

REVIEWS

Manuscripts at Mitchell

Catalogue of manuscripts of Australasia and the Pacific in the Mitchell library, Sydney. Series B: Manuscripts catalogued between 1963 and 1967. Sydney, Trustees of the Public library of New South Wales, 1969. 500p.

The publication of Series B of this catalogue only two years after that of Series A is no mean achievement, and is a tribute to the enthusiasm and industry of Mitchell librarians.

Series B has continued the arrangement of Series A, which divides the volume into chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 are "through periods" (primary and secondary material respectively) and 3-9 are in seven periods up to and including 1967. Name, locality, subject and form entries are to be found in the index. Listed in the catalogue are not only the library's own original manuscripts, but also microfilms, photostats and typescripts which have been acquired of manuscripts held elsewhere.

New Zealanders will find a number of items of interest. There are photostats of letters concerning the family of William Swainson (the naturalist), 1839-49, and these include comments on the Bay of Islands and Hutt Valley disturbances. On microfilm are the papers of James Couitts Crawford, 1840-75, who settled in New Zealand in 1846 and was geologist for the Wellington Province. Also on microfilm are letters of the Vyvyan family, which include eight from J. Henry Vyvyan, 1857-64, describing conditions in New Zealand, land regulations, and copper mining. A collection of Marsden papers contains letters concerning New Zealand. There are Selwyn papers on microfilm, typescripts of some of which have been in New Zealand for many years. Other items, either originals or microfilms, of some New Zealand interest, include the Papers of J. E. Watkin, Letters of the Rev. J. R. Orton, 1826-41, and Papers of Sir Joseph Banks. Microfilms of some of the above are also in Alexander Turnbull Library. A diligent pursuit of all the "see also" references in the index will yield a rewarding crop of New Zealand items. Although these may not all necessarily be of much importance, it is at least valuable to know just what there is concerning New Zealand in the many collections listed here.

The descriptions and lists of contents will in fact be of great assistance to all workers in the field of historical research. For those who cannot use the Mitchell Library in person, the details given will be of immense value, and even those who are fortunate enough to be able to visit the

library, will find much time is saved by this detailed listing. Also it must perform the important function of reducing the unnecessary handling of original material.

The index is most detailed, with liberal cross reference. For example, in addition to specific entries under individual names, there are groupings under their respective categories. From the heading *Professions, occupations and trades* there are "see" references to 39 entries, including *Librarians, Architects, Missionaries and evangelists, Travellers, explorers and navigators*, and to less likely ones such as *Skiers, Walkers and Wheelwrights*. Under each of these headings are listed the relevant names in chronological order. There is also a chronological listing of ships under *Ships and shipping*, and another of families under *Family trees and registers*.

The series number is given in the index with a view to an eventual cumulation of indexes—something which, by the time the catalogue is complete, will be welcome.

With such a useful work, whose overall standard is so high, it seems churlish to cavil at minor errors and inconsistencies, which in any case do not seem to be either many or serious, so I will make only one comment in this connection, and that is that there is no reference in the index either from *Maori wars*, or from the heading we use, i.e. *Maoris—Wars*, to the one used in the index, which is *New Zealand wars*, but only a "see also" reference from *Maoris—Atrocities*. Also one must regret that dates are not given of the persons under whom each collection is listed.

However, librarians and research workers should indeed be grateful for a reference tool such as this, which provides so much detailed information about the resources of a library of the richness of the Mitchell Library. It should be realised that perfection, either in accuracy or complete consistency, in a work of this nature is an ideal difficult, if not impossible to attain, and if libraries refrained from publishing such works until perfection was reached, we should all be the poorer because of the inevitably long delay in publication.

This work, with Series A, is a most valuable reference work. Its arrangement, its cataloguing and index are excellent, and all who are concerned with historical research must appreciate and admire the thoroughness and care with which it has been done.

ENID A. EVANS

Literary periodical

We welcome the first issue of *Edge*, a new literary magazine to be published twice a year by The Edge Press, a non-profit organisation for the promotion of the literary arts. Edited by D. S. Long, the first issue contains contributions by James K. Baxter, Denis Glover, Keith Sinclair, Kendrick Smithyman, and other well known and less known New Zealand writers.

The typography of this new publication which is printed by the Caxton Press, is both interesting and pleasant; the prose is set in 11 point Baskerville and the poetry in 10 and 12 point Galax. The subscription is \$1.00 for one year, or 50 cents per single copy (plus postage). Subscriptions are handled by Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., Magazine Department, P.O. Box 1465, Christchurch.

J.W.B.