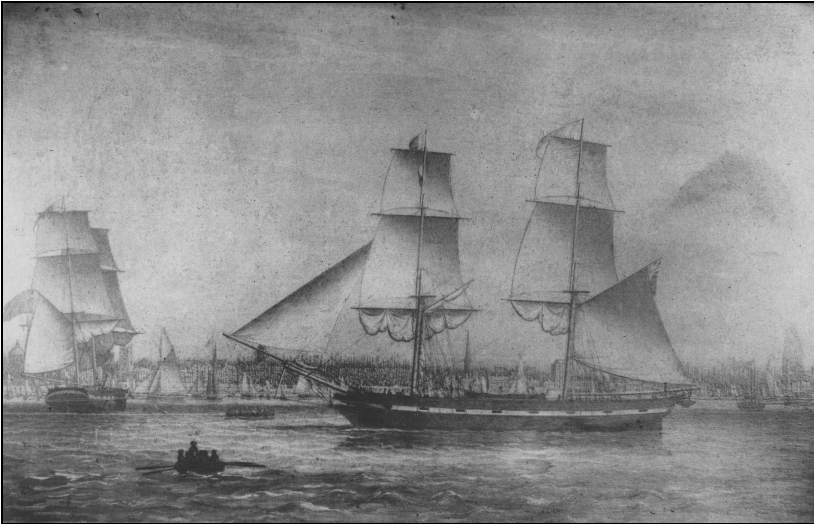


Recollections of a Voyage to South Australia and New Zealand Commenced in 1838

William Porter

Recorded at Huntly 1907



Transcribed and edited by Miranda Field Law and Garry Law

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Introduction

William Porter had an exciting early life. Accompanying his parents, brother and sister in their family owned brig, he was a pioneer settler at both Port Lincoln and Auckland, arriving in the latter in the town's first year and before the main immigrant ships. Their emigration, a single family version of Wakefield's vision of transporting British society to new worlds, has been described by one observer as a sort of Swiss Family Robinson adventure. William or his captain father met and knew some leading citizens of their age including George Grey and Eyre, both Australian explorers and New Zealand governors, Franklin of Arctic exploration fame and many other leading citizens of the new colony of New Zealand. He visited Adelaide, Melbourne, Geelong, Wellington, New Plymouth and Nelson within a few years of their founding. At Nelson he witnessed the departure of the armed settler party to Wairau which culminated in the famous massacre. He was an ammunition boy at a redoubt built there in the aftermath to defend the settlers. He also observed many of the prominent citizens of the new colonies at play and work.

Two other reminiscences of early Auckland by William Porter, published under the pen name *Kaumātua* appeared in Auckland newspapers late in his life and complement the account here. Appended here are brief biographies of both the father Captain Porter and his son, the author of these recollections, William Porter. These do not repeat information in the recollections but are written to add to them.

This account written in old age, gives a child's memory of the events of his early life, complete with explorers, pirates, whaling, exotic animals and the to him strange indigenous inhabitants of his new home. It is not artless, as much of the material is clearly with the input of an adult perspective. Renditions of parts of this have appeared in several publications (e.g. Stoyles, 1975). It is not always accurate and it should not be treated as a journal of the times.

The recollections were specifically written for his young descendants. They, young and old, have treasured it ever since not just as a document of historical value but as an insight to his character.

HUNTLY, WAIKATO, SEPTEMBER 7TH, 1907

Wishing to put on record our leaving England in 1838 and the voyage out, I am trying to remember as much as I can¹ for the young people of the family to read in after years and see the conditions under which their forefathers came to this side of the world.²

My brother Richard, having travelled for two or three years after his education was finished in one or two of my Father's ships over most parts of the world, became unsettled in the old country and was anxious to go out to South Australia which was just then attracting attention.³ So my Father decided that all the family should emigrate to a new country and more so as he had suffered heavy losses from bad times; vessels lost and not heard of for a long time so the insurance could not be got to meet liabilities.⁴ My Mother⁵ was grieved at leaving her sisters and other old friends and Liverpool – where she was born and lived all her life up to that time. Father persuaded her by saying that if they did not like the new country they could always go back. To voyage to the other side of the world was a serious undertaking at that time.

After due consideration it was decided not to take one of the larger vessels as in that case it would be necessary to take passengers to pay expenses and Father only wanted our own family in the cabin for so long a voyage; so he selected the Brig *Porter*, a vessel built in his own ship yard.⁶ She was only 250 tons register⁷; but a very good sea boat and strong. She was put on the slip and sheathed with inch and a half hard wood planks, some tons of extra copper fastenings put in, extra iron knees to beams, newly coppered and strengthened in every way possible. The cabin was enlarged and newly fitted throughout. The Brig *Dorset*⁸ was built especially to accompany us, so as to have a back door as my Father put it, in case of accidents; she was built in our own yard and as a large ship had been launched shortly before, there was a lot of timber etc that came in handy. The ship was called the *Lancaster*.⁹ I remember the launch quite well, also the fine lunch in the large mould room.

