

also enjoy wrestling with its ambiguities, elisions and misrepresentations. Congratulations must also go to Godwit for producing such a handsome book, wonderful to look at and delightful to hold.

The publication of this superb edition of a 'New Zealand classic' – even 'taonga', given how much it has been used in Waitangi Tribunal claims – along with Stone's earlier *From Tamaki-Makau-Rau To Auckland*, ensures that Russell Stone is not only a living Auckland treasure but a national one as well.

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Migrations: Journeys in Time and Place. By Rod Edmond. Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2013. 256pp. NZ price: \$39.99. ISBN: 9781927131466.

This is a most intriguing book, and one not easily categorized. It is at once memoir, biography, family history, travelogue, research log, mission history, and literary and postcolonial analysis. Above all it is, as the title suggests, an extended meditation on the experience of migration.

Rod Edmond explores the lives of two of his migratory ancestors, visiting the places where they lived, seeking out traces in local archives and oral traditions, and using history, fiction and anthropology to contextualize their experiences. Catherine McLeod, Edmond's great-grandmother, was born into a near-destitute crofting family in Ardmail, in the Western Highlands of Scotland, in the late 1840s. At the age of five she became part of an extended group of families from the Coigach estate who travelled to Tasmania; they were one of the first groups of 'free' migrants to settle in that colony. After marrying James Edmond, Catherine moved to Melbourne, where she lived the rest of her life. From the maternal side of Edmond's family comes Charles Murray, born in 1858 to a tenant farming family in the parish of St Fergus, on the east coast of Scotland. He graduated in arts and theology at Aberdeen University before training for ordination at the Aberdeen Free Church College; he then travelled across the world to Ambrym, in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), to serve as a missionary. Following a crisis in health and confidence, Charles Murray left the mission and became a successful Presbyterian minister in various New Zealand parishes.

Edmond selected these two forebears 'because of the representative value I sensed their histories possessed' and 'to capture in heightened form many of the defining features of the nineteenth-century experience of displacement, migration, settlement, and the fractured relation of settler colonists to their place of departure' (p.12). This is family history of the best sort: not the pursuit so readily dismissed by 'the academy and its auxiliaries ... as amateur and recreational', but rather a richly contextualized 'history from below' (p.48). It is in many ways a deeply scholarly book, engaging with debates within history, anthropology and literary scholarship. But the book wears its scholarship lightly: the writing is compelling and a model of clarity, and Edmond has enjoyed the opportunity offered in retirement to write 'with a freer stride, "a book without footnotes" as I put it to myself' (p.14). (In case anybody is troubled by this, he does clearly note his sources at the end of the book). He brings to life a wide range of colourful characters, from ni-Vanuatu entrepreneurs to Scottish librarians to stranded whales.

The book is as much about Rod Edmond as it is about Catherine McLeod and Charles Murray. As he explores the lives of his ancestors, Edmond reflects on his own experiences as a migrant, one who left New Zealand for a scholarly career in England many years ago, but retains close ties to his motherland. The most powerful parts of the book for me were the paired

chapters set in the Pacific. In 'Ambrym I' Edmond writes about the experiences of his great-grandfather as missionary on the island of Ambrym, making good use of the diary Murray kept during part of his time there. In 'Ambrym II' Edmond writes of his own visit to Ambrym, where he attempts to square the evidence of written sources with the oral traditions of the ni-Vanuatu residents, keeps his own diary in an attempt to better understand his forebear, and has some challenging experiences (both physical and psychological). He encounters with some discomfort the religious devotion of the locals; any sense of postcolonial guilt at the actions of his great-grandfather in denouncing some of the 'evils' of indigenous culture is thrown into disarray by the ni-Vanuatu celebration of Charles Murray and his brother William Murray as bringers of Christianity to the island, and the villagers' desire to go through a 'sorri ceremony' where they formally apologize to Edmond for their ancestors' treatment of the Murrays.

Edmond's reflections on diary-keeping are intriguing, though he could have made more of his forebears' religious motives: Edmond refers only briefly to diaries as a tool for self-examination, but this was the most powerful motive for diary-keeping in the puritan and evangelical traditions. On the whole, though, the book captures vividly and with considerable empathy the religious and psychological world of Edmond's ancestors. His generally acute use of language is let down by the careless use of the term 'non-conformist' several times in the chapter on New Zealand. One of the most important features of religion in colonial New Zealand was the lack of an established church; strictly speaking, there were no non-conformists in this country, a fact celebrated by migrants considered dissenters in their countries of origin.

The book includes no illustrations, though it does have some helpful maps and genealogical tables. Occasionally, when Edmond describes a picture of one of his ancestors or a landscape he is photographing, I longed to see that image. I suspect, though, that the absence of illustrations is not due to simple pecuniary issues. Edmond is a skilful writer and the book is a very personal one: we see people and places as he interprets them, and photographs might diminish the power of the written language. There is, throughout the book, a strong sense of place.

We are all shaped by our particular cultural tradition and family background. Although our family history may contribute to our curiosity about the past, few academic historians in this country actively engage with their own family histories in their work. Māori historians have shown the most initiative in this respect; the work of Ngāi Tahu historians Angela Wanhalla and Michael Stevens, for instance, demonstrates how family stories can be integrated into particularly evocative and powerful understandings of our pasts. Rod Edmond's achievement in this outstanding book is to reflect in an engaging and considered way on his own life, on the lives of his colonial forebears, and on the enormous impact of migration on individuals, families and cultures. *Migrations* is a compulsive page-turner, but it is also deeply thoughtful and thought-provoking.

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Home in the Howling Wilderness: Settlers and the Environment in Southern New Zealand. By Peter Holland. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2013. 256pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN 9781869407391.

Peter Holland is appreciated by many both as a person and a scholar, and for us it is particularly satisfying to view the steady flow of publications he has achieved since retirement. Appointed Professor of Geography at the University of Otago in 1982, he made his reputation as a