

NOTES

1 Bronwyn Dalley, 'Finding the Common Ground: New Zealand's Public History', in Bronwyn Dalley and Jock Phillips, eds, *Going Public: the Changing Face of New Zealand History*, Auckland, 2001, p.16.

2 Roberto Rabel, 'War History as Public History: Past and Future,' in Dalley and Phillips, *Going Public*, p.55.

3 Chris Maclean, Jock Phillips and Debbie Willis, *The Sorrow and the Pride: New Zealand War Memorials*, Wellington, 1990, p.31.

Annie's War: A New Zealand Woman and Her Family in England 1916–19. The Diaries of Annie Montgomerie. Edited by Susanna Montgomerie Norris with Anna Rogers. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2014. 256pp. NZ price: \$45.00. ISBN: 9781877578755.

Primary sources are a valuable means of adding to our knowledge of the past. Published diaries and letters have added greatly to our understanding of New Zealanders' experiences of World War One. Edited collections of letters, such as Glyn Harper's *Letters from the Battlefield* and *Letters from Gallipoli*, and published diaries, such as Monty Ingram's World War One diary, tell the story of men's experiences of training and war service, which continued until they were killed, incapacitated by sickness or wounds, or saved by the Armistice. Soldiers' (and nurses') diaries survive because they recorded participation in extraordinary events. In contrast, the diaries of those who were left behind by the soldiers, and who did not participate directly in the war, are scarce, and as a diary of a New Zealand woman who was not directly involved in the war, *Annie's War* is unique. However, it too has survived because her experience of the war years was something out of the ordinary for New Zealand women.

Annie Montgomerie's diary focuses on the second part of the war, which she spent in England. As her two sons, Seton and Oswald, reached the age of eligibility for conscription, the entire Montgomerie family – Annie, her husband Roger, the two boys, and their two daughters Winifred and Al – sailed for England. There, Seton and Oswald sought commissions in the Royal Flying Corps (there being no New Zealand equivalent), and Roger also attempted to gain a commission in the BEF (British Expeditionary Force). *Annie's War* is Annie's edited diary of those years, interposed with letters from Seton and Roger. It provides a unique insight into wartime London, as well as the experiences of the young New Zealand men who enlisted in the Imperial Army. During the war 1184 men left New Zealand with the intention of serving with imperial units in Britain, while 192 New Zealand men served with the Royal Flying Corps. Many other New Zealand men were in Britain at the start of the war and rather than returning home to enlist, they joined the British Army. Women also travelled to Britain to contribute directly to the war effort, nursing, joining the VAD or working in the various soldiers' clubs and canteens. These women included Ettie Rout, who established the New Zealand Medical Soldiers Club

near Hornchurch, and Drs Jessie Scott and Agnes Bennett, who served with the Scottish Women's Hospital. Their moves to England were often prompted by the slow response of the New Zealand government to demands by women to be able to officially contribute to the war effort. The war experience of these men and women was different from those who remained in New Zealand, and this is why *Annie's War* is a unique contribution to the New Zealand World War One historiography.

The Montgomeries experienced a London under attack from German Zeppelins, and like the Londoners, feared for their lives on occasion. They saw the war fought out in skies overhead. They saw a city full of men in uniform, looking for something to do while on leave and someone to do it with. Consequently, the Montgomeries received visits from many men in uniform from back home. Winifred volunteered to work in the New Zealand Soldiers' Club in Russell Square, as well as in the Records Office. Annie visited young men at the New Zealand hospitals at Codford and Brockworth. The family experienced the war in a much more direct way than women half a world away. However, while Annie certainly is aware of the looming presence of the war, her focus is always squarely on her boys.

Ironically, although having moved to England brought her physically closer to the war, Annie is in some ways less touched by it than women in New Zealand. Much of Seton's war was spent training or in camp in England, and he served in France between December 1917 and March 1918. Oswald also spent considerable time in training in England, finally being dispatched to the Sinai-Palestine Theatre in June 1918, shortly before the end of the war. Annie saw both sons regularly and her diary is full of their visits to her and her daughters in London. Unlike most New Zealand women, her war is not one of death through absence, although her worry for her boys was, as in the case of all mothers, ever present.

Annie's diary is a challenging read. Like us all, she is full of frustrations and contradictions. She had a strong sense of being a New Zealander and of her difference from the English. Indeed, she was very negative about the British Army, government and people in general. Yet her boys chose to serve with the British rather than the New Zealand forces. She hated the war and feared for her sons, yet went to England to support their enlistment and that of her husband. She was contemptuous of the English people's apparent focus on food and entertainment, yet her diary listed regular theatre-going and almost endless shopping trips, often for luxury items. She was bitter about the stupidity of the British Army, but almost always when it affected New Zealanders or when Roger and the boys did not secure the postings or military advancement they sought. Although at times grating, these are her private thoughts and fears, not written for other's eyes, and best contextualized as the frustrations of a mother who doted upon her two boys.

Annie's published diary covers the period from late 1916 to late 1919. Mostly daily diary entries are included, although in some cases a series of entries has been omitted in favour of a brief summary of her activities during this time. However, far greater use might have been made of paraphrasing or summarizing groups of entries. This is particularly the case in the first half of the volume, which at times is monotonous, with successive entries adding little to Annie's story. Tighter editing of the diary entries would have resulted in a more streamlined and less plodding read. On

the other hand, the supporting notes are excellent and provide good contextualization for Annie's daily musings.

All in all, *Annie's War* is a useful contribution to the New Zealand World War One historiography, providing a very different experience from those we have seen to date and reminding us that the New Zealand experience of the war was diverse.

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Changing Times: New Zealand Since 1945. By Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2013. 576pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN: 9781869407827.

This is a timely and useful comprehensive synthesis of New Zealand's history since 1945. The book's 12 chapters are both chronological and thematic. The broad objective is to 'engage with the key themes, ideas, people, places and events that forged the history of New Zealand in the second half of the twentieth century' (p.5). *Changing Times* manages to weave together social, political, economic and cultural history with apparent ease. Major events and individuals are introduced in enough detail to satisfy those encountering them for the first time. Readers who have lived through some or all of the time period can ponder just how and in what ways times have changed – or not. The theme through the book is to weigh up the influence of those advocating for change against the pull of those striving for continuity.

As the authors wade into their content and analysis without devoting much attention to their guiding structures and frameworks, situating this book theoretically and methodologically is an interesting task. Despite the intention to 'tell the story using the experiences and views of New Zealanders themselves' where possible (p.5), this is not a book to draw heavily upon oral histories. Nor is it one to present voluminous and focused research from New Zealand government documents. The sources are incredibly eclectic, and mainly secondary, with *Changing Times* bringing together and summarizing the research and ideas of historians who have previously studied various aspects of the time period. In this way, *Changing Times* works as an introductory reference text. At the University of Canterbury we are already recommending it as an introduction to the time period for students. The clear and flowing prose makes it easy to read and the comprehensive scope makes for a strong source. In contrast to the trend for brief electronic synopses, this is a doorstop of a book, coming in at 520 pages. Enhancing the text, there are carefully selected high quality photos, likely familiar to historians. Paul Moon's general texts on the twentieth century and turning points come to mind as belonging to a similar genre of New Zealand history. These books are more social and cultural in approach, yet also mix in major political and economic events. They are generous and gently inclusive at the expense of thesis and argument. However, a major strength of this book is that the level of analysis goes