¹ The writer was eight years old in 1838 and 76 when he wrote this.

² The original followed here is a typescript. It has been followed exactly here as regards idiosyncratic spelling of names but the text has been edited for obvious mistype errors, inserting paragraph breaks, punctuation for readability and modern capitalisation, other than the use of capitals for mother and father. Where there is an apparent missing word a replacement has been proposed inside square brackets. The section headings are as in the original.

³ A number of Porter cousins emigrated separately to South Australia from 1839 onwards, see figure 8. South Australia was proclaimed as a colony at Glenelg in 1836 after the arrival there of HMS Buffalo. She was wrecked in Mercury Bay, New Zealand in 1840.

⁴ Only one ship loss is now known – see Appendix 4.

⁵ Alice, nee Roper.

⁶ Registered 1824 in Liverpool, 251 tons, 93'5", 24'10", 16'9". Built Bland and Chaloner, co-owned with John Irlam as at 1835.

⁷ Tons burden was the standard of the time, different from displacement used now.

⁸ Registered 1838 in Liverpool, 81 tons, 73'8", 15'8", 9'2". The origin of the name is not explained. There is no known family association with the County Dorset.

⁹ Not in Lloyd's.

The *Dorset* was only 80 tons register but a strong fast vessel for those days. In light winds she could outsail the *Porter* but come to take in a reef in the topsails the larger vessel outsailed her. In the *Porter* there was a cuddy and small after cabin lit by stern windows and a skylight; the stern port and rudder case came through the after part. On the stern port¹⁰ was fastened a long mirror (I have it still). At the bulkhead forward the piano was secured and sofas all round the sides and after end. This was Mother's and sister's special apartment. Also Alice¹¹ slept there. There were berths on both sides with curtains. Mother's and Father's cabin opened into this and also had a door to the foot of the companion way so that Father could get on deck without loss of time, as he took command himself rather than have a captain. Forward of Father's and Mother's cabin was my berth; these were on the starboard side. At the port, at the foot of the stairs leading on deck, the first stateroom was occupied by Mr and Mrs Shivenoe.¹² She was my sister's governess and he was to teach me. Next to that was the cabin of Richard and his wife.¹³ Then came the steward's pantry up to the forward bulkhead; in this there was a door into the between decks. At the after part of the saloon was a side-board secured to the after bulkhead. The dining table could be drawn out at each end (I have it still); over the table two copper tubes came down from the beams to within a foot of the table. It was double jointed so as to swing. On this, round trays slid up and down for holding tumblers, wine glasses, decanters and when not in use could be pushed up out of the way. A brass knob screwed into the end of the tube secured it. Directly over the table was the skylight. The clock and barometer were also fixed there. In bad weather sticks were laid along the table over the cloth connected by strings - two on each side held the plates and in the centre the dishes. We had special dishes of plated metal and spoons and forks with our monogram on, teapot, sugar basin, milk jug and some of the dishes the handles came off the cover and formed another dish. There was a large soup tureen. I remember yet the first class pea soup. This service all looked quite like silver.¹⁴ They did not like to have the solid silver in use on the voyage.

In the after cabin there were two stern windows and in bad weather dead-lights were put in. We knew when the carpenter came down to fix them what to expect. Under the saloon was the store room; there was a scuttle in the deck. Light stores were kept here, also wine, beer and spirits. Wine was drunk more in those days, always at dinner and lunch and of different kinds. Under the after cabin deck the ammunition was stored, of which we had a considerable quantity, as we had two 18 pound guns on the quarter deck, for which we had powder and ball. The cabin floor ran the whole length of the ship and was called the between decks. The after part of this was partitioned off next to the

¹⁰ Sic. Probably sternpost is meant.

¹¹ The writer's sister, later Alice Salmon.

¹² Shivenor is the spelling used elsewhere and seems more likely.

¹³ Rosetta Caroline nee Small. They later separated and she returned to England permanently with their sons. She died there in 1863.

¹⁴ Electroplating had not been put to practical use by 1838. It was probably Sheffield plate – a sandwich of silver over copper used from the 18th century. Two Sheffield plate items survive in family ownership.

cabin and formed the quarters for the two mates and Doctor. Forward of that the few emigrants we had were located; there was one family of the name of Cain with several sons who all had their different duties. One looked after the pigs, one the poultry, another the sheep. The Father looked after the cattle and milked the cow. He also looked after the two horses.

