

**From Alba to Aotearoa:
Profiling New Zealand's Scots Migrants 1840-1920**

REBECCA LENIHAN

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The study of post-annexation migration into New Zealand has enjoyed something of a renaissance in recent years, driven in good measure by an effort to establish the genesis and character of Pakeha culture. Some of the investigations undertaken have created and analysed large-scale datasets based mostly upon vital records and assisted immigrant passenger lists. The most comprehensive examined migration from the United Kingdom to New Zealand up to 1945, while others studies have examined, in particular, the Scots and the Irish. In *From Alba to Aotearoa*, Rebecca Lenihan investigates migration from Scotland to New Zealand from 1840 to 1920. Given the previous studies, a key test is whether, to what extent, and in what particular ways the work refines, extends or changes existing analyses and conclusions.

Lenihan employs two data sources, the first being the dataset generated by the *Peopling of New Zealand* project and the second created by the New Zealand Genealogical Society. The first (the PNZ dataset) was based on a random sample abstracted from the national Registers of Deaths, the analysis focussing very largely on the national, regional, social, and economic origins and the demographic structure and character of the migrant stream. The second (the NZGS dataset) was derived from data assembled by a self-selected group of families and individuals of Scots origin: as such, it contains a great deal more information about particular families and individuals, including geographical origins, migration paths, settlement in New Zealand, and career paths. Essentially, Lenihan employs the results of one analysis to calibrate and, where possible, illuminate or extend the results of the other. One outcome is to expose their respective strengths and weaknesses, a matter that the author properly keeps to the fore.

Using those two datasets, the author examines some key questions, among them, the scale and timing of Scottish inflows into New Zealand; the regional origins of New Zealand's Scottish immigrants; matters of age, gender, and marital status; occupations; and geographical patterns of settlement and community formation within New Zealand. Particular themes include chain and cluster migration, return migration, and individual and generational occupational mobility. Chapter 1 deals with

immigrant origins and her results based on the NZGS dataset do not differ significantly from those generated from the PNZ dataset. Lenihan does expand the findings of the latter by offered a more detailed examination of emigration from the Shetland Islands, useful given the strong links forged between New Zealand and Shetland, especially during the 1860s and 1870s.

Chapter 2 considers the settlement of the Scots in New Zealand and identifies where, in terms of their regional origins, they fell short of or exceeded the New Zealand average. That some counties recorded above or below that average led the author to explore the links forged by chain migration between places of origin in Scotland with places of settlement in New Zealand. One outcome, illustrating one of the strengths of the genealogical approach and data, was the identification and dissection of distinctive communities, among them the Scots of the Turakina and Rangitikei districts. That was not a pattern confined to the Scots. For example, communities of the Irish-born from Kerry, Down, and Donegal were established in various districts of Canterbury and elsewhere in New Zealand. The value of Lenihan's work is that she explores the links, the relationships, and the ties involved. It would be interesting to explore whether, to what extent, and in what ways those early regional identities persist.

Chapter 3 deals with the Scots-born immigrants in terms of age, gender, and marital status. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the results do not appear to differ significantly from those derived from the PNZ dataset. Many nineteenth century migrant streams were dominated by males, by the young and the single, or by families in the early stages of the family life cycle. Lenihan offers some useful comparisons with the PNZ dataset, emphasising what was realised at the time of its construction that some of the information recorded with respect to age and marital status, in particular those of 'single' men, was often an approximation. On the other hand, the PNZ dataset was probably more successful in capturing 'single' male arrivals, while allowing that details relating to age and marital status may not always have been entirely reliable.

Chapter 4 explores the difficult area of occupation. It is here that I have some misgivings over Lenihan's approach. At the time the PNZ dataset was constructed, it was recognised that the descriptions of occupations given in the death certificates presented potentially serious difficulties with respect to classification and occupational change, that for married women occupations, pre- or post-marriage, were rarely given at all, and that while occupations may have been given, the industry

groups were not. For those reasons, a decision was taken not to code and analyse those data, but the author has proceeded to do so and not surprisingly has produced results considerably at variance with those derived from the NZGS dataset. Such comparisons are hardly soundly based: the author's conclusion that death certificates do not by and large yield useful information relating to occupation is exactly the reason the data were not analysed. Some subsets of the PNZ datasets, notably those of the New Zealand Company and the assisted immigrants of the 1870s did include the declared occupations at the time of arrival of married and single males and single women. Beyond that, her discussion of occupations, where it is based on the NZGS dataset, is sound and useful. Chapter 5 carries the story of Scottish immigration beyond 1920 and in doing so draws essentially on the PNZ dataset.

I do have some other misgivings. First, as the author acknowledges, the NZGS dataset does not constitute a random sample of Scots arrivals. More particularly, some of sub-sets derived from it are sufficiently small as to raise doubts about the reliability of the results drawn from them. That was especially true for the period from 1887 to 1900. I also wonder about the merits of one of the author's major conclusions, namely, that New Zealand's Scottish immigrants were not fleeing from Scotland's urban-industrial centres. That may have been so. But the argument that they were not fleeing 'industrialisation' hardly stands scrutiny. It was precisely because of the accelerating industrialisation of the rural sector, the contraction and indeed disappearance of many rural-based occupations, the growing centralisation of many formerly rural-based industries in urban centres, and the growth and expansion of new nodes and networks of distribution, that many, in both Scotland and England, decided to depart for the so-called 'regions of recent settlement.' Third, having noted that the migration of extended family groups was especially pronounced among Shetlanders, the author suggests that there is no evidence that a similar degree of cluster migration occurred among other Scots coming to New Zealand. It would fairer to say that that is a matter that has received little systematic investigation.

From *Alba to Aotearoa* is attractively presented, although the legibility of some of the graphs could have been improved. Most importantly, the author does demonstrate how genealogical research can be woven into more broadly based analyses: the book is thus a very useful contribution to both immigration and settlement studies.

T. J. Hearn