

Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland, 1800–1945. By Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2008, 221pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 97-1-86940-4017.

THIS BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN and attractively presented book seeks to establish the origins and nature of British and Irish migration to New Zealand from the early 1800s until the end of the Second World War. It draws on material collected during a long-term project funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology to offer a ‘succinct overview’ of detailed statistical findings available on-line. The authors acknowledge that their own work builds on the recent expansion of migration historiography in this country. This is plainly evident in the kinds of sources and methods they adopt, which follow approaches pioneered by other scholars in the field. Nonetheless, this study makes a fresh contribution in several respects. First, it moves beyond previous work to systematically explore ‘the ebbs and flows’ of migration from Britain and Ireland across the *longue durée*, thereby providing a connected picture and addressing major lacunae in the existing literature, such as the significant movements that took place in the decade before the First World War. Secondly, the book sets down an invaluable statistical baseline which indicates the main characteristics of the migrants themselves. The third contribution is the attempt — inspired by earlier work on the survival of West African cultural resources in the New World — to determine whether ‘the national, regional, religious and class origins’ of the migrant streams ‘explain some of the enduring characteristics of New Zealand society’ (p.158). As we confront our multicultural present, Phillips and Hearn remind us, ‘there is value in contemplating [our] multicultural past’.

Settlers begins with a brief historiographical commentary and turns next to an incisive overview of the patterns of British and Irish migration to this country. This chapter sets a crucial context for the sweeping statistical analysis that follows. It shows that roughly one-third of the long-term migrants who came directly from the United Kingdom and Ireland throughout the period covered by the book received some form of state assistance. As we might expect, the proportion varied over time and featured relatively high numbers of state-financed arrivals during the years 1840–52, 1871–79 and 1919–27. The authors carefully trace the directions and magnitude of movement to New Zealand, revealing ‘certain continuities’ — assisted passages, nomination schemes and trans-Tasman links — beneath the broad panorama of ‘diversity and complexity’ (p.50). Teachers of New Zealand history at tertiary and secondary levels will be very grateful for the authors’ periodization and easily accessible writing.

The main substantive section of the book presents major findings about the character of New Zealand’s ‘founding settlers’, adduced from death registers. Contrary to popular wisdom, Phillips and Hearn show that England supplied a low proportion of newcomers relative to the population of the United Kingdom, even though it constituted the largest source of migrants. By contrast, Scotland made up more than twice its relative percentage in New Zealand’s migrant streams; Wales was badly underrepresented; and Ireland, which provided few people in the early years of colonization, was well represented among assisted passengers from the 1850s to the 1880s and on the goldfields. To provide a higher degree of resolution, the authors draw close to the regional and county levels of migration. This painstaking analysis reveals some striking patterns. The English-born data show that three locations were particularly inclined to send settlers to New Zealand: London and Middlesex; the Home Counties of the southeast (Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire); and the counties of the southwest (as well as the offshore islands such as the Isle of Man). Of these ‘unusually New Zealand prone’ places, only the southwest had diminished in importance by the turn-of-the-century era, overtaken by northeast England. Most migrants were from agricultural or pre-industrial backgrounds, with a strong minority of non-Conformists — especially Methodists — and those with white-collar connections.

Like their English-born counterparts, the Scottish-born were Protestants who came largely from farming or craft households. There was less geographical clustering to be found in the county data, but a majority of New Zealand's migrants emanated from the Lowlands and there were very significant links with the Shetlands. Turning to their Irish-born data, Phillips and Hearn identify patterns of step-wise migration and locate a decisive shift in origins from Leinster and Ulster to southwest Munster and northeast Ulster after the early 1850s. The analysis they provide highlights the extent of the Ulster Protestant dimension in New Zealand's migrant intake and its growing importance over time.

The final and arguably least convincing chapter of *Settlers* addresses a series of research questions about the nature of migrant adaptation and ethnic incorporation in 'the new land'. The first section uses the death registers and supporting census data to show that 'extreme long-term clustering of particular groups' (p.142) did not happen in New Zealand and that various pressures 'broke up' family and ethnic formations (p.143). In their intriguing and speculative treatment of 'the legacy' which follows, the authors argue that aside from the introduction of a wide range of English cultural practices, separate national and local traditions dissolved speedily (p.179). This state of affairs owed much to a cluster of interrelated factors. The lack of big cities, the frequency of face-to-face interaction in small communities, frequent itinerancy; state education and a strong 'sense of Imperial identity' worked against the formation of migrant enclaves and diluted regional influences. In the first part of a suggestive closing section, Phillips and Hearn 'reconceptualise the settlers into cultural, particularly religious, groupings' (p.182). By the late nineteenth century, they contend, we may segment New Zealand's culture, politics and society according to four divisions: Irish Catholics, Anglicans, low-church Protestants and 'the culturally and ethnically mixed blokes of the frontier' (p.184). In a second approach, the analysis shifts to consideration of the specific cultural values that transcended ethnic and religious boundaries. The authors briefly explore our attitudes to the activities of the state, to land ownership and to versatility and self-sufficiency.

I have considerable sympathy for some of the arguments developed in the final chapter, but their explanatory force is diminished in two main ways. The first weakness relates to the *evidence*. The limitations of the research base are exposed in the statistical analysis of familial and ethnic clustering, which involves a potentially misleading assumption that the populations in question were evenly distributed across the given census enumeration units. To avoid this 'ecological fallacy' and buttress their claims, the authors might have carried out a small number of case studies that engaged with the specific geographical contexts in which settlement occurred. Without such careful work in the primary sources, they are badly positioned to make generalizations about issues such as kinship. A second weakness is *conceptual*. Scholarly research in migration studies over the past two decades has invoked the notions of transnationalism, diaspora and migratory networks to explore the attachments that migrants maintained with people, places and institutions outside the boundaries of the nation states to which they travelled. We might reasonably expect some reference to these key ideas given the subject matter of the book, the 'colonially inspired transnationalism' that connected New Zealand to Britain and the Empire, and their centrality to contemporary migration historiography!

My criticisms are inspired by some provocative and thoughtful arguments and should not be taken as an attempt to diminish the substantial achievements of Phillips and Hearn. *Settlers* makes a very significant contribution to our history and is a wonderful teaching resource. Readers will enjoy the delightful cameos and evocative images. The task for a new generation of historians is to build on this baseline, attuned to the reciprocity between theory and evidence.

LYNDON FRASER

University of Canterbury