All the emigrants in both vessels were under engagement to us, till the passage money was paid. There was a blacksmith, carpenter, tailor, gardener, bootmaker and brickmaker; most of the emigrants were in the *Dorset*. In the *Porter*, forward of where the emigrants had their berths, the between decks was full of furniture and very light goods, chocked off with hay, so that if we fell short of fodder for the stock it could be broken out, as the sailors say. The crew were of course in the forecabin and a dark shop it was, but always warm and dry, which was not always the case in small vessels in those days. An oil lamp always burning just made things visible. The topgallant fo'c'sle, as it was called, was about 18 inches higher than the bulwark and a scuttle in the deck gave access to the fo'c'sle berths but the men had to go down a ladder to below the main deck. The fo'c'sle deck projected over the windlass to protect the fodder and give more shelter to the young cattle that were stalled under the fo'c'sle deck. The manger for hay was over the windlass and a trough for bran and oilcake;¹⁵ on this account the windlass could not be used in the ordinary way by handspikes as was the custom then in all vessels large or small at the time - it was expressly geared and worked by a capstan on the fo'c'sle deck but owing to some miscalculation it was too slow, but of good power. Of the cattle under this deck, there were five pedigree heifers, 18 months old, a bull of same age and a small black jersey cow in full milk. On deck starting from aft, over the stern, hung a long light gig. Inside the rail was a grated platform in midships. On either side of this were lockers. In the port one were kept the log, reel, sand glass, lead lines, oil for the binnacle lamps and other odds and ends. Under the bulwarks on each quarter were seats with grated bottoms. They went as far abreast as the skylight. Forward of this, to abreast the after hatch, were the hen coops with turkeys, fowls, ducks and geese for the cabin table. The Brig steered with a wheel but there was also a tiller secured to the bulwarks and a mortise hole in the rudder head to receive it if required. The voyage before we left England she was struck by a heavy sea and the wheel smashed. The man at the helm at the time was washed right forward under the windlass and had his arm broken. His name was Anson and he was one of our crew on the voyage out.

The binnacle and compass were abaft the after skylight; forward of this was the companion where stairs went down into the main cabin with brass rails. Just inside the doors was a speaking trumpet and telescope. On one side of the companion on deck was a dripstone for filtering water. Father had brought it from one of the West Indian Islands thirty years before: these Islands were noted for their dripstones. This was fixed on top of a cask nicely painted. Near the middle there was a small door to get the water. I remember watching with great interest the carpenter at work on it. I think it is still in being. Amy, Mrs

¹⁵ The residue after oil has been pressed out of a crop, such as rape, sesame, etc, used as cattle feed.

William Hall had it.¹⁶ From the companion to the skylight over the saloon was called no man's land and abreast of this were port holes for the two guns which were secured there. Forward of the skylight was the capstan. Forward of that the companion into the half deck as it was called. Then came the pumps near the main mast; a rail went round the mast for belaying pins.¹⁷ Close to this on the after side was the arms chest - a long, strong box bound with brass, with ring bolts at the ends for securing it to the deck. In this were muskets, flint locks, long handled axes with spike at the back of the head called boarding axes, cutlass and flintlock pistols. I had one for many years until the boys broke it up. Forward of the main mast was the companion into the quarters of the emigrants, then came the main hatch, over which was the long boat. A very fine large boat, in the middle she was glazed over quite close to keep out the salt air and spray. In this were all sorts of trees and plants. Apple trees were got from America as they were supposed to be superior to the English. The trees throve wonderfully although quite without water - oranges and lemons especially.¹⁸ In the fore and after ends of the boat were the sheep - pedigree Southdowns and Lesters.¹⁹ Under the bilge of the boat on one side were the pigsties. The pigs were Berkshire, Chinese and Neapolitan.²⁰ The last were quite bare of hair with skin like rubber. The boar was very large and at Port Lincoln he got out of the sty and nearly killed an old man. He ran between his legs ripping him up on both sides; if he had not been able to get into the sea [which] was near, he would have been killed.

There was one horse box abaft the boat and one at the bow; in the after one was a blood stallion and in the other a mare. As the horse was valuable Father did not like the risk of taking him on past the Cape and as the mare was in foal, there was less reason for keeping him. I remember the old Dutchman Vanderean came on board - the horse was led along the deck. The old man said "I like your horse. What do you ask for him?" Father answered: "400 guineas". Van said, "I will give it." The horses at the Cape were small and this horse was very big. Forward of the mare's box was the foremast. Before the foremast was the forehatch. The main bulwarks were high but on this, raised about 18" was what was called the topgallant bulwark. There was no break in the main rail for gangways, but a section of the topgallant rail unshipped a rope ladder put over the side from brass stanchions [which] with manrope gave access into the boats. There were no accommodation ladders in small vessels in those days. For ladies a chair was slung and attached to a whip from the main yard. The yard would be slung to just the right position. The whip led through a snatch-block on deck, two or three men would tail on and at a call from the mate up went the chair and occupant and down into the boat

¹⁶ nee Salmon. See family tree, Alice Jnr's daughter.

¹⁷ The pins were through the rail with a length showing above and below the rail. Rigging ropes (halyards, sheets etc) were tied off and the loose ends tidied away in figure of eight style around each end of the pin. The rope could be released quickly by pulling the pin.

¹⁸ Citrus trees were grown in containers in England and moved indoors in the winter.

¹⁹ Southdown and Border Leicester sheep are still maintained as breeds in New Zealand.

