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Autore	Ashton Jennifer
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-- Epilogue -- Plates -- Acknowledgements -- Notes -- Sources and Bibliography -- Index -- About the author.

Sommario/riassunto

In telling the story of John Webster's long and colorful life for the first time, this biography also explores the wider transformation of relationships between Maori and Pakeha during the 19th century. In this remarkable biography, Jennifer Ashton uses the life of one man as a unique lens through which to view the early history of New Zealand. "Born in Scotland in 1818, John Webster came in New Zealand via Australia in 1841 after narrowly escaping death in the outback following a violent encounter with a group of Aboriginal men. He spent most of the rest of his life in the Hokianga region, carving out a fortune as the region's leading timber trader and cultivating connections with the leading political figures of the day. As he settled into this new home his life became intimately entwined with Maori. He fought alongside Tamati Waka Nene in the Northern War against Hone Heke, married one of Nene's relatives and built up his kauri timber business through trade with local chiefs, but also awoke one day to find a plundering party had arrived on his front lawn. Webster was also engaged with Pakeha and the Crown - friends with Frederick Maning, visited by George Grey, Richard Seddon and others. Ashton takes us into Hokianga to reveal how the evolving intimate relationships and economic transactions of everyday life reflected larger shifts in colonial power. She argues that through his daily interactions, Webster helped slowly shift the balance of power in the North: the credit that he extended to his customers and kin saw them selling land to pay debts, helping push Maori into economic dependence"--
