

Muir worked as a whaler in America⁴² before seeking new pastures in New Zealand. William Nation, founder of the *Nelson Colonist*, had gone first to New South Wales. After a short period on the *Sydney Press* he established his own paper, the *Australian Banner*, in Sydney, from where he brought his plant and staff to set up office in Nelson.⁴³ Most journeymen printers never stayed long on one job, moving often to seek their fortune in various settlements. James Champ, one of the printers who arrived in Nelson in 1842 as a cabin passenger⁴⁴ on the same vessel as Elliott, disappeared from view soon thereafter, and it seems Duncan MacKintosh, another printer, disappeared from the printing history of Nelson in 1857.⁴⁵ Such labour problems led to delays in presswork, and it seems the *Nelson Examiner* did not always appear on the dates given on the paper.

We have a great reluctance to trouble our readers with excuses for our shortcomings, trusting rather that their own indulgent kindness will overlook our defects. On the present occasion however, we feel that it is necessary to offer some explanation for the omission of editorial matter, and for our late publication. The assistant on whom we chiefly relied in the printing office, has now been absent from work three weeks on account of ill health, and the whole of the labour has therefore fallen on ourselves. Now however hard one person may strive to do the work of two, it is not easy to succeed, and so we have found on this occasion. As we have taken steps to provide ourselves with the assistance we require, we hope not to be long hampered as we are at present.⁴⁶

Unreliable journeyman printers occasioned advertisements such as this:

WANTED, a steady COMPOSITOR.
Apply at the office of the *Nelson Examiner*.⁴⁷

There were problems with materials as well as with men. There was shortage of virtually all printing materials—ink, paper, type—as most materials had to be imported from Britain, over 22,500 km away by sea. But Elliott does not seem to have suffered much from shortage of type. I have seen only a few instances of mixture of founts, as, for example, the mixture of the letter ‘J’ italic cap with roman in volume 12, no. 593 (16 July 1853). Some of the ‘J’ roman caps seem to me to be slightly smaller than the rest of the caps used in the text. In fact Elliott had sufficient supply of types and ink to loan some to Nation, who was unable to commence business for lack of them.

When the Proprietor of the *Colonist* first arrived in Nelson, he was unable to commence work for want of printer’s ink, and we supplied him with a cask from our own stock. On another occasion, not having the necessary type for a large Govern-