

tion which can be conveyed on one map. Unfortunately the author has settled for maps which are too small and poorly delineated to permit detailed analysis. Individual polling booths, an essential element for psephologists, are not shown, and there is no information on the past and present boundaries of the city electorates. For anyone requiring information on the 1992 by-election seat of Tamaki, for example, the Atlas has very limited value. Moreover, maps of the main population centres are reduced to small and incomplete insets, thereby distorting the electoral importance of the cities relative to the rest of the country.

The author analyzes weaknesses in the reapportionment system, including the absence of any provisions for the regular redistribution of Maori electorates (corrected in 1981) and the disruptive nature of some of the Commissions' decisions to an electorate's community of interest (such as the 1987 decision to remove the Thames borough from the Coromandel electorate). He concludes, however, that the reapportionment system is fair, impartial and largely fulfils the democratic objective of one vote, one value.

Despite the limitations of the electoral maps, this book is a mine-store of valuable information on the evolution of New Zealand's electoral system. Clearly the new electoral boundaries for the 1993 general election will require a second edition, by which time the results of the forthcoming referendum on the electoral system will be known. Maybe the next edition will also have to include some thoughts on the possible shape of the electoral map under a proportional electoral system.

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*The Quest for Efficiency: the origins of the State Services Commission.* By Alan Henderson with a chapter by Roberta Nicholls. Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs/State Services Commission, Wellington, 1990. xv, 442 pp., illus. NZ price: \$39.95.

THIS IS a timely book. It provides a valuable context for the growing number of histories of government agencies being researched or recently published under the auspices of the Historical Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs. It also provides a necessary perspective on the impact of the State Sector Act, 1988, although this is not its ostensible objective. The primary focus is on the period of 'commissioner control' of the public service between 1913 (when the Public Service Act of 1912 came into effect) and the passage of the State Services Act 1962. The subsequent role of the State Services Commission up until 1988 is much more briefly surveyed in a chapter and a short postscript. An excellent chapter by Roberta Nicholls on the equal pay campaign integrates the perspectives of earlier accounts with that of the socially conservative Public Service Commission.

The origins of 'commissioner control' have been examined in earlier works; but Henderson's account supersedes them. He examines the development of 'political control' of the bureaucracy up until 1912, and in particular the Liberal resistance to civil service reform in the face of the growing size and complexity of public administration. At the heart of this resistance, according to Henderson, were Liberal fears of 'the

apparently anti-democratic aspect of the bureaucratisation of civil service personnel management' (to be echoed by Labour reformers in the 1980s?).

More attuned to the advocacy of civil service reform were the philosophy and objectives of the Liberals' political opponents. Here Henderson demonstrates that the 'conservative innovation' of 1912 did not stem (as most other accounts would have it) largely from the recommendations of the Hunt Commission of Inquiry, but rather from the preoccupations of Alexander Herdman who was much influenced by contemporary developments overseas and (during the drafting of the 1912 legislation) by ideas of civil servants, particularly from the Post and Telegraph department.

Thus emerged what Sir Robert Stout termed 'the most republican statute in any British colony': politically-independent control of the personnel of the public service; and with it a unified, non-political, permanent, career service. There were limits of course. Post and Telegraph and Railways employees escaped 'commissioner control' (but the on-going issue of 'uniformity' of pay and conditions keeps them within Henderson's discussion), as did the Police (which are ignored). Henderson argues that strong-minded Public Service Commissioners established their independence in staffing decisions. He also provides sufficient evidence, however, for this reader to observe that Commissioners were sensitive to the outlook of the political executive in making their decisions.

Commissioners were also responsible for the efficiency and economy of the public service. Here their authority and independence proved to be limited; inevitably so, given ministerial control over the allocation of resources and the ability of departments to obstruct. From the outset then, the energies of Public Service Commissioners were confined largely to personnel management — until the advent of R.M. Campbell (Chairman of a new Public Service Commission from 1946), who brought a 'breath of fresh air' in matters of efficiency and economy. From the early 1950s, the PSC sought to delegate and decentralize staffing decision-making. It also promoted 'Organisation and Methods' within departments, thereby laying the seeds (which often took a while to sprout) for continuous internal review and adjustment of systems.

