

and fine wool. Developments over time also emerge, with the manufacture in the early twentieth century of felt hats, boots and shoes. We also learn of the competition generated by companies like Hallensteins, who produced clothing in the colony rather than sourcing it from abroad. Just as insightful are the tantalizing glimpses we gain of the characters of the key individuals. We learn, for instance, of John Ross and Robert Glendining's philanthropic exercises, with Ross contributing to the Presbyterian church, Knox College, the YMCA, the YWCA and St Margaret's College. He also established the Ross Institute in Halkirk, Scotland. Yet this 'doing good', although proclaimed in the title, is significantly less discussed than Ross and Glendining's 'doing well', a result of the focus on business rather than social history.

Also weaved throughout the book is the tense relationship between John Ross and Robert Glendining, exacerbated by the latter's problems with alcohol, which seemingly made him irrational, disagreeable and reckless. Dead by 1917 at age 75, he was soon followed in 1921 by his son Bob, also a heavy drinker. Ross, meanwhile, was knighted in 1922, and deceased by 1927. Both Ross and Glendining had difficult relationships with their sons, who appear in the book as less entrepreneurial and driven than their fathers. Such tantalizing insights add to the book, as does the selection of black and white photographs, which include depictions of early Dunedin, Auckland, Wellington and Napier; workers at the Roslyn mills; steam wagons with bales of wool; and male and female fashions.

There is, however, a further book to be written here, one that delves more deeply into the lives of John Ross and Robert Glendining and how their relationship shaped the ups and downs of the firm. Newly discovered Ross family letters, together with descendant reminiscences, would make a fine second volume, adding to the important work already produced by Jones.

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*Golden Prospects: Chinese on the West Coast of New Zealand.* By Julia Bradshaw. Shantytown (West Coast Historical & Mechanical Society), Greymouth, 2009. 294pp. NZ price: \$55.00. ISBN 978-0-473-15546-9.

THIS DELIGHTFUL BOOK addresses a major gap in the newly reinvigorated study of Chinese migration to Australasia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Julia Bradshaw draws upon an impressive range of documentary and material evidence to illuminate the everyday lives of the West Coast Chinese.

Most of these people came from small rural villages in the Pearl River Delta region of southern China and about 90% were Cantonese-speakers from the county of Poon Yu. Contrary to popular wisdom, the first arrivals on the goldfields were not miners but cooks or gardeners like Ah Sing, who took up land at Donnelly's Creek in 1866. Small groups began mining in Westland from mid-1867, but many were dissatisfied and left for Otago. Bradshaw shows that a 'continuous inflow' did not take place until the early 1870s — mainly to districts close to Greymouth and Hokitika — and fresh waves followed between 1880 and 1882, and again at the end of the decade. Thereafter, the number of Chinese migrants declined precipitously, an outcome that reflected the economics of gold-digging and the impact of the poll-taxes. At their highest point, in the 1880s, the Chinese-born comprised about 5% of the West Coast population and perhaps as many as one-fifth of all miners. Yet the broad figures conceal significant local concentrations. In the 1870s, for example, there were residential clusters around No Town, Ahaura, Greenstone and Stafford; and at Cronadun, Boatman's and Reefton in the following decade. By the early twentieth

century, however, few remained. Many of those who stayed eked out a precarious existence close to the once-thriving mining townships and died destitute and alone; all were denied access to the Old Age Pension on the basis of 'race'.

*Golden Prospects* provides a nuanced account of migrant interactions that matches recent work in Victoria by Keir Reeves and Valerie Lovejoy. Bradshaw does not play down the intense local hostility toward the Chinese and devotes an entire chapter to the region's anti-Chinese politicians. But she resists the temptation to present a simple story of racism and resistance. In a detailed treatment of everyday lives on the goldfields, Bradshaw reveals the engineering skills of the Chinese miners, the nature of their settlements and the perspicacious ways in which they used the warden's courts to protect their claims. Subsequent chapters range widely and explore the experiences of Cantonese merchants, storekeepers and cooks; the businesses of market gardeners and fruiterers; the spiritual labours of Christian missionaries; the dimensions of ethnic community; death, crime and the extensive philanthropic work done by Chinese for the benefit of local charities and institutions. Perhaps the most captivating material, at least for this reviewer, is to be found in the extraordinary stories of Chinese women and cross-cultural marriages. I was surprised to learn that some of the female migrants who came to the West Coast had bound feet, including Hui Young Hee, the wife of a popular Greymouth law clerk. Others, like 'former bondsgirl' Annie Long of Ahaura and the fiercely independent Lily Chow Fong, did not suffer this impediment, enjoyed greater mobility and forged strong local Chinese and European networks. By contrast, the road travelled by the Pākehā women who married Chinese men was a very hard one. Bradshaw provides glimpses into the lives of individuals such as Mary Ford, who caused great scandal in Greymouth when she chose to follow Young Hee to Hong Kong to become his second wife, and the four Gray sisters from the town and their unions with Chinese residents. With commendable even-handedness, the author shows how these relationships were perceived negatively across the racial divide. From a Chinese perspective, marriage to culturally inferior 'foreign devil girls' threatened familial loyalties; on the European side, these relationships were a source of shame and degradation. A key difference was that marriages were 'generally' accepted within the local Chinese community 'once they had occurred'.

The West Coast Historical & Mechanical Society (Shantytown) and the Chinese Heritage Poll Tax Trust deserve high praise for supporting the publication of Bradshaw's extensive research. In my view, the book's presentation is outstanding. The rich collection of images and maps relates directly to the text and the accompanying vignettes add considerable value to its impact. Readers will be struck by the variety of photographs, which include Wong Kan of Cronadun on his Harley-Davidson, Margaret Choo Poye (née Gray) and her children, the Young Hees' dining room in their Tainui Street villa (Greymouth) and assorted objects from the Shantytown collection. The writing is crisp, clear and imaginative, making *Golden Prospects* difficult to put down. Julia Bradshaw has succeeded in producing an accessible and exciting regional study that constitutes a significant contribution to the historiography of the Chinese in Australasia.

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