²⁰ Only the Berkshire is recognised as a modern breed in Britain. However the other two breeds are recognised as part of its ancestry. Berkshire pigs are kept as rare breeds in Australia and New Zealand.

alongside. There was always a flag spread on the seat of the chair. After the lady got seated this was brought up over the feet. The chain plates of the Brig were very wide so as to keep the shrouds clear of the rail. The rigging was set up with lanyards through dead-eyes. No wire rope then or screws to set rigging up.

Both vessels were painted black with broad white streak and black ports. The *Porter's* figure head was a woman with arm extended and gilt. The *Porter* was a vessel of great beam. Although the masts were not very lofty, she carried a large spread of canvas, the yards being very long; there were no royal masts. The topgallant sails were large and often set over reefed topsails. She was fitted with stunsail²¹ booms on all the yards. The trysail was big, very square in the head with a long gaff. The main and forestays were double. My Father claimed the innovation and thought highly of it; also the iron caps to the topmast and topgallant masts. The old fashioned caps were large blocks of wood bound with iron. These kept the masts so far apart that a man could easily pass between the masthead and the heel of the topmast. Father would point out the great improvement to any strangers that came on board. There was no fore trysail as the long boat would have interfered in the working of it. She carried jib and fore topmast staysail but no flying jib.

The anchors had the old fashioned wooden stocks bound with iron. The ground tackle was very heavy in both ships and well it was so or we should probably have been lost at the Cape of Good Hope.

On each side of the main mast, harness casks were lashed. One contained pork, the other beef for daily consumption. Over each stateroom were deck lights let into the deck; they were of very thick glass twelve inches long by three wide, going to a point at the bottom. There were no ports in the sides of the ship. The decks were very good and very white, planks only 3 ½" wide and bolted together edgeways, besides the usual fastenings to the beams; this was also Father's idea and he thought a lot of it. Our house flag was white and blue swallow tailed.

LEAVING ENGLAND

Our house was at Edgeberth²² and was called Mosley Bank.²³ It was four miles from Liverpool. The land was bought some twenty-five or thirty years before we left England. It was a field with a pond and some large oak trees. A very nice place. All around were farms. Father had a house built. The bricks were made on the ground. I remember the large hole the clay came out of – it was called the delph. It was a favourite place for my sister Alice and me to play in. The house was very nice with a fine orchard and garden - also grass fields for the cow and horses to graze in. Both Alice and I were born there. It was

²¹ Sails erected in light winds, outboard of the regular sails.

²² Aigburth Hill is nearby on an early 19th century map and this spelling is still commonly used for the locality today, although Aigberth is also used.

²³ Mossley Hill is a Liverpool suburb. Mosley is an alternative still in use in Liverpool. See figure 12.

quite in the country then. A man named Tipin had a farm quite close; we were taken there sometimes as a treat to see the cattle, horses and pigs or harvest work. How well I remember the old home. Now I believe that part is thickly built over.

We were twelve months preparing to leave England. Everything that could be of use in a new country was got. I have heard Father say that he thought it a lost day if something was not added to the stock. South Australia had only just come into note. All books about it were got and maps studied. As the time of leaving drew on, the house was sold – to a Mr Waterhouse, a gentleman that lived not far off. He wanted it for his son. They were old friends of ours. We then moved to Liverpool and went into lodgings. Father left all the moving to Mother. Professional packers came out and it was soon done.

I don't think anything was sold.²⁴ A few good pictures were given to old friends as a remembrance. Boxes and cases were made in the shipyard, large and small. There were a dozen about two feet by one foot six. These were packed with cotton, buttons, needles, tapes, lace, wools, socks, stockings and other small things; they were numbered and a list kept of contents. I had one of these boxes for years, No. 8, that I took about in the boats with me to keep provisions in. We called it the medicine chest. Another, No. 12, was my tool box as a boy. It went to Nelson with me.²⁵

At last, all being ready, the day of departure arrived. Father went to the Custom House to clear the ship out for Adelaide, South Australia. The clerk said, "You must be making a mistake Sir. You mean New South Wales." So little was known of Australia in 1838.

THE CREW

We had a picked crew, mostly elderly men. One old man, Williams, had been in the Royal Navy. Another, Andrews, was a sailmaker. I think there were eight A.B. and two boys on the *Porter*. The cook was a native of West Indies - a coloured man. He had sailed with Father in the *Tiger*²⁶ thirty years before. He was a first rate cook.

Then there was the steward and a boy to help him. The First Mate, Mr Murray, was a first class navigator and had been in command of ships. The Second Mate Mr Cross, was also a good man. The Doctor completed the list.

It was a Sunday in August.²⁷ I don't know the exact date in the year 1838 that we left Liverpool. The parting with aunts, cousins and old friends was a sad time for all as it was not likely we should ever meet again and so it has proved

²⁴ His niece recalled Captain Porter ("...such a kind and pleasant man") giving her sister his canary prior to departure.

²⁵ Some are still in the family.

²⁶ See Appendix 2.

²⁷ 26th August in shipping records, which was a Sunday.

