

Editorial Introduction

THESE ESSAYS are written in honour of Sir Keith Sinclair, on the occasion of his retirement as editor of the *New Zealand Journal of History*, which he founded just over 20 years ago. They also mark his retirement as a teacher from the University of Auckland after 40 years. Keith Sinclair's stimulus in the teaching and writing of New Zealand history has been more extensive than that of any other single individual. The contributors to this volume have all been influenced by him. Many were former students of his; and the different areas in which they research and write today are a direct reflection of the breadth of his own interests. The energy he transmits is also indicated by the productivity and continuing enthusiasm of the several generations of graduate students whom he has taught.

The contributions specifically relate to the major areas of his own historical investigations. As Bill Oliver comments in his essay, Keith began by working at the centre of race relations and conflict in nineteenth-century New Zealand. Three of the essays in this volume, all by former students of his, take up these themes in new ways. Claudia Orange looks at the present dilemmas of Maori leadership through a moment in the past when an autonomy of decision-making, based on older tribal authorities operating within the Pakeha governing system, might have been achieved. Keith Sorrenson examines the Treaty of Waitangi and the Tribunal created for its better implementation. He probes the issues and difficulties of achieving retrospective justice. Judith Binney discusses the gap in perceptions which exists between Maori oral histories and the Pakeha written texts. In so doing she also extends a later interest of Keith Sinclair's, his encouragement of the recording of oral history.

After his early research, Keith developed another area of interest, business history. But it was Russell Stone, a long-time colleague and contemporary, who made it his own particular specialization. Here he probes the common belief that Auckland has always been run by hidden cliques of powerful, interlocking, commercial interests.

Keith soon began to examine the thoughts and careers of some of the settler-politicians in the later nineteenth century. He was particularly interested in the Liberals in power, and the emergence of the Labour alliance. This study led to his major biographies of William Pember Reeves and

Walter Nash. Five of the essays develop these themes. Raewyn Dalziel challenges the long-standing historical myth of a sustained continuity of power established by friends-in-office in the 1870s and 1880s. David Hamer, a former student, looks at the brief experiment in preferential voting which was attempted between 1908 and 1913. Such ideas are being urged again as a solution to the problems of apparently unrepresentative government. Jeanine Graham, also a former student, takes up the previously unexplored area of child labour. She examines the legislative efforts to control it by the Liberals in the 1890s, and the economic developments of the family farms which would reinforce pioneer attitudes and undercut some of the force of the legislation. Erik Olssen re-examines the roots of the Labour Party, whose later legislation structured the welfare state and New Zealand's international image as a radical society — now rapidly being eroded. Michael Bassett, the present Minister of Health and a former student and colleague, traces the history of New Zealand's longest-serving Cabinet minister, and former Prime Minister, Joey Ward.

Keith Sinclair's perspective on New Zealand has never been insular. If, like many of his generation, he was reared in the traditions of British imperial and commonwealth history, he was one of the earliest to teach courses analyzing the phenomenon of imperialism, and the development of decolonization. Judith Bassett's essay takes up the imperial theme with a wry humour. Another former student and colleague, she traces the first royal procession through New Zealand in 1901, with the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall. Mary Boyd, friend and contemporary, looks at New Zealand's record as an administrator in Samoa, and exposes the in-built, misplaced assumptions of the Pakeha administrators that 'they knew best'.

Kendrick Smithyman, poet, school-friend and colleague, wrote the ode we asked him for. Bill Oliver, himself an historian of stature (and a poet, like Keith), contributed a jousting eulogy, befitting of equals. We offer this collection as our *koha* to Keith, for the many amazing tales, serious and otherwise, which he has told over the years. No reira he taonga ki te ariki nui.

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