

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910820294003321
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Titolo	At the Margin of Empire : John Webster and Hokianga, 1841 - 1900 // Jennifer Ashton
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Auckland, New Zealand : , : Auckland University Press, , 2015 ©2015
ISBN	1-77558-781-9 1-77558-778-9
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (276 p.)
Disciplina	822.3
Soggetti	Dramatists, English - Early modern, 1500-1700 Colonists - New Zealand - Far North District Maori (New Zealand people) - New Zealand - Far North District - History - 19th century Pioneers - New Zealand - Hokianga County Economic development - New Zealand - Hokianga County - History - 19th century Noho-a-iwi Pakeha Korero nehe Taipuwhehenuatanga Far North District (N.Z.) History 19th century Far North District (N.Z.) Race relations History 19th century Hokianga County (N.Z.) Colonization
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Contents -- Map -- Introduction -- Chapter One: The Making of an Imperial Man -- Chapter Two: Hokianga and the River Trade -- Chapter Three Among the Queen's People: The Northern War, 1845-1846 -- Chapter Four: A Voyage through the Pacific,1848-1851 -- Chapter Five: Hokianga's Timber Baron, 1855-1870 -- Chapter Six: War and Politics in the 1860s -- Chapter Seven: Hokianga Old and New, 1870-1890 -- Chapter Eight: Unquiet Retirement, 1880s-1900

-- 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"--