– as my cousin Mrs Saunders²⁸ and myself are the only ones now alive after just 70 years, of those that parted on that morning. As the ships hauled out of dock, the pierhead was covered with people. Father and Mother being natives of Liverpool, cheered to the echo. Such a sight had never been seen before as two ships loaded with all kinds of stock and everything necessary to found a new settlement, commanded by the owner with all his family on board and work people of all trades. Nor do I suppose such a thing has taken place since, now 70 years ago.

As evening came on we all stood at the stern and watched old England fade away. I am not quite sure that was the last sight we got of the land, but it's the last I remember.²⁹

The first night at sea I was very sick; also Mother and Alice. They gave me weak brandy and water – that made me rather worse for a time. Richard recommended a nice piece of fat pork as a certain cure. We had fine weather and fair wind for the start and soon got over the sickness. I enjoyed the novelty of everything so strange. I don't remember much of the voyage until we got to Madeira, then we realised we were in a foreign country. Bum boats came out to the ships loaded with tropical fruit. The strange, dark people in them wore queer dresses and funny comical hats made of straw. The hills at the back of the town were very high. Funchal was a walled town with a garrison. There was a large gate at the sea front with a guard house. A sentry paced up and down. The gates were closed after dark. Father knew Madeira well as he had traded there years before. We remained for a week, took in a lot of fodder for the stock, planting³⁰ stalks of which the cattle were very fond, a lot of poultry, fresh butter, eggs and fresh meat. We had a trip in a carriage to a convent some miles inland to a small town called Constanca, noted for its sweet wine, of which we took in several casks. At the convent the nuns were very polite, but had very little English: here they bought beautiful fancy work and everlasting flowers of all colours. At Madeira we got a number of vessels for holding water. They looked like terracotta. They were curiously shaped with a narrow mouth. Some had spouts and were called monkeys. The larger ones without spouts were goblets. They were hung under the awning. The water in them was always cold. We started to get under way about 8 pm and it took all night to get the anchor. The capstan on the fo'c'sle had to be abandoned as it proved too slow. A tackle was ranged along the deck with what was called a devil's claw that took hold of the links of the cable. The fall was taken to the capstan on the quarter deck through a snatchblock. When the blocks came together the cable was stoppered, the tackle was then fluted³¹ and the heaving went on again. I could hear the men tramping round the capstan to a lively shanty. I don't think that is ever heard in these days. The *Dorset* was hove

²⁸ See figure 7 for the family relationship. The author's first cousin was Elizabeth Saunders. Their respective mothers were sisters. There are several Saunders portraits in the late 19th century family photo album and there is surviving correspondence until the 1920's. There are also some local portraits labelled Roberts, described as relatives of the Saunders but the exact relationship has been lost.

²⁹ As far as is known the writer never made a return visit.

³⁰ Probably plantain. These would be plantain banana stalks.

³¹ Sic. Probably fleeted is meant.

short hours before the *Porter* and waited till we broke ground so that we should leave at the same time. The water in the Bay was very deep, some 25 or 30 fathoms, so getting under way was a heavy job with bad ground tackle.

THE DORSET

[The *Dorset*] was commanded by Captain Bishop.³² He had served his time in Father's employ from a boy. The mate I do not remember, nor the number of her crew. A number of the emigrants were on her with their wives and most of the fodder for the stock. On very fine days it was transferred by boats – the casks of water being floated. I went on some of these occasions. It was a great treat to get into a small boat. One fine moonlight night Captain Bishop was amusing himself sailing round the *Porter*. The wind was light at the time. He miscalculated the distance and we ran into him. No serious damage was done. After that he got orders never to go before our beam but always keep astern, then we knew where to look for him in case of parting company.

As a matter of fact, we never did lose sight of each other. Both vessels burnt masthead lights. There were no side lights in those days. The *Dorset* was a very handy little craft. Captain Bishop would brag that he could handle her himself with one hand. At sunset on fine evenings she would sail quite close to us. A young man on board of her could play the keybugle.³³ He would play "Home, sweet Home" and "God Save the Queen", then goodnight.

It was one of my great delights to turn the minute glass when the log was hove. A man held the reel over his head with both hands – then a mate would put the log into the water. It was made of a triangular piece of wood about nine inches each way and loaded at one angle. A line from each corner was attached to the log line. As soon as the log caught the water, the mate said "turn" and when all the sand was out of the glass, the person holding it would call out "stop." The line was then hauled in and the knots counted. They were marked on the line with a bit of red bunting. There were no patent logs then.

The only land we sighted was Tenerife after leaving Madeira, till we got to the Cape of Good Hope.³⁴ At that time there was no breakwater – it was an open roadstead. Cargo was landed in large, open boats. They had one sprit sail and jib. The sprit was so heavy that it required a small tackle to slide it up the mast. The boats landed on skids and were hove right up by capstans. There were moorings outside to make a stern line fast to keep the boat stern on till she was hauled up.

