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LAND PURCHASES BY MISSIONARIES OF THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY BEFORE 1840.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in History at Massey University.

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1970

The missionaries of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand were subjected to criticism as a result of their private land dealings. One critic in 1839, after a brief visit to the Bay of Islands claimed that they had been in the vanguard of a European conspiracy to rob the Maori of their lands. This was neither the first nor the last of such criticisms.

This work will deal solely with the purchases made by members of the Church Missionary Society. Only two Wesleyans are known to have purchased land on their own account whilst there is no evidence that the Roman Catholic missionaries bought land for private purposes in the short time which elapsed between their arrival in 1838 and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The representatives of the three missionary bodies operating in New Zealand before 1840 also bought land for the purpose of establishing mission sites, but since there was no criticism or dispute arising from these purchases it is not proposed to include them in the scope of this work.

The New Zealand missionaries when armed with authority to buy land for their children's maintenance and employment in the eighteen thirties had little thought of the calumny which Grey would heap upon them a decade later. Two of them, Henry Williams and George Clarke, were dismissed from the mission as a direct result of Grey's attacks. Over twenty years of faithful service in the mission was insufficient to protect them from the attacks of a governor whose guile they could not match.

The stand made by Henry Williams and George Clarke in face of the combined pressure from Selwyn and Grey ensured that the families of all the missionary land claimants received more land than would have been the case had these two also meekly submitted. On principle Henry Williams refused to submit even though this meant dismissal; nor did he alter his position.

Thanks are due to Dr John Owens who suggested the topic and who has been ever helpful over a long period of years. Thanks are also due to the staffs of the various libraries which were consulted. In this regard, Miss Green, formerly at the Teachers College and now at Massey University Library deserves special mention. So does Mr J.D. Pascoe, Chief Archivist of National Archives, whose staff, particularly Miss J.S. Hornabrook, the Senior Archivist, were exceptionally efficient and helpful. This study would not have been possible without their active cooperation.

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