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978-1-108-00834-1 - Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand, Volume 1

John Liddiard Nicholas

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Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand

John Liddiard Nicholas (1784-1868), a London iron-founder, arrived in New South Wales in 1813 but rather than develop his business, he accompanied Samuel Marsden on a journey to New Zealand from November 1814 to March 1815 that established the first Christian mission to the Maoris. This two-volume book, first published in 1817 after Nicholas had returned to England, was widely successful, and was translated into Dutch and German in 1819. Based on Nicholas's journal, kept throughout his voyage, it tells the story of the missionaries' efforts but focuses particularly on Nicholas's observations of the Maoris and reflects his desire to share knowledge of a 'people so little known to Europeans, and at the same time so ... interesting'. Nicholas pays careful attention to the customs, personalities, and relationships unique to different communities, and in Volume 1 outlines and highlights the relationships he himself developed with the Maoris.

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Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand

*Performed in the Years 1814 and 1815, in
Company with the Rev. Samuel Marsden*

VOLUME 1

JOHN LIDDIARD NICHOLAS



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A Chief of New Zealand?

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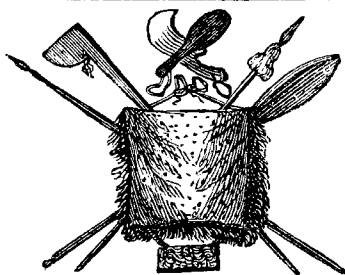
Performed in the Years 1814 and 1815,

IN COMPANY WITH THE REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN,

Principal Chaplain of New South Wales.

BY

JOHN LIDDIARD NICHOLAS, ESQ.



— *utilitati consulens hominum et ei quam sæpe commemoro, humanæ societati.*
Cicero de Offic. lib. iii. cap. 6.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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P R E F A C E.



THE following Narrative was composed from a journal which the Author kept during his voyage to New Zealand; and for the sake of minutely particularizing the incidents in their proper order, he has still preserved an uninterrupted succession of dates up to the period of his departure from that island; avoiding, however, as much as it was practicable, that abrupt formality of statement which the journal form prescribes. Besides, the New Zealanders are a people so little known to Europeans, and at the same time so peculiarly interesting, that he conceived an account of the daily occurrences he met with during his short intercourse with them, would be more acceptable to the reader than any

general detail. But as this plan obliged him to conform to the order of time and circumstance, he was necessarily restricted from treating diffusely on particular subjects, however closely connected with the country and its inhabitants. To supply this defect, the Author has subjoined, under the head of *Supplementary Observations*, such topics as could not be introduced or dilated on in the Narrative, without too long a suspension of the train of events.

Aware that accuracy of narration must constitute the chief merit of a work like the present, the Author has been scrupulously exact with respect to it. The occurrences which came under his own observation are detailed with a strict regard to truth, nor has he admitted any statements on the authority of the natives, without examining the veracity and motives of the persons who made them. Many of the incidents possess a considerable degree of interest, while even those which seem trifling in themselves are yet parti-

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cularly important, as they tend to develop the character of man in the wildest state of ferocious barbarism; and it will be recollected, that in civilized as well as in savage life, the dispositions of individuals are often best discovered in matters apparently insignificant. The object of the Author in visiting New Zealand is stated in the commencement of the work, where he has endeavoured to render justice to the views of the benevolent Gentleman whom he accompanied; and this Narrative, while it embraces other topics, is also a record of that Gentleman's proceedings in the cause of humanity.

In the course of the Narrative, as well as in the supplementary part, the Author has appealed occasionally to the authority of Captain Cook and the learned Doctor Fors- ter, for the sanction of some of his remarks; though in treating of cannibalism as it prevails in New Zealand, he found it necessary to differ from their separate opinions. He must, however, acknowledge himself much

indebted to both these Gentlemen, and to the latter in particular, for the information he has derived from his philosophical researches.

The Author has been enabled to give in this work a faithful account of the destruction of the ship *Boyd*, which in the year 1809 was cut off by some tribes in New Zealand, and the crew and passengers all massacred and devoured, except four individuals. The particulars of this horrible enormity he has related as they were detailed to him by the chief perpetrator, a savage of the most ferocious disposition.

In tracing the origin of the New Zealanders to the continent of Asia, the Author does not mean to adhere pertinaciously to the hypothesis he has assumed; his object being only to advance such arguments on the subject as appear best supported by analogy, without presuming in any instance to categorical affirmation. If it should be objected to this work, that it does not take an enlarged

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and comprehensive view of New Zealand and its inhabitants, the Author's reply is, that in the first place he should distrust his abilities for such a task ; and secondly, did he deem himself equal to it, a few short weeks would not be sufficient for its completion. During the limited time he sojourned in that remote country, he let no occurrence that was worthy of being noticed escape his industry ; and though an abler pen might in the same short period have given a more finished detail, still he trusts that the result of his observations may not be uninteresting to the public.

18, *Southampton-Row, Russell Square,*
August, 1817.

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