

*That* serves as a contentious yet valuable reference work on a crucial aspect of political history in New Zealand.

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*Parliament's Library.* By John E. Martin. Steele Roberts in association with Dunmore Publishing, Wellington, 2008. 270pp. NZ price: \$59.99. ISBN 978-1-877448-43-0.

NEW ZEALAND'S LIBRARIES HAVE NOT BEEN WELL SERVED by historians. There are several handfuls of slim compilations by dedicated librarians and local amateur historians, nearly all in response to an anniversary celebration, and only four major published studies: Wynne Colgan on Auckland Public in 1980, Rachel Barrowman on the Turnbull in 1995, and now in 2008 Mary Ronnie on Dunedin Public and John E. Martin on the Parliamentary Library, all commissioned to mark an anniversary. The tide of the history of the book, so strong in Europe, North America and Australia, which has stimulated historians to examine libraries and their place in social and intellectual history, has only gently lapped the shores of New Zealand. The handful of collectors — Alexander Turnbull, Sir George Grey, A.H. Reed and Thomas Hocken and the library administrator Geoffrey Alley, have done remarkably well by comparison.

John Martin's full-length study of the library of Parliament is a welcome and distinguished contribution to New Zealand's library, social and intellectual history. Martin chronicles the development of the General Assembly's library from a small collection of reference books in Auckland in 1856 which — through international exchanges of government publications, donations from parliamentarians and collectors, and a regular annual budget for acquisitions — grew to a 'colonial treasure house' by the end of the nineteenth century. Over time it went from being New Zealand's de facto national library in Wellington, to being a narrowly focussed and technologically sophisticated reference and research service for Parliament, after it shed most of its collections to the National Library.

A strong narrative framework is woven from the major strands identified by Martin. Dominating the narrative are the conflicts, inevitable because of the number of players with a stake in the library: the two Houses of Parliament, their clerks, their library committees and their Speakers, and the executive, which had to find the money and the buildings. In an institution saturated in politics and abundantly supplied with egos, the 'hopeless method of control' criticized by Alister McIntosh in the 1930s could result only in administrative incoherence. Due weight is given to the influence of personalities such as the members of the library committees, other parliamentarians and the chief librarians. Underlying everything is the inexorable growth of the collections (Martin juxtaposes the statistics with examples of specific books or categories to bring to life vividly the shaping of the collections) and their insatiable demands for space, all set within the wider social forces shaping New Zealand society.

Minor themes include problems and issues shared with other New Zealand libraries in the nineteenth century, the swings of economic fortune, constant breakdowns in the supply of books and periodicals from British agents, the rapidly evolving demand for recreational fiction, pressures for greater public access and the difficulty in maintaining reliable records of borrowing.

A diligent editor would have picked up the error on p.53 (the black letter texts were not printed before moveable fonts were used), added to the abbreviations on p.223 those for Archives New Zealand's record groups, and queried the necessity for some of the cited sources. Endnote 111 for Chapter 4, for a passage of 10 lines, has some 30 cited sources;

endnote 105, Chapter 7, dealing with the minor matter of a theft from the library, has at least nine cited sources. But these are very minor blemishes.

The narrative pace is sustained by a sense of an institution moving inexorably towards its apotheosis as a true legislative library, no longer collection dependent, narrowly and effectively focussed on supplying the information needs of its parliamentary clients. To some future historian will be left the task of exploring why, once the library had reached this high point in the provision of information, Parliament and its members were held in such low esteem, so much legislation was botched, and the standard and content of debate was so low compared with the past when it functioned as a collection-centred library with next to no reference and research services.

Martin has provided, for the Parliamentary Library, the firm base essential for further testing of the wider and more complex issues in the development of New Zealand's libraries.

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*Personal Narratives of Irish and Scottish Migration, 1921–65, 'For Spirit and Adventure'*. By Angela McCarthy. Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2007. 257pp. US price: \$74.95. ISBN 978-0-7190-7352-6; *Irish Migration Networks and Ethnic Identities Since 1700*. Edited by Enda Delaney and Donald M. MacRaild. Routledge, London and New York, 2007. 305pp. US price: \$150.00. ISBN 978-0-415-39053-8.

THESE SUPERB BOOKS showcase exciting new research by scholars working at the cutting edge of migration history. Over the years historians have used a wide range of tools to explore aspects of global mobility, drawing selectively on the literature in disciplines such as sociology and anthropology. More recently, however, one senses that the traffic in ideas and methods across disciplinary boundaries has intensified and that historians in the field are engaging with — and producing — more sophisticated theoretical frameworks. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the renewed emphasis on the role of migratory social networks in facilitating movement and shaping its timing and direction. Building on various network theorizations, migration historians have demonstrated that these institutions were crucial to patterns of departure, settlement and adaptation over time, and to the kinds of ties which developed with 'homelands' and other migrant destinations. This research trajectory has forced scholars to move their analyses beyond the boundaries of the nation-state and encouraged them to frame their inquiries in terms of diaspora and transnationalism, sometimes using comparative strategies. Recent studies like those under review have enriched our understanding of migrant lives, sharpened our conceptual weaponry and introduced new topics and ways to approach the past.

Angela McCarthy's *Personal Narratives of Irish and Scottish Migration* exemplifies the richness and perspicacity of the latest wave of migration scholarship. It seeks to capture the experiences of migrants from Scotland and Ireland — both north and south — to the United States and the British World destinations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand between the 1920s and the 1960s. To accomplish this task, the author exploits the 'raw migrant narratives' preserved in personal correspondence, oral interviews, shipboard diaries and written questionnaires. The sheer scale of the evidential base is breathtaking. Research Fellowships at the AHRC Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies at the University of Aberdeen, the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich and the Stout Research Centre enabled McCarthy to bring together material from an impressive range of archival collections. As a result, she is ideally placed to illuminate the social