



Black Robinson: Protector of Aborigines (Melbourne University Press Australian Lives)

Vivienne Rae-Ellis

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George Robinson is renowned for his claims to have Christianized and civilized the Tasmanian Aborigines in the 1830s. Official recognition of his work came when he was appointed as the first Chief Protector of Aborigines in Australia. He has long been considered the friend of the Aborigines. However, this perception - formed largely on the basis of Robinson's official papers - is now challenged by Vivienne Rae-Ellis who has made an intensive study of his personal journals. Rae-Ellis found disconcerting contradictions: the private journals told one story, the official reports another. An unattractive picture emerges of a greedy, vain and unscrupulous man, bent on self-aggrandisement. His solicitude for the Aborigines in his care appears to be a flimsy thing indeed, and there are few words of praise from those who knew him personally. This book is intended for students and researchers in Australian history, the history of colonization, Aboriginal studies, and anthropology.

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