

Resignation of Miss M. M. Pryde, O.B.E. as Director-Secretary of O.E.S.A.

By W. MARTIN

In 1940 Miss M. M. Pryde was appointed as assistant to the Secretary of the Otago Early Settlers' Association Mr William Paterson, and following his death in 1943, was appointed his successor. Though a young lady still in her twenties, she quickly proved she was particularly well qualified for the position and intensely interested in the welfare and affairs of the Association. Some five years after her appointment the celebrations marking the jubilee of the O.E.S.A. and the centenary of the Province of Otago were held, and her organising ability and careful attention to detail were important factors in their success. In 1949, in recognition of her services to the history of Otago, she was awarded the O.B.E.

She quickly acquired an intimate knowledge of the early history of Otago, and made the acquaintance of many of the pioneer settlers and their descendants. She had a wonderful memory for facts and faces and always had at her finger-tips as it were, detailed information on all matters that came before the Executive Committee. Requests for information were numerous and were always promptly attended to. She had an intimate acquaintance with the financial affairs of the Association and each Treasurer in turn acknowledged the great assistance she gave in this department. She had the happy knack of getting on well with the other members of the staff.

Under her guidance the library has grown and has become one of the finest pertaining to the history and development of Otago. When in 1955 the Association decided to publish an annual booklet entitled "Provincial Pride" for distribution to members, the editors were greatly assisted by Miss Pryde in the selection of topics and material, in interviewing potential contributors and in making all arrangements for publication.

For over 31 years she has served the Association faithfully and well, and as Curator of the museum, administrator, organiser, and Secretary has given the fullest satisfaction. As broadcaster and lecturer she has kept the interests of the Association before the public. Her resignation is an irreparable loss to the O.E.S.A., but she leaves having earned the goodwill and esteem of all members, and the fullest satisfaction of the Executive Committee.