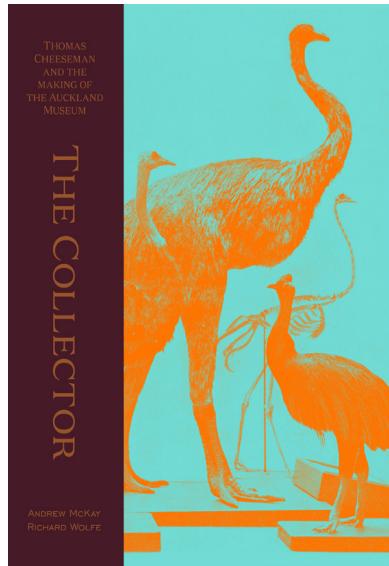




# The Collector

## *Thomas Cheeseman and the making of the Auckland Museum*

ANDREW MCKAY AND RICHARD WOLFE



\$65

CATEGORY: Biography, botany, museums  
ISBN: 978-1-99-101626-3  
THEMA: DNB, GLZ, PST, 1MBN  
BISAC: SCIO20000, SCIO11000, NAT026000, BUS100000  
PUBLISHER: Massey University Press  
IMPRINT: Massey University Press  
PUBLISHED: November 2025  
PAGE EXTENT: 320  
FORMAT: Hardback  
SIZE: 240 x 180mm  
RIGHTS: World  
AUTHORS' RESIDENCE: Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, New Zealand

ISBN 978-1-99-101626-3



9 781991 016263

### THE VIVID BIOGRAPHY OF A COLONIAL SCHOLAR, SCIENTIST AND GENTLEMAN

When Thomas Cheeseman arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1853 at the age of eight, the world outside knew little of this country's people, plants, animals and environment. Within weeks, he began a lifelong love of collecting and classifying, and by his early twenties he was making waves in colonial scientific circles.

Appointed the director of the Auckland Museum when it was not much more than a shed of curiosities, by sheer force of dedication he developed it into one of New Zealand's leading museums and scientific institutions. Along the way he cultivated relationships with the leading scientists of the day, including Charles Darwin and directors of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, William and Joseph Hooker. And he collected many thousands of specimens and objects, making a vital contribution to our understanding of New Zealand's natural history.

This handsome, richly illustrated book tells both his story and the story of the fine museum he founded.

'Readers interested in the history of New Zealand's museums will be amply rewarded' — Thomas McLean, NZ Listener

'The Collector has its roots in McKay's PhD thesis, so you hope for an authoritative coverage. You get that, in a biography which is also a social-cum-scientific history and engaging narrative. It's published by MUP, so you expect a quality production. You get that as well' — David Hill, Kete

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Richard Wolfe** is a cultural historian and curator who has written or co-authored around 40 books on everything from the moa to New Zealand art. He was a display artist at the Auckland and Canterbury museums, and co-curated the first major exhibition of Kiwiana (a term he helped invent). Richard lives in Auckland with his wife, the artist Pamela Wolfe.

**Andrew McKay** has a Masters of Heritage Conservation from the University of Auckland and his PhD was focused on Thomas Cheeseman, the visionary founding curator of the Auckland Institute and Museum. He lives in Auckland and works in finance.

#### SALES POINTS

- A vivid and accessible insight into a remarkable early scientist and museum director
- Over 100 images, including important botanical specimens and historic photographs
- Handsome design, the perfect gift

