

on this subject. The notion of ‘unsettling’ as well as ‘settling’ could also have been interrogated more systematically, especially in terms of Maori responses to this Pakeha engagement, but otherwise this book represents a very useful beginning of a long-overdue conversation we need to engage in if we ever hope to become comfortable in this country by moving beyond the ‘settling’ phase.

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*The Devil's Own War: The First World War Diary of Brigadier-General Herbert Hart.* Edited by John Crawford. Exisle Publishing, Auckland, 2008. 336pp. NZ price: \$55.00. ISBN 978-1-877437-30-4.

THERE ARE SIGNS THAT HISTORIANS writing about New Zealand’s experiences of the First World War are starting to diversify their approach. *The Devil's Own War* is an example of this. The book is based primarily on the war-time diary of Brigadier-General Herbert Hart and it could be said that it naturally continues where John Crawford left off with *No Better Death* (2005), the Great War diaries and letters of Lieutenant-Colonel William George Malone. Hart was Malone’s second in command of the Wellington Infantry Battalion at Gallipoli in 1915. It seems remarkable that officers and soldiers like Hart and Malone found the time to reflect and write about their battlefield experiences whilst encamped in a warzone. And yet when one reads other sources, like the unpublished ‘Rememberings’ (MS-Papers-1032, Alexander Turnbull Library) of James Rarity Young who served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, New Zealand Field Artillery, and who recounts that as a soldier he experienced ‘months of boredom interspersed with moments of intense fright’, it is not so surprising that such writings were possible. Perhaps what is surprising is the survival of such records nearly one hundred years after they were written.

*The Devil's Own War* focuses almost exclusively on the period from August 1914 to April 1919, flanked by informative opening and closing accounts of Hart’s life before and after the war. Each chapter is headed by a quotation from Hart’s diary, which unfortunately does not convey readily what the chapter entails, except perhaps for the accompanying dates. The non-specialist reader may find this format troublesome. For instance, Chapter Five’s heading is ‘The Somme is the Maelstrom Drawing all Troops in Turn, August–October 1916’, and Chapter Eight, ‘One Big Sea of Slush: Passchendaele, July 1917–February 1918’. Crawford does help rectify this situation by providing explanatory comments at various intervals within the text and through the detailed and highly informative endnotes, the latter of which represent a piece of meticulous scholarship well worth examining.

Hart’s military service with the Ninth New Zealand South African Contingent in the closing months of the Boer War in 1902, and his role as head of the Imperial War Graves Commission in the Middle East from 1936 to 1943, suggests that there is scope for a larger study of his life in connection with war in the twentieth century, especially since he wrote diaries covering those episodes which survive to this day in the Kippenberger Military Archive and Research Library at Waiouru. However, it is the First World War that attracts Crawford’s attention to Hart, and the comments in his diary on the war definitely warrant a volume such as this. Seldom a day went by without Hart writing something in his war diary, and those entries were full and lengthy passages on events such as the landing of Anzac troops at Gallipoli (pp.58–60) and on the withdrawal some months later (pp.89–91). He also wrote about ‘The Soldier’s Life’, ‘Suez’, ‘Night Operations’, ‘Cairo Riot’, ‘Bayonet Sharpening’, ‘Lemnos’, ‘London’, ‘Artillery’, ‘Raiding Party’, ‘Battle of Gravenstafel’, and many more important episodes.

Crawford has also selected some stimulating photographs to illustrate Hart's life. Most are of Hart in uniform posing with fellow officers, but the context of some invite closer inspection. These include images of a funeral at a location somewhere on the Western Front in 1917, of Hart shaving outside his dugout near Biefvillers in 1918, and of Hart with the Prince of Wales outside Mielenforst Chateau in 1919. There are also photos of Hart at home in New Zealand. One shows him with his wife, Minnie, shortly before he embarked for overseas service in October 1914. But the most stimulating photo of all is that of a crowd of hundreds of people gathered in Carterton on Anzac Day in 1919 to welcome Hart home. The setting is a railway station on a windy Wairarapa day with macrocapa trees as a backdrop, and the photo depicts the transport, communications and fashions of early twentieth-century New Zealand.

The value of this book lies in the easy accessibility it provides readers to the contents of a New Zealand officer's Great War diary. Its importance lies in the two-fold contribution it makes to New Zealand's growing First World War historiography: first, by providing a semi-biographical account of a key military figure based on a primary source; and secondly, by enabling corroborations and connections to be made with the contents of Lt. Col. Malone's letters and diaries in *No Better Death* for the period August 1914 to August 1915. While 23 years separated Hart and Malone in age, both came from small-town New Zealand: Hart from Carterton; Malone from Stratford. They knew each other while serving together at Gallipoli, and both recorded their wartime experiences. For historians who have ever wondered about what Malone's life might have been like had he survived Gallipoli, some speculative answers might be found in Hart's diary and from his life in the post-war world.

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*New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies & the First World War.* Edited by John Crawford and Ian McGibbon. Exisle Publishing, Auckland, 2007. 675pp. NZ price: \$79.00. ISBN 978-0-908988-85-3.

'ZEALANDIA'S GREAT WAR' was a great conference, so I am told. Held in November 2003, the idea was to help kick-start Great War studies in New Zealand since, as the editors of this book tell us, 'New Zealand's historiography of the First World War is very limited'. Conferences can do that. History was almost moribund at the Australian War Memorial in the early 1980s, but an annual military history conference and some judicious publishing opportunities attracted academic historians and others to the much-underworked field. Military history is now as lively an area in Australian historiography as any other major sub-discipline. Perhaps this book will work in the same sort of way. It deserves to.

The editors attracted the very best speakers to the conference and have produced a distinguished collection that is comprehensive, thoughtful and authoritative. Divided into four major sections, *New Zealand's Great War* explores context, operational matters, impacts and effects at home and on the soldiers themselves. It is rare for a single volume to cover such territory. There are 32 authors included in this collection, among them the stalwarts of New Zealand military history: Chris Pugsley, Ian McGibbon and Glyn Harper. There are some well-credentialed 'outsiders' too: Peter Dennis, Jeffrey Grey and Peter Stanley. But this will not be a 'ticks and crosses' review attempting to look at each contribution. Almost every chapter is too dense for a single-line summary and too important for a flippant remark.

Gary Sheffield, Professor of War Studies at Birmingham, sets the book's tone in the