

to the chairmanship in 1906. This analysis, however, does not seem to tie in very closely with the author's own description of the continued expansion of the company in the immediate prewar years nor the fact that Mills and Allan Hughes are cited as the main actors in the discussions with P & O. Lord Inchcape may well have been the critical figure in this story, although his role is given little attention.

McLean sets out to write an 'enterprise history' which, borrowing from Arthur H. Cole, he defines as 'the critical examination of an individual company history or organisation, with particular reference to the contribution made by its management' (p. 9). Judged from this perspective the work succeeds reasonably well and certainly stands far above the many sycophantic in-house histories of New Zealand businesses which exist. It provides, without doubt, a thorough, critical and lucid account of a major New Zealand corporation, indicating the basis of its growth, the policies pursued by the management and something of the structure of the firm. It is, however, also a missed opportunity to say something more fundamental about the changing nature of ship ownership and the development of large scale business enterprises. Ship ownership is discussed more generally in the introduction, but the remarks are based upon outdated opinions. Maritime historians no longer accept that the coming of steam was critical in the emergence of professional shipping management or the replacement of the partnership with the public company: professional shipowning predated steam, while partnerships and small shipping firms remained important features of the industry in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.

Such monolithic assumptions about shipping management inevitably infect McLean's brief comments upon the position of the company within the framework of the growth of the modern corporation. A variety of management theorists are quoted in the conclusion, none of whom really provide an accurate analysis of entrepreneurship in the pre-1914 shipping industry. Nor is it clear how the Union Company fits into the Chandlerian-style analysis: on the one hand, McLean writes of the company as an example of a modern multi-unit enterprise with tiered professional management, on the other we are told of the critical roles played by Mills, Holdsworth and Hughes. Ironically, the company passed into the hands of a huge British shipping firm, whose chairman was all-powerful to the extent of being able to produce fictitious company accounts. It would have been interesting to have read more about the internal structure of the company, in place of some of the detailed descriptions of trade policies, in order to appreciate more clearly the significance of New Zealand's largest company of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the development of the business enterprise.

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Along the Hills. A history of Heathcote Road Board and the Heathcote County Council 1864-1989. By James Watson. Heathcote County Council, Christchurch, 1989. 274pp. NZ price: \$19.95.

LARGELY, one suspects, on account of the rather limited range of responsibilities granted to them, local authorities have attracted comparatively little systematic, historical study. In fact many 'histories' of local authorities are little more than mere catalogues of events deemed to have been significant, inventories of major public works, and listings of local notables. James Watson's *Along the Hills* is a welcome and important exception, one which should help establish an appropriate standard for further similar studies of the institutions which have helped shape both society and landscape.

Several features distinguish Watson's account of the Heathcote Road Board and later

County Council. First, he endeavours to place Heathcote's development within a wider national context, to trace the impact and assess the significance of war, depression, prosperity, and government policies. Second, the processes of change are identified and described, among them, transport technology, population growth and demographic transformation, rising living standards, and suburbanization. Third, the author systematically explores a wide range of themes: bridges, roads, and rivers, of course but also pollution and waste disposal, brothels and nude bathing, disease and housing, and unemployment. Watson's treatment of the pressures making alternately for amalgamation and independence is lucid, offered in terms of the debates over the basis for rating, the range of services provided, the questions of scale, costs, efficiency, and the ability to finance capital works, and rural-urban differences. It is interesting to note that the independence of Board and Council was threatened more by defections to Christchurch City than by government policy and edict. *Along the Hills* presents a skilful blend of narrative and analysis, spiced with anecdotes relating to various local eccentrics and the hazards which confronted the Council's traffic inspectors. Throughout the book the transformation of the district from wilderness to built-up environment and the implications for local government are carefully established and assessed.

Of course there are as always themes and issues which merited more detailed treatment. Why were the Board and Council reluctant to be drawn into dealing with wider social issues and problems? What were their contributions to the development and operations of the housing market? The manner in which small, largely independent and local communities were transformed into commuter suburbs awaits detailed study, part of the larger urbanization of New Zealand, itself a theme and process neglected by historians and geographers alike. But then Watson identifies a number of other themes which await further study.

Along the Hills makes full use of Board and Council archives. It is well illustrated with maps and photographs. Above all, it is an absorbing account and a pleasure to read.

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Ritual Song of Defiance: A Social History of Students at the University of Otago. By Sam Elworthy. Otago University Students' Association, Dunedin, 1990. 171 pp. NZ price: \$29.95.

THIS IS a good looking book, with a bright cover (bravely extolling its virtues as 'social history at its best') and clearly set out text, amply illustrated with cartoons and photographs, including a surprising number which feature male students decked out in drag or masquerading as clowns. Sam Elworthy's argument is straightforward. Over the last century the students of Otago University, sharing a 'youthful enthusiasm and rebelliousness', have defined a 'distinct identity'. Central to this 'student culture' has been the 'ritual song of defiance' against the stifling conservatism of the university authorities in particular and adult society in general. The tune and tempo of this song has in turn been set by 'two traditions': one dominated by rugby, alcohol and male (or misogynist) sexual bravado, and another peopled by arty bohemians and political radicals. It is around Elworthy's ability to reconcile these two apparently competing 'movements' into one student culture that this book as a credible piece of academic history stands or falls. In his discussion of the interwar years in chapter two, he succeeds and the argument is cogent and compelling. In chapter four, dealing with the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, he fails, and one is left wondering how not only sexist male 'traditionalists' and feminist 'radicals', but also the overwhelming majority of students in the middle, could have shared any common