

probably remember being in the Caledonian Hotel Oban Scotland when you were on your European tour. I was proprietor of the Hotel at the time and before leaving you were kind enough to say that if ever I came to New South Wales you would be glad to be of service to me . . . In 1847 I gave up the hotel my wife and myself being of opinion that it was an unsuitable place to rear a family in . . .'. The letter goes on to describe how Duncan arrived in Otago in 1861 and ' . . . From want of colonial experience I unfortunately speculated . . .' and then mentions that his ' . . . object now in writing to you is to solicit the favour of your kind interference on my behalf . . .'.

Among the whaling records held in the Mitchell are those of Weller Brothers who operated in New Zealand out of Sydney. Covering the years 1832-41, they include drafts or copies of letters concerned with whaling in Otago; land transactions, shipments of timber, fish, and potatoes from Otago to Sydney; and a letter to the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales requesting permission to purchase a howitzer and ammunition to protect their Otago shore party against the Cloudy Bay tribes. Governor Macquarie's papers include a transcript of a letter 27 January 1810 signed by Sydney merchants Simeon Lord, Alexander Riley, Thomas Kent, and Francis Williams, applying for permission to establish a settlement to obtain flax in the North Island and asking for Kent to be granted a Commission of Peace to assist him in dealing with marauding sailors. Fifteen pages, 1833-36, concerning Thomas McDonnell's (1788-1864) ownership and registration of the barque *Sir George Murray* built at Hokianga (and which, therefore, had registration problems); McDonnell's trading at Hokianga; Maoris in the timber trade, and the spread of Christianity among them are found in the papers of Alexander Riley (1784-1825) and his successors. An interesting journal, 1831-34, also copied, was kept by Henry Ransome, an ordinary seaman on board the whaler *Elizabeth* of London. Ransome paid three visits to the Bay of Islands totalling about two and a half months and gives what appears to be a description of the Bay and its European and Maori inhabitants that is neither exaggerated nor sensational. For those curious about the more notorious brig *Elizabeth* chartered by Ngati Toa to avenge themselves on Ngai Tahu, the Mitchell original of the agreements between Captain Stewart and his crew have been copied. Finally for the period up to the end of the 1840s it should be mentioned that the Australian background of many government officials in New Zealand at that time becomes evident when one sees the amount of material held on Sir George Grey (1812-1898), E. J. Eyre (1815-1901), and the Busby family.

Records of the 1850s are found in the journals of naval and merchant officers who called at New Zealand. George Newall, Master and Supercargo of the *Sea Breeze* provides an insight into the difficulties of