

on the Somme in 1916 and two others running from the law as defaulting conscientious objectors receives scant mention, even though Nolan gives these aspects full coverage in her introduction. This is not necessarily a fault of the editor as the diary is essentially an account of his work, but it is frustrating nonetheless. There is another intriguing, one-off entry — which has resonance to one of this reviewer's research interests — where McCullough 'invests' (not gambles) £4 at the Addington Trots, wins nothing, and then feels 'disgust at his weakness'. Oh, the penance that a fallen Calvinist must endure.

My only other criticism relates to the poor quality of some of the photographs, particularly those replicated directly from newsprint. Their inclusion is debatable. The publication would have benefitted from more cartoons pertaining to industrial issues in general, and the Arbitration Court in particular, positive from the workers' and unions' point of view in the *Maoriland Worker* and the contrary view, often scathing, from the Blomfields and others in the *Observer* and *New Zealand Free Lance*. A wider, more serious concern is the paucity of labour history appearing from within the academies. Both Len Richardson and Erik Olssen, Nolan's mentors, have retired with a commensurate decrease in published volumes, and Nolan herself has decamped from Victoria University in Wellington to the Australian National University in Canberra where her focus is more international. Partly as a consequence there are far fewer postgraduate students in labour history than there were two decades ago. It is being left to public historians and members of the Labour History Project, which Nolan assesses as having been very important in her professional life, to keep the fires burning.

DAVID GRANT

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Field Punishment No.1: Archibald Baxter, Mark Briggs & New Zealand's Anti-Militarist Tradition. By David Grant [with paintings by Bob Kerr]. Steele Roberts Publishers, Wellington, 2008. 159pp. NZ price: \$34.99. ISBN 978-1-877448-46-1.

THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, freedom of association and freedom to dissent from political orthodoxy are all taken for granted in twenty-first century New Zealand. During times of war, however, these rights are easily swept aside. In New Zealand during the First and Second World Wars, for example, these basic rights and freedoms were at a premium and replaced by jingoistic patriotism and fervent nationalism.

The author of this book, David Grant, is the son of a prominent and distinguished New Zealand army officer. Because of his father he was exposed to the bravery and heroism of those who fought (often in appalling conditions) for New Zealand in a variety of theatres. Out of this family history he became interested in those who chose a different path — namely the path of resistance to the state in times of war. In his first book on this subject, *Out in the Cold: Pacifist and Conscientious Objectors in New Zealand during World War II* (1986), he documented the ways in which conscientious objectors to the Second World War were treated by the state and the community. The Labour Government of the time (many of whose members had conscientiously objected to the First World War) adopted a very tough stance with objectors and hundreds spent the war in detention camps or prison. The 'Conchies' and their families were ostracized by the community, vilified by the press and left in no doubt about the price of dissent in New Zealand.

In this book, Grant turns his attention to the First World War and the punishments meted out to two very prominent conscientious objectors — Archibald Baxter and Mark Briggs. The book was inspired by Bob Kerr's paintings of the First World War, all of which evoke the desolation, isolation and destruction of the war and the challenges facing those who sent so many to their slaughter. Grant decided that these paintings captured something

of the experience of the First World War's conscientious objectors who were sent to the Western Front in an effort to break their resolve. Much of Baxter's experience has been revealed in his own autobiography *We Will not Cease* (1968), but Briggs's experience is much less well known despite the fact that he was a legislative councillor from 1936 to 1950. Grant is to be commended, therefore, for this excellent comparative analysis of the individual and shared histories of these men. Both demonstrated a courage — even to their captors and tormenters — which, to some extent, has established an important benchmark for those who choose to pit themselves against the power and authority of the New Zealand state. Their experiences in New Zealand and in France created a space for dissent which many others in New Zealand have benefited from.

David Grant establishes a long line of dissenters — both before and after Baxter and Briggs — who, knowing what punishment might lie in wait for them, nevertheless chose the path of principled resistance to authority. This long line of dissenters played a fundamental role in expanding the boundaries of political action in New Zealand and in other parts of the world. Those who follow the path of resistance in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia today, for example, continue to be confronted by the 'iron' fist beneath the velvet glove of the state. Because of the courage of people like Baxter and Briggs and their families it is no longer possible for political leaders to demand unquestioned obedience from citizens. Nowadays leaders are expected to provide explanations for their decisions, especially for those that have to do with going to war. They are now expected to share the possible risks, costs and benefits of different strategies with Parliament and citizens.