We stayed a month at Table Bay. One week was spent ashore at the house of a merchant Father knew. He had been a ship master out of Liverpool. We also went out to Wineburg, some miles out. A very pretty place. We were astonished at the heaps of grapes and other tropical fruits. While we were

³² John Bishop, born in Bisley in 1803, first went to sea as an apprentice of Captain Porter.

³³ A bugle with keys on the stops, like a saxophone but coiled rather than S-shaped.

³⁴ The two ships crossed the equator on October 10th.

ashore the cabins were thoroughly cleaned for we had the longest part of the voyage still before us. Table Mountain is a sight well worth seeing. Quite flat on top, it seems to quite overhang the town. When the white clouds settle on top, it is said the tablecloth is spread, then look out for squalls.

We were at the Cape during a very heavy gale. A number of vessels were wrecked – one large ship went ashore at eight in the morning and at twelve not a vestige of her was to be seen. Another ship with a Lascar crew had all her sails unbent and the Captain was ashore. We saw him trying to get off in a six-oared boat, but they had to put back. The Mate of that ship must have been a fine seaman; he got some sails bent and as the ship was driving towards the rocks, he slipped his cable and worked her off round Green Point. They came back a day or so after. I can remember how delighted Father was at the way that ship was handled. The *Porter* and *Dorset* were riding with both anchors down and chains end for end, not far from each other. A lead line was kept over the side to see if there was any drift. Topgallant masts and yards were on deck and yards braced sharp up to the wind and everything snug. The great danger was other vessels driving down on you. Two ships came to grief that way. Well, we hung it out but it must have been a most anxious time for Father with all his family on board. When we got under way from the Cape there were over twenty other vessels leaving. The wind was in and we were the only ones that got out. The *Dorset* had to be helped with the sweeps,³⁵ of which she had two, to clear Green Point.

After landing the horse that was sold, we took on board a Cape mare in his place and four working bullocks and dray. Also a coloured man to drive them and two black girls for domestic servants. That was just after the emancipation of slaves.³⁶ The girls had been told they would see land all the way and when land was lost sight of, they were very frightened. They were good servants. One of them came on to Auckland with us. Black Sall was known here for years.³⁷ The other girl left us at Sydney. Before we left the Cape, the Doctor disappeared, although he was under engagement for the voyage. He thought there was a good opening at Capetown, so he forfeited his pay and left.

It was a bad thing for us as it turned out, for a few days after we left Mrs Shivener was taken ill of some kind of fever. We had a medicine chest and Father, like most sea captains, knew something of sickness and the treatment. In spite of all that could be done, she died after a week or ten days' illness. We had known her for some years. She was the French teacher at the school Alice went to two miles from our house and there was a very strong attachment between her and Alice. In consequence my sister could speak French like a native of France. Mr Shivener was the German teacher. They were engaged and he wanted to go with us also. Father said then they would have to be married for he would have no lovemaking on board. I think this must have been my first experience of death. The burial at sea vividly impressed me. The crew

³⁵ Oars.

³⁶ Slavery was abolished in the Cape Colony in 1834 and the subsequent emancipation was in 1838. The tangential comment about emancipation may be more significant as the only acknowledgment of Captain Porter's early career.

³⁷ Family tradition has her continuing as a family employee in Auckland.

were mustered, the main sail clewed up, main yard hauled aback, flags half mast. The coffin was put on a grating at the gangway covered with a flag. Father read the service for burial at sea; at the proper time the grating was tilted and the coffin disappeared from sight. Then the main yard was swung, main tack boarded and we were on our voyage again. This event threw a gloom over the ship for some time.

The voyage from this out was broken by few incidents. We sighted one homeward bound ship in which letters were sent, saw whales, caught the usual sharks and benetoes³⁸ and flying fish came on deck. One night, in the second Mate's watch one of the young cattle fetched way and broke through the bulkhead and fell into the sailors' berth. One of the men, a Welshman, put out his hand in the gloom. He felt the horns and hair and cried out "The Devil is in the Fo'c'sle." All hands were called and it was a work of great difficulty to get the beast out through the little scuttle. Another night the most valuable of the two horses got down in her box and had to be lifted up. Any unusual happening always took place in the second Mate's watch.

The most exciting incident that took place was that a low black schooner kept sight of us for three days. She would not answer any signals nor make any. Sometimes she would run down near us, then haul her wind and stand off. This caused great excitement on board both vessels as piracy had not been suppressed in that part of the world. Piracy was not finally done away with till warships used steam. In 1838 there were no steam ships in the Royal Navy. All the arms were got ready, the two big guns cast loose, ammunition got up, small chain cut up to make grapeshot. The guns had copper locks that were screwed on to the breach, with the pan over the touch-hole. They were flintlocks - quite a new thing. The old way was to prime them at the touch-hole and fire with a long sulphur match on red hot iron. At last the schooner left us; perhaps it was the two vessels she did not like to tackle. Whatever it was we were very glad to see the last of her.

On Sunday, if the weather was very fine, Captain Bishop or one of the mates were invited to dine with us and no doubt they liked the change of menu.

