

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.

T. J. HEARN

University of Otago

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

identity at all. Taken as a whole, Elworthy's argument is unconvincing: there is more to culture than beer and politics. What about the more abiding influence of class and gender? Treatment of the former, restricted almost entirely to chapter one, is amateur (to put it kindly) and his discussion of the latter is sadly limited (this is a particular shame when one considers the illustrations mentioned above). Failure to make adequate use of these conceptual tools, and his consequent inability to reconcile two largely contradictory traditions, forces the author to turn to the mysterious powers of the University — 'a certain spirit which hovers over the Leith' — manifest in the Otago University Students Association, as the author of a distinct student culture! What we are left with, then, is institutional history masquerading as social history — just like the young male students at capping time, in drag.

PAUL HUSBANDS

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A Documentary History of New Zealand Education. Part One: The Imperial Background To New Zealand Education: British Traditions, Government Policies, Colonial Experience 1400-1870. By C.L. Bailey. NZCER, Wellington, 1989. 257 pp. NZ price: \$20.

THIS IS a selection of 81 heavily-edited documents relating to the 'imperial background' of New Zealand education, linked by substantial commentaries. It has a disappointingly old-fashioned approach and narrow focus, dealing in the main with élite policy in a way that tends to justify and celebrate the educational reform tradition of the British Empire. The collection includes documents from England, Ireland, Scotland, the North American colonies, New South Wales, Cape Colony, and British India, but it is important to note that there are none about or from New Zealand in this initial selection. Further collections are apparently planned to chart in detail the educational history of New Zealand itself.

GARY McCULLOCH

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Musical Images. A New Zealand Historical Journey 1840-1990. By John Mansfield Thomson. Wellington: National Library, 63pp. NZ price: \$19.80.

THIS SMALL volume forms the catalogue to a 1990 exhibition mounted by the National Library. It quotes Michael Balling, the founder of the Nelson School of Music: 'I am singularly struck by the prominence given to "sport" of all kinds . . . we may resolve to reserve a little for higher things such as music.' In fact, as J.M. Thomson shows, New Zealand's music has long been copious and lively, strikingly so considering the small size of its population and its dispersedness. The book whets our appetite for the author's *Oxford History of New Zealand Music*, due in 1991. No doubt he will remedy a gap found here, and give us a treatment of school music, upon which our hopes may perhaps securely lie.

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