

will read it for pleasure, most of us will read it as an aid to our scholarship – and this, I argue, is its greatest strength. There is of course very rich detail for those who will very fruitfully use this book as the basis for their own research. A careful reader can piece together many different narratives of the creation, dispersal and accumulation of knowledge in the colony. They have in their hands a heavily detailed resource about the way ideas, texts and information circulated and were collated.

In many ways the spirit of Hocken himself seem to have infused the book. For just as Kerr often notes that Hocken's lectures and papers were packed full of historical detail, the same could be said of this book. We not only get the collecting and the collections; we are also offered many short, informative sketches and notes concerning those individuals, groups and societies of interest to Hocken as collector, as well as notes on his correspondents and co-collectors. There are also numerous gossipy asides and comments and references, often unexpected, interspersed with the more detailed and formal discussion. Reading this is in many ways like undertaking archival research: short bursts of illumination amongst a wealth of detail. It is therefore a book unlike any other: book as archive in itself and book as key, as entry point, commentary and map to the archive – and to Hocken himself. It is a formidable achievement of scholarship and should be on every library shelf.

MIKE GRIMSHAW

*University of Canterbury*

*Berry Boys: Portraits of First World War Soldiers and Families.* By Michael Fitzgerald and Claire Regnault. Te Papa Press, Wellington, 2014. 200pp. NZ price: \$54.99. ISBN: 9780994104120.

After the discovery of a cache of glass plate negatives in the ceiling space at 147 Cuba Street, Wellington, staff at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa undertook to identify the 120 Great War soldiers whose portraits were included in the collection. The building in Cuba Street had been the premises of Berry & Co photographers, and the soldier portraits were among the 194 negatives discovered. Staff at Te Papa made significant efforts to identify the individuals in the photographs, appealing for public help through a range of social media. Web pages were launched inviting the public to help identify the individuals in the photographs, newspaper stories were used to publicize their search, and the project was also the subject of a documentary. This book is the result of that search.

The authors note the value of the Berry & Co negatives as a source for the social history of New Zealand men and women from the early 1900s through to the 1940s. However, instead of providing a volume surveying both social and photographic developments in New Zealand, *Berry Boys* focuses on the portraits of the Great War New Zealand soldiers, and in doing so it adds to the flood of publications resulting from the interest in the centenary of World War One. *Berry Boys* includes brief

bibliographies for the 82 identified soldiers, giving information, where possible, about their lives before, during and after the war. The focus of most of their biographies is their war service. This reflects the reliance on written records, in particular the Military Service Records, birth and death notices and newspapers. By identifying the men and then searching out their stories, the efforts of the Te Papa project have indeed succeeded in giving 'faces to the war experiences' of the men in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF). Some readers will be disappointed that many of the biographies are brief and leave them itching to know more. What were the men's experiences once wounded? What was it like being transferred from one unit to another? What were their feelings about the war more generally and about coming home? The clipped nature of many of the biographies in the *Berry Boys* reflects the limited information about soldiers and veterans. Few written records survive, with the military records often the only extant information about New Zealand soldiers. The oral record is also limited, reflecting the fact that war veterans either were not asked or could not answer questions about their individual experiences.

The volume is well set out, with prominence given to the portraits, as befits the subject. The biographies make good use of the information in the primary sources. The authors include additional information in the biographies, which explains details and provides context. But the question remains: what is the point of a book containing a series of 80 or so biographies of men who volunteered or were conscripted into the NZEF? How does this expand our knowledge? The answer is that it demonstrates the diversity of the NZEF experience. Each story tells a different enlistment decision, a different type of war experience, and a different impact of military service on the individual concerned. However, the authors do not appear to have fully realized the importance of their material.

What is missing from *Berry Boys* is any significant analysis of its importance as a cohort study of New Zealand Great War soldiers, something that might well have been included as a final chapter. Who are the men in this little cross-section of the NZEF? What conclusions can we draw from these biographies about the war experience? More importantly, how do they challenge popular perceptions about Kiwi Diggers or the existing historiography? These stories help move the focus of the war experience from one of unrelenting front-line fighting, often ending in death, to the fuller range of military roles men undertook and the different ways that the men responded to the challenges of military service. For example, while World War One is closely associated with wounding or death by bullet or shellfire, the biographies highlight the all-pervasive threat of illness for soldiers, the result of contagious diseases (such as meningitis and influenza) and of the conditions in which they lived and fought. Indeed, disease claimed the lives of three of the eight men in the cohort who died as a result of the war. The biographies in *Berry Boys* also allow us to see military service as just one phase of these men's lives. Around 84,000 New Zealand soldiers were demobilized in New Zealand at the end of the war. Much of the existing historiography suggests that many, if not most, found repatriation difficult and that their lives were blighted by their war service. There are hints of this in the biographies through comments about the men's relationships with their wives and with alcohol; and one of the men's brothers committed suicide. Certainly, the military service is

known to have had a psychological impact on all participants. The lives of few of these men, however, appear to have been derailed by military service. The majority came home; most married and had children. They went back to work (sometimes in their old occupation and with their previous employer), and they contributed to the lives of their families, communities and country. In other words, *Berry Boys* illustrates that the men were not simply relics of the Great War. By giving the life dates of the men in the biographies, *Berry Boys* challenges widely held ideas about the extent to which soldiers' lives were cut short by military service. The average age at death for this cohort is 70 years of age, very close to the average age at death in my own cohort study of Great War veterans.

The core content of *Berry Boys* is very useful for those interested in knowing more about the New Zealand Great War experience, and it is presented in an attractive volume. However, the authors needed to do more with this content, rather than simply present the results of their research and public appeals for information. In order to move this from an interesting coffee-table book to a significant part of the New Zealand Great War historiography, they needed to consider what these biographies tell us about the Great War experience for New Zealanders. They needed to consider the widely held stereotypes of the ANZAC Digger – dying needlessly at Gallipoli or in the trenches of the Western Front – and how the biographies of these 82 men present a much broader spectrum of war experience and survival.

GWEN PARSONS

*University of Canterbury*

*New Zealand's First World War Heritage*. By Imelda Bargas and Tim Shoebridge. Exisle Publishing Limited, Auckland, 2015. 287pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN: 9781775591290.

Bargas and Shoebridge have curated New Zealand's World War One history around 'public memories'. While no battles were fought on New Zealand soil, the war permeated everyone's daily lives. *New Zealand's First World War Heritage* follows the tradition of exploring life on the home front and features 'physical war reminders' on the New Zealand landscape – the war memorials, the military training camps and the places where 'uniquely wartime events took place' (p.10). The authors offer a wider and 'more varied understanding' of the country's wartime experience than walking through the battlefields or visiting cemeteries and memorials nearer where the fighting took place. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Massey University, the New Zealand Defence Force and the Returned and Services' Association (RSA) jointly produced *First World War Heritage*. Bargas and Shoebridge, both senior historians at the Ministry, are well positioned to produce this commissioned work: Shoebridge has written about military training camps in New Zealand while Bargas' background is in collections management.