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**JOHN BRYCE, 1834-1913:
The White Charger.**

A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I have examined the life of Hon. John Bryce, Native and Defence Minister in the Hall Ministry of 1879-82, and Native Minister from 1882 to 1885. Bryce is an important, but substantially unstudied, figure in New Zealand history, who briefly rides his white charger into other people's stories and then, just as briefly, out again. Accordingly, there are few secondary sources on him, apart from those that cover the two White Charger episodes in his life, the attack at Handley's Woolshed and the invasion of Parihaka.

Of necessity primary sources have played a major part in the research, reports of New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives, reports from contemporary newspapers through Papers Past, Waitangi Tribunal Reports, the diary Bryce kept in London in 1886, William Rolleston's diary and correspondence accessed through the Alexander Turnbull Library helped to present a fuller picture of the subject, along with the few available secondary sources.

Bryce was a controversial, though respected, figure in his own time, and as mores and attitudes have changed in the century since his death, particularly with reference to race relations, he has been increasingly 'traduced' (a word Bryce used, meaning misrepresented), and condemned. To understand Bryce's perceived ambivalence or hostility towards Maori, this thesis looks at his early life as an immigrant and settler in Wanganui, where events transpired that created lasting impressions and influenced his later responses.

The thesis was written chronologically from the time of Bryce's arrival in New Zealand in 1840, and covers his service with the Kai Iwi Cavalry during Titokowaru's War, his role as a Wanganui and national politician, his time as Native Minister and a Member of the House of Representatives, until his retirement from politics in 1891. This shows that though Parihaka was an important part of his political life, it did not define or limit his contribution to 19th century politics in New Zealand.

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PREFACE

This has been a major undertaking for me, as a very mature student I have probably needed more than my fair share of support and encouragement to see it through to its conclusions, and this has been unstintingly given, for which I am most grateful.

The Bryce journey has been one of constant discovery and I have been excited at the richness of resources available to researchers of New Zealand history. I was fortunate to be able to make contact with the family of the late Jock McEwen, who had a distinguished public service career in Maori and Pacific Island Affairs, and was Bryce's great-grandson. They were able to fill in a few personal details and told me that Jock considered history had been hard on his great-grandfather. My thanks go to Mary and David for their interest.

I would like to record my appreciation of the very helpful and knowledgeable librarians at the Alexander Turnbull Library where I spent a week absorbing history, the thrill of holding a leather bound diary written over 130 years is still with me. No request was too difficult and their professionalism, interest and assistance are very much appreciated.

My thanks are also due to Associate Professor Peter Lineham and Dr Geoff Watson who have been very supportive and interested in my progress, and I am especially indebted to my Supervisor, Professor Michael Belgrave for his patience, knowledge and encouragement on every step of the Bryce journey.

To my family and friends who have wondered if this journey was ever to end, we are nearly there and I thank you for your forbearance and support.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AJHR	Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
NA	National Archives
NZPD	New Zealand Parliamentary Debates