

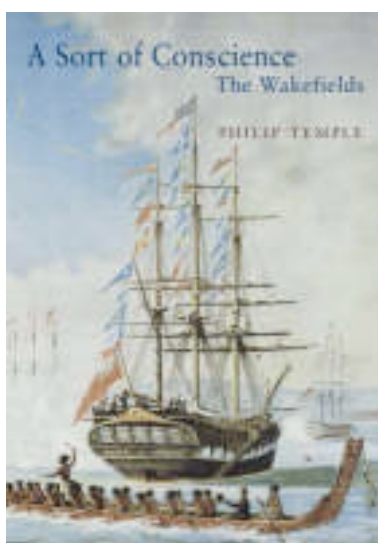
Did You know:

Edward Gibbon Wakefield, leader of the organised European settlement of New Zealand, had a rather shady past.

Wakefield was born March 1796 in London. His schooling or lack of, left a lot to be desired. He was ambitious, used his charm, was persistent and fast talking trying to progress his career ambitions. He became a messenger in the diplomatic service and travelled widely in Europe.

A Serial Eloper

In 1816 he eloped with a 16 year old heiress, Eliza Pattle. In 1820 their son Edward Jenningham Wakefield was born but sadly Eliza died. In 1826 Edward Snr deceived another young girl into marriage. He had ambitions of a political career and had hoped his wife's father would help him. Instead, he and his brother William, who had helped with the abduction, went on trial. Their trial caused a public sensation. The two brothers were sentenced to three years in prison. While in prison Wakefield read a number of books on economics and social ideas. This lead him to work out his theory of colonisation.



Read More: "A Sort of Conscience, The Wakefields"

Books about Edward Gibbon Wakefield are held at the Christchurch City Library.

Historic Event:

September 1827

Captain William Wiseman, on a flax trading voyage in the "Elizabeth", named Port Cooper (which is now Lyttelton Harbour).

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