

even visit the Auckland Institute & Museum or the Turnbull Library and the end product will simply be as long as the energy, time and imagination of the Committee permit.

It is about time to approach one's assignment. One can think of the raw material in various ways, firstly in the context of the particular *kind* of record which one needs to search, for example land or legal records or secondly by the type of library material, to use our newer jargon, into which they fall such as books and pamphlets, public archives of central or local government, private papers, newspapers, maps and other pictorial materials. We do not think of these categories simply by the institutions in which they are found although there is an almost exclusive grouping of land records in the Deeds Division of the Justice Department, Lands and Survey, Valuation Department or the Maori Land Court. The records of central government are mostly in National Archives or the Departments themselves. For the rest the historian goes where the trail leads, and it may not have many side tracks. I have made the point for example that in my *Old Greytown*, which is only an outline of about fifty years the main sources were newspapers, National Archives and the Borough Council Minute Books. There was only one essential unique reference from the Turnbull Library, the autobiography of Joseph Masters.

In New Zealand, almost inevitably, local history is the human cycle on a plot of land. The conscientious local historian will want to uncover as many facets as possible which are relevant to his approach but to me the humus, clay or rock underfoot is fundamental. Man in relation to the land that he coveted, fought over, acquired, lost, or walked off is an inescapably basic framework for any local study. Whether it is 30 perches of his suburban retreat or 25,000 acres to provide the fortune to retire to the country of his origin it is fundamental to his sense of "belonging", however temporarily. Our 130 years of national history is this theme writ large with the antithetical response that the welfare state is a recognition that the land is not enough. In this context politics may be viewed as merely a complex of constitutional checks and balances to provide a legal machinery to formalise our contractual relationships.

Specifically any history of an area of up to a thousand square miles should have the main title changes established at least to the first rural subdivision. If, as is often the case, the small town did not fulfil the hopes of its promoters, this should also be explored. The decay of the New Zealand small town, which as a theme attracted the geographers long before the historians, likewise can be documented by following through the aggregation of small sections. In my . . . *Carterton*, 14 years ago, I made a limited use of deeds records—I have searched the titles for most of the Wairarapa runs—and more recently D. B. Waterson in an article