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978-1-108-03998-7 - New Zealand's First War: Or, the Rebellion of Hone Heke

T. Lindsay Buick

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New Zealand's First War

Thomas Lindsay Buick (1865–1938) became interested in New Zealand history while working as a political journalist in Wellington, and became an influential figure in the field. He wrote twelve books and numerous pamphlets on the early history of the country and was elected Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1914. This book, first published in Wellington in 1926, describes one of the most significant conflicts in nineteenth-century New Zealand, the Flagstaff War (1845–6), in which European settlers and their Maori supporters fought those Maori who were resisting colonial encroachment. A key figure during the war was the Nga Puhi chief Hone Heke, from the Bay of Islands, who famously refused to acknowledge British sovereignty and repeatedly felled the British flagpole in Kororareka. Buick's account probes the complex relationships among the warring factions, describes the individual phases of the war, and explains how peace was eventually restored.

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CAPTAIN ROBERT FITZROY, R.N.

Governor of New Zealand, December, 1843, to November, 1845.

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NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST WAR,

OR

THE REBELLION OF HONE HEKE.

BY

T. LINDSAY BUICK, F.R.Hist.S.,

Author of

"Old Marlborough," "Old Manawatu," "An Old New-Zealander,"

"The Treaty of Waitangi."

Published under the auspices of the Board of Maori
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Dedication.

TO THE MEMORY OF

THOMAS MORLAND HOCKEN, M.R.C.S., F.L.S.,

WHOSE PATIENCE AND INDUSTRY IN COLLECTING THE

EARLY RECORDS OF THE DOMINION HAS MADE

THE WRITING OF THIS ACCOUNT OF NEW

ZEALAND'S FIRST WAR POSSIBLE,

I GRATEFULLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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PREFACE.

THE genesis of this book is to be found in a request I received on the eve of the Great War, to collect such facts as were then available regarding the activities of the 96th Regiment during the time it was stationed in New Zealand. The idea was that when these facts had been collected and put into narrative form they were to be included in a history of the Manchester Regiment, then being prepared in England, the 96th having in recent years been embodied as the 2nd battalion of that unit of the King's forces. I was able to devote some furtive hours to this work, and I hastily put together such facts as I could find in the limited time at my disposal. Then the Great War broke out, and I never heard whether the manuscript reached England, or whether it was ever published. It is more than likely that in the world welter which took place between the years 1914 and 1918 it was either lost or forgotten. Since then I have had other opportunities of adding to the incomplete details which formerly fell under my notice. I therefore began to amplify them; but as the story developed I discovered that it would become somewhat disproportionate if the 96th Regiment was put upon a pedestal, while other regiments, whose detachments were of greater strength and equally heroic, were left on the ground-level. I therefore decided to change the plan of the work, and, while giving all credit to the 96th Regiment, enlarge it to a history of Heke's war, in the later phases of which the 96th took no part. And here the extended story is given to such as may feel an interest in it.

THE AUTHOR.

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Wellington, New Zealand.

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NOTE OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

THE story of this book has been compiled from official records of the Dominion, contemporary newspapers, and from private letters written by Governor FitzRoy. Where European sources have failed to explain events from the native point of view I have utilized the account of the war related by an old Nga-Puhi chief to F. E. Maning, and published by him as "The War in the North." Carleton's "Life of Henry Williams" has been drawn upon as a mine of curious information, and especially helpful have been some notes on the war left by Colonel Despard, as well as the published diary of the Rev. Robert Burrows, the representative of the Church Missionary Society at Waimate, and Coleman's Memoir of the Rev. Richard Davis, the resident Church missionary at Kaikohe. The unpublished diary of Major Cyprian Bridge, and some letters written by the missionaries at the Bay of Islands, copies of which I found in the Hocken Collection at Dunedin, and from which I was kindly permitted to make copious extracts, have also been extensively used.

A number of the illustrations have likewise been obtained from the same generous source, the Governors of the Collection freely placing their pictures at my disposal.

For the photograph of the Rev. Mr. Burrows I have to thank his granddaughter, Miss Erina S. Edgcumbe, of Parnell, Auckland.

For several of the illustrations I am also indebted to Mr. James Cowan and Mr. J. McDonald.

I have likewise to thank the Hon. Sir Maui Pomare, M.P., Mr. Tau Henare, M.P., Mr. Elsdon Best, Mr. H. M. Stowell, Mr. Horace Fildes, and Mr. H. R. H. Balneavis for much valuable assistance and for kindly suggestions.

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