PROVISIONS

Provisions were not what you get in these days. There was no tinned meat; the only kind was bully soup which had vegetables in it – rather nice. It was packed in large round tins. The staple food was corned beef and salt pork but in the *Porter* we had plenty of poultry, salt tongues, hams, pickled salmon in kegs, cod fish, tripe in jars, casks of eggs in salt, carrots in sand, all kinds of fruit in bottles, jam in large and small jars, (tinned jam was never seen), dried fruits and nuts in plenty. At the Cape we took in bags of walnuts and boxes of raisins that lasted us all the time we were on the Brig and long afterwards. Mother had provided a lot of cake put up in tins. She would say as a cake was finished, "that's the last." Then the very next day another would be put on the

³⁸ Bonito.

table. They would say, "You said that was the last yesterday." She would reply, "the last of that kind."

We spent Christmas Day at sea. The dinner was a record. The turkey was a splendid bird. Poultry do well on board ship if properly looked after. The plum pudding was brought from home soldered in a tin. I recollect the pudding was smothered with brandy and set fire to. We had potatoes packed in boxes but they did not keep well. The cook made fresh bread every day and hot rolls for breakfast as well as the cold ones. Rice was largely used with curry; oatmeal was not eaten by adults in England in those days. All the provisions lasted well although the voyage was over five months, but then there was the month at the Cape and week at Madeira. At the Cape we got a lot of Dutch cheese. Some were in the shape of pines, others round like a cannon ball and about as hard. These were very salty. The way [to eat them] was to cut off a small piece, scoop out a hole and pour in port wine. They were very good.

Every day after dinner, after the cloth had been removed and dessert put on the table, Father would say, "Fill your glasses. We will drink absent friends." That custom was kept up all the years the family were together. My one great ambition was to keep watch at night. I often tried it on but without success. One night I got up and dressed, got on deck, crouched down behind the skylight. Father came on deck and spotted me. I was sent below sharp.

The sailmaker made me a jacket and sailor's trousers of fine white canvas. I was very proud of them. He also made me a bag to hold twine, sailor needles, a fid, a marlinspike, serving board and palm. The part of this that took the needle was made out of a farthing with indents punched in it. I had that little palm for years after. By this time I thought myself quite a sailor. When the ship was put about, all hands at station, my place was at the main mast to overhaul the lee toppinglift. The cook had always to attend the foresheet as it came in close to the galley. I think we must have had a fine weather voyage. At times after leaving the Cape we were under close reefed topsails, with mainsail furled, foresail reefed, trysail stowed. We never had much water on deck. It was well we did not meet with very heavy weather, considering the size of the Brig and the stock we had on deck. It might have gone hard with us. I doubt if people of the present day would undertake such a voyage from one side of the world to the other in a comparatively small vessel and with a deck-load of stock. My Father was a man out of the common, with great self-reliance and a long experience of the sea and its ways.

AUSTRALIA

We made the land within a short time of what was expected. There was a man at the masthead. Father would go up now and then with a telescope. Towards evening there was a cry of "Land Oh!" but it was very faint. I believe it was Kangaroo Islands we made first. When I got up next morning the vessel was quite still. I jumped up and ran into the after cabin, looked out of the stern windows and found we were at anchor in a creek with mangrove bushes on

both sides. It was a beautiful morning, the water like glass and very hot. That was my first sight of this side of the world, where I was destined to pass the rest of my life, although not in Australia.

It is now nearly seventy years ago since that morning and what I saw is still fresh in my mind. At the time we arrived at Adelaide it was difficult to get in or out of the creek; it was necessary to have a fair wind and tide. To get out was harder than to get in, as a fair wind blew on the water out of the gulf and there was a bar at the entrance.

The Brigs were anchored some distance from what was called the port; where the Custom House was and a few houses and stores.³⁹ The Harbour Master, Captain Lipson, came on board at once. The first thing he said as he looked round was what a splendid cutter she would make on account of her great beam. He had been in command of a revenue cutter in England and some of them were over 200 tons.

We stayed on the ship for ten days, then the mosquitoes fairly drove us out. They were very bad and as we were just from home, they went for the new blood. I remember the state I was in. There had been no rain for months before we arrived. The country was burnt up. We had to pay 4/-⁴⁰ a cask for water for the stock, flour cost £100 a ton and potatoes £50. The first money Father spent in the colony was £2:15:0 for a hundredweight of potatoes.⁴¹ Bread was partly made of rice meal. The stock were landed and driven a few miles back where there was a marsh and a little water; a camp was formed for the men in charge. The wild dogs were very numerous. We could hear them all night. The man in charge of the stock shot several.