It is sobering to realise that 95 years ago, citizens, for the most part, in New Zealand and in other parts of the British Empire ceded so much authority to the state and willingly embraced whatever decision their leaders made. Patriotic loyalty was the norm and dissent the exception. The millions all around the world who resisted the 2003 invasion of Iraq — with more foresight and wisdom than the leaders who initiated this war of choice — stand in the Baxter/Briggs tradition. It is a mark of Baxter's and Briggs's success, and all those who followed them, that knee-jerk patriotism is no longer the norm.

David Grant's book focuses on a range of specific punishments that the New Zealand government and military authorities applied in order to break the dissenters' will. Fourteen New Zealand conscientious objectors were taken to France and the front lines in an effort to break their resolve. Twelve of the 14 succumbed to the threats and punishment and put on military uniform. Baxter and Briggs held out to the end. They acknowledged on their return that what they had experienced was no worse than what most other soldiers experienced, and Grant is careful to highlight that Field Punishment No.1 was not a unique punishment for conscientious objectors. It was in fact a military replacement for the nineteenth-century flogging of recalcitrants. This more 'enlightened' punishment originally involved strapping military and non-military recalcitrants to the wheel of a gun carriage or wagon and leaving them there for hours at a time in public view as a disincentive to anyone else who chose the path of disobedience. In 1916, after one soldier died in this manner, the British Army replaced the wheel with a pole. Baxter and Briggs were strapped to such poles in bitterly cold conditions near places that were militarily dangerous. They did not break and the authorities eventually gave up. Because of their actions the state slightly softened its treatment of dissenters in the Second World War. There is no doubt, as Grant indicates, that such First World War acts of courage helped redefine the boundaries between state and citizen in New Zealand and other parts of the world. For this we can all be thankful.

This is a book that every New Zealander should read if they want to know why we are a little freer today than our ancestors were in 1914. As James K. Baxter wrote in his *Pig Island Letters*:

When I was only semen in a gland
 Or less than that, my father hung
 From a torture post at Mud Farm
 Because he would not kill. The guards
 Fried sausages, and as the snow came darkly
 I feared a death by cold in the cold groin
 And plotted revolution. His black and swollen thumbs
 Explained the brotherhood of man...

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Before ANZAC, Beyond Armistice. The Central Otago Soldiers of World War One and the Home They Left Behind. By Keith Douglas Scott. Activity Press, Auckland, 2009. 352pp. NZ price: \$39.99. ISBN 978-0-9582634-5-0.

SINCE 2000 THERE HAVE BEEN NO LESS THAN 31 BOOKS and 17 scholarly articles published solely on New Zealand's participation in the First World War. *Before Anzac, Beyond Armistice* is a welcome addition to the publications in this field of study. The book is primarily set during the period of the war and its immediate aftermath, and it focuses almost exclusively on the soldiers from Central Otago. While the focus on soldiers is not new, the regional approach adopted by the author, Keith Scott, is new, at least in the context of New Zealand First World War studies, and so is the main primary source he uses, being the military service files of the soldiers themselves. What unfolds is a broad coverage of the First World War and its impact on 'Central's' males of military age.

There is a typical chronological structure to this book spanning the years 1914 to 1919 that begins in 'New Zealand' and then shifts to 'At Sea and in Egypt', 'Gallipoli', the 'Middle East', the 'Western Front', and then back to 'New Zealand'. Each of these sections is layered with easily recognized chapter headings like, 'GOODBYE CAIRO! Departure for the Dardanelles', and 'SUFFERING HUMANITY: The Somme 1916'. The text is interspersed with 61 illustrations and 44 tables of statistical information, ending with a set of appendices pertaining mainly to the 'Central Boys of World War I'.

Scott, with family connections to the region dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, writes with passion and a sense of duty and attachment to the soldiers. A strong feature of this book is the assembly of diverse details about these soldiers, including whole letters and diary excerpts, tables of data on demography, casualties, employment, family, conscription and drunkenness, which previously would not have been readily accessible to readers. This information will no doubt be of immense value to the residents of Central Otago who have family connections to these young men, as it will be to historians interested in making regional comparisons and trans-Tasman connections. In this sense *Before Anzac, After Armistice* has a role to play as a building block in more comprehensive understandings about the participation of New Zealand soldiers in the First World War.

Throughout the book Scott introduces and elaborates upon situations and issues experienced by the region's soldiers. Conscription and the work of the Appeals Court are particularly noteworthy. The Military Service Act (1916) was undoubtedly New Zealand's most disruptive piece of wartime legislation because it introduced conscription, which subsequently affected entire sections of the community. Single males of military age were vulnerable, but so too were married males without children. Wives and families faced possible economic hardships with the call-up of male breadwinners and employers faced labour shortages. Successful appeals were rare, most merely gave a conscript time to prepare his exit from society. Scott describes the issues faced by Central's communities