed 1967 as appears alongside a pamphlet dated then]. Elizabeth Wilson Collection, WYAS, KC1030/1/3.

²⁷⁹ Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. London: Routledge.

status of 'other', even in the age of decolonisation.²⁸⁰ As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, 'othering' can be split into two constituent definitions. The first, more weaker sense simply denotes how one discusses differences in culture, whereas the second suggests that these cultures are not simply different, but inferior. In many cases, the 'othering' that takes within her memoir *Encounters on the Way* simply incorporates the first of these definitions, however, in a few instances, an expression of inferiority is apparent.

This chapter has demonstrated how Hudfam evolved in after the Second World War into an organisation concerned with development in Asia, progressing from an emergency relief organisation. Furthermore, this chapter has evidenced how a greater cooperation between Hudfam and Oxfam existed by the 1960s, and whilst Hudfam was providing 65% of their donations to Oxfam, the Huddersfield committee maintained a quasi-independent status. Arguably, it is Elizabeth Wilson who was the important figure that emerged from Hudfam's post-war activity, as Wilson bound together the network of connections which created a greater unity between Hudfam, Oxfam, and the wider humanitarian network.

²⁸⁰ Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincialising Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 28.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has made the contribution of an in-depth history of a small famine relief organisation in Huddersfield, providing a new case study to the historiography, interlinking this organisation with their network of connections, whilst also contextualising this smaller organisation within the history of Oxfam, and famine relief in Greece and the wider world. This thesis has placed, for the first time, the famine of Bengal and Greece into the same frame of reference, highlighting the need for a rethink and reconstruction of the current configuration of the historiography on famine relief. Occurring just a year apart, these two deadly famines have both received scholarly attention, but the two are separated within the historiography. This means that historians have not found a link between the two famines, however, the history of Hudfam provides one. Hudfam's simultaneous focus on both the Bengal famine and the Greek famine exposes the interlink between the two events, and the need for a reconfiguration of the historiography.

The first chapter of this thesis has analysed the origins of Hudfam, forwarding an argument that a complex mixture of pacifism, internationalism, and Quakerism stirred the compassion of individuals within Huddersfield to create a local famine relief committee. The early lives of Elizabeth Wilson and Hugh Wilson have been exposed within this chapter, and a study of their connections and influence on Hudfam as a charitable organisation has highlighted the significance of the milieu in which they worked within. As members of the PPU, and as registered Conscientious Objectors, their adherence to the peace effort has been analysed, and it has been concluded that whilst pacifism is the major contributor to the creation of Hudfam, there was amalgamation of the humanitarian milieu that designed Hudfam's future. Their connection with Labour politics and the internationalism of the Labour movement has also been addressed in this chapter, specifically focusing on the Labour Party's increased focus on relations with India. The interests of the peace movement and the labour movement in Indian affairs were wide-ranging, with independence and famine relief becoming a focus of their international work. Having looked at Vera Brittain and Lionel Cowan, and the pacifist

circles in which they work, it has been concluded that pacifism was of great influence on Hudfam as an organisation. Furthermore, Vera Brittain and her connections with India has been identified as the instigator of Hudfam's early interest in famine relief in India.

Chapter two has scrutinised Hudfam within the context of the Second World War. Having been inspired by Friberg's model for assessing the appeals process of famine relief organisations, this chapter will have expressed that Hudfam used a three-pronged approach to their committee's strategy, combining lobbying tactics against the British government, fundraising and appeals for engagement, and cooperation with other relief organisations to successfully create a competent and combative organisation that continued to grow in stature. Drawing on evidence from their fundraising for the victims of the 1943 Bengal Famine, their deputation to the Minister for Economic Warfare in 1944, whilst also mapping out the networks of connections with Oxfam, the SCF, and the MSFRC, this chapter has constructed an argument that despite their modest size, Hudfam created an ideal model for how a charitable organisation could force issues of pacifism and humanitarianism simultaneously. Furthermore, as previously stated, this chapter has placed the famines of Bengal and Greece within the same frame of reference for the first time within the historiography, arguing that there is an interlink with these two events, both caused by political actions of the British government.