Much of the account of the Commissioners' activities (and of the Public Service Commission from 1946) details public service staffing issues within the changing context of retrenchment (1920-35); expansion of the bureaucracy under the first Labour government; the pressures of war and of post-war full employment and inflation; and the advent of a PSA that was (from the mid 1940s) much less ready to submit to the decisions of Commissioners or the government. Regrading of personnel (which is not sufficiently explained at the outset for a lay reader) and pay-fixing are recurring issues.

A whole chapter is devoted to the Royal ('McCarthy') Commission of inquiry into the State Services (1961-2) and the making of the State Services Act which followed. Rightly so; indeed some key aspects of the McCarthy Commission's philosophy and recommendations, sidestepped by the 1962 legislation, were endorsed by the State Sector Act of 1988 (a point not made by Henderson).

This is very much an institutional, rather than social, history of but one control agency within the public service. How 'commission control' actually shaped the careers of public servants, especially heads of departments, remains unexamined (except for an anecdote that being a poor conversationalist at breakfast disqualified one contender for promotion to permanent head in the eyes of R.M. Campbell). Also not really considered is the extent to which Public Service Commissioners sought to break down departmentally-focused career patterns, and promote the notion (espoused by J.K. Hunn, for example) that technical experts should be 'on tap and not on top'. (Thynne's PhD thesis on the career patterns of permanent heads was apparently not consulted.) More particularly, how the Commissioners (and their successors in the Public Service Commission and the State

Services Commission) selected their own staff remains shadowy, but important since such selection was apparently a fillip to one's career. (On this point, a brief comment is consigned to a footnote on p.389.)

Altogether then, this is a valuable account, but a 'history from below' of the New Zealand public service under 'commission control' will need to come from the variety of studies of individual departments. And the changing role and influence of the State Services Commission from the early 1960s requires a more detailed analysis than Alan Henderson was able to provide in the time available to him as a 'contract' historian.

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*Shackleton's Lieutenant: The Nimrod Diary of A.L.A. Mackintosh, British Antarctic Expedition 1907-09.* Edited by Stanley Newman. Polar Publications, Auckland, 1990. 144 pp. NZ price: \$47.50. Copies may be obtained from the publisher, P O Box 36-093, Northcote, Auckland.

AENEAS LIONEL ACTON Mackintosh, leader of the Ross Sea party of Ernest Shackleton's 1914-1917 transantarctic expedition, disappeared in May 1916: with a companion, he had attempted the dangerous journey across newly-formed sea ice from Hut Point to Cape Evans on Ross Island. Mackintosh's action epitomizes not only the courage but also the foolhardiness which characterized much of the 'Heroic Age' of Antarctic exploration, and which sometimes had tragic consequences. *Shackleton's Lieutenant* makes available Mackintosh's diary of his activities on Shackleton's earlier expedition, 1907-09, and the diary gives examples of both the engaging energy and the occasionally flawed judgement which Mackintosh was to display in later years.

Mackintosh, born in India and educated in England, served as an officer in various merchant ships before joining Shackleton's expedition in 1907. His opportunity to be 'one of the Land Party' was dashed during the unloading of the *Nimrod* at Cape Royds: a hook from a swinging cargo hoist damaged one eyeball so badly that the eye had to be removed. Nevertheless, Mackintosh served on the *Nimrod* when it returned south later in 1908, and twice sledged across 'the Barrier' to near Minna Bluff early in 1909. A few weeks before, his initial experience of sledging went within a hair's-breadth of disaster: with Thomas McGillan (or McGillion), a New Zealander, he was caught on sea ice which was breaking up. With difficulty, the pair reached land south of Cape Bird, and a few days later they tramped for some 40 hours, in increasing confusion, to Cape Royds, where they were located by members of the shore party. Mackintosh's account of this episode makes exciting reading, and will be relished by armchair explorers.

The diary reproduced in *Shackleton's Lieutenant* is not Mackintosh's holograph version (which has not been located) but a typed copy in the possession of his family and believed to be a faithful copy of the original. Stanley Newman, the editor, has neatly divided the diary into chapters, thus importing into the narrative a dramatic structure, and, assisted by David Harrowfield, has amplified the text with copious annotations, including references to other contemporary materials, to provide a useful context. No less valuable are the biographical notes by Richard McElrea: these identify not merely the well-known