The distance from the port to Adelaide was nine miles. The only public conveyance was a spring cart with awning over it. It was driven by Mr Henry Hardenton, afterwards well known in Auckland in connection with the turf. It was determined we should remove to Adelaide, so the bullock dray was got out and some thick planks and spare sails and small spars. The carpenter and part of the crew went up to form a camp for us in the township. Several tents were set up with planks for sides and sails for roofs and also on the floors of our own tent.⁴²

It took several trips before all that was wanted was got to the camp. Adelaide at that time was quite in its infancy, gum trees everywhere. It was supposed to be on the River Torrens but when we were there where the river was supposed to be, there were only a few water holes. The first I saw of Australian natives was at Adelaide. I thought they were some kind of wild animal. They were quite in the wild state without any clothing. We met at Adelaide two brothers, both lawyers. They were from Liverpool - Mr William and Mr Thomas Bartley. Mother had been at the same school as Mrs Thomas at Liverpool. Mr Thomas

³⁹ The port records have them arriving three days apart.

⁴⁰ That is four shillings.

⁴¹ The precision of these suggests a diary or ship's log source. None is currently known.

⁴² See figure 16. A contemporary advertisement for the sale of goods from the Brigs gives the address as 678 South Terrace. There is no contemporary record of his ownership of this, but many early official records of Adelaide were lost in fires.

Bartley⁴³ afterwards came to Auckland and he was the first speaker of the first House of Representatives. They were always our greatest friends to the time of their deaths. Mr William Bartley remained at Adelaide and very kindly looked up the titles for me and sold a few allotments in Port Lincoln in 1879 and would take no recompense for his trouble.

When we arrived by the spring cart at the township it was towards evening. The bullock dray with bedding, crockery etc and two coloured girls on top of a full load had not arrived. It got very late. Father sent a young man named Fleetwood⁴⁴ who had come out with us as a sort of cadet, to look for the dray; he found it had been upset by driving one wheel into a hole. The two girls were thrown out. Each had a looking glass in her hand. The first thing Sall said was, "My glass is all right." They unloaded and righted the dray by ten p.m. and got to the camp. That was our first night ashore. It was such a new experience for us all. As we were taking a walk round the town one evening a large kangaroo dog⁴⁵ took up with u and would not leave. He was a large brindle dog. We called him "Spring" and afterwards found him very useful. We also bought another. A yellow dog and called her "Fly". There were no regular streets in the township - only a few houses scattered about and a few stores and boardinghouses. The only house of any size was Government House that had been brought out from England all ready to put up. Father brought letters of introduction to Colonel Gawler,⁴⁶ the Governor. He was received very politely. The Governor said that he would do all in his power to forward his views and advised him to look at Port Lincoln.⁴⁷

Port Lincoln was 150 miles from Adelaide in Spencer's Gulf. Boston Bay was the port – a splendid land-locked harbour. Father went there in the *Dorset* and was delighted with the place. It was a large bay. Boston Island closed it in. The points of the Island overlapped the mainland at both ends, so there were two entrances. It was always smooth water in the bay and quite deep until close to shore. Sandy beach was all round with beautiful shells and seaweed. The country near the sea was flat with ranges of hills at the back. There was timber on the flat but so open that you could ride or drive anywhere.⁴⁸ At the head of the bay was a valley. This was called Happy Valley, but it proved a valley of discord.⁴⁹ A small township was laid out here near a fine fresh water stream. There were springs on the sea beach everywhere. When Father came back from inspecting the place, he joined the company. To a considerable extent at that time, people were allowed to take up a special survey, paying to the Government a nominal price, laying out a town, suburbs and country sections.

⁴³ Thomas Houghton Bartley, third speaker of the Legislative Council, 1856-1858. Earlier an Executive Councillor, but not speaker of the House of Representatives. William Bartley became Registrar General in South Australia.

⁴⁴ On the *Dorset* passenger list.

⁴⁵ An Australian breed like a greyhound, used for hunting kangaroos.

⁴⁶ George Gawler, Governor 1838-1841.

⁴⁷ Port Lincoln was named by Matthew Flinders (1774-1814) after his native Lincolnshire when he was the first European to see it in 1802, during his circumnavigation of Australia. The first settlers at Port Lincoln arrived in March 1839 aboard the ships *Abeona* (arrived 19 March), *Dorset* and *Porter*.

⁴⁸ A G.F. Angas illustration of Port Lincoln (in Schurmann 1987:112) shows the open treescape.

⁴⁹ The author does not explain why, but see Appendix 2. The Porter house was some distance from Happy Valley.

Such a company was just forming. After the land was laid out, there was a ballot for sections - each shareholder getting town, suburban and country land. The town was laid out along the shore.

Our house was built on two sections close to the beach. It was a large, long house with a wide verandah. There was a brick foundation high enough to be used as a store, a wide flight of steps led up to the verandah.⁵⁰ I remember we had a big goat that I was in the habit of teasing. It would turn and chase me. Then I would run up the steps and slam the gate at the top, sometimes only just in time. The bricks, doors, windows and fittings we brought with us from home. At the back there were two houses at right angles to the main building from each end and across there was another which was the kitchen, so there was an open, enclosed space at the back. There were two double chimneys in the main building. In winter it was rather cold. I have seen a fire in the bedroom.