The final chapter has focused on the post-war period, highlighting how Hudfam progressed from an emergency relief organisation to a charity providing development overseas. This chapter has placed Hudfam's post-war humanitarianism within the context of decolonisation and a perceived increase in liberal internationalism, suggesting that whilst not supporters of colonisation, paternalistic tendencies were suffused within the internationalism of the organisation. It has been argued that from the 1960s Hudfam, influenced by the progression of Oxfam, evolved into a development organisation that focused their attention on challenges across Asia. Whilst Hudfam had previously focused on famine in India, and other aspects of relief work in Asia, Hudfam's focus is more heavily

directed at development work in Asia due to Elizabeth Wilson's role on Oxfam's Asian Grants Committee. The contribution of Hudfam to the global FFHC has been addressed, arguing that Hudfam's voluntary efforts during the Second World War ignited the humanitarian tendencies of Huddersfield, which saw an impressive engagement with this campaign. It has been highlighted that this increased Hudfam's exposure within the local press and led to an increase in donations. Additionally, this chapter has focused on Hudfam's relationship with Oxfam, and the influence of Elizabeth Wilson over Hudfam's campaign and donation allocation. Using extracts from her travel writing, it will be demonstrated that Wilson had an affectionate bond with India, and more broadly Asia, and this directed Hudfam's development policy accordingly. Lastly, this chapter has highlighted how whilst Hudfam was heavily influenced by Oxfam, the organisation managed to maintain a quasi-independent status which allowed them to dictate the focus of their development work.

Unfortunately, due to lack of source material, there are some limitations to this study. Firstly, the lack of source material on Huddersfield Quakers during the war, the Huddersfield branch of the PPU, and the Huddersfield Central Labour Party have meant that the first chapter lacks in-depth primary source analysis. Instead, this chapter has created an intellectual biography of the origins of the organisation in the hope that this will help to create a deeper understanding of the principles of Hudfam. Furthermore, it was hoped that an oral history interview with John Wilson would take place, however, he is no longer a permanent resident of the United Kingdom. This meant that Peter Wilson provided his time and conducted an oral history interview for this research. Unfortunately, due to his lack of engagement with Hudfam as an organisation, this was not as fruitful as hoped, although he did provide some vital information that plugged some significant gaps within the research.

Overall, this thesis has created an organisational history of Hudfam, assessing their origins, aims, methods, and survival and growth. This thesis has attempted to avoid creating broad categorisations, instead offering evidence of continuities within the organisation, but also between

the wider humanitarian sphere. The changing contexts of the world has been acknowledged, and the evolution and response to these changes by Hudfam has been addressed. However, this thesis has argued that attitudes and networks of concern do not follow epochs, and therefore Barnett's strict categorisation of humanitarian eras has been challenged. An original and important contribution has been made to the historiography in several ways. Firstly, this thesis has used previously unused archival documents on Hudfam and Elizabeth Wilson, as well as utilising an original oral history interview with a Wilson family member. This thesis has also drawn upon archival documents from the Lionel Cowan collection, and the Labour Party archive. Both the Bengal Famine of 1943, and the impact of the British blockade of Europe, especially the threat of famine in Greece, have been placed within the same frame of reference within this analysis. Lastly, this thesis has provided a new and original case study to the history of humanitarianism in the shape of Hudfam. This is significant in the sense that the history of Hudfam further develops our understanding of the network of connections that have existed within the field of humanitarian organisations. Furthermore, it has extended the typical networks of concern that have existed in Huddersfield since the First World War, evidencing the continuation in strands of pacifism, Quakerism, and internationalism. It can be said that over the forty-eight-year history of the organisation, Hudfam made an invaluable contribution to society, and to the community of Huddersfield, and allowed the ethos of humanitarianism to continue within the West Yorkshire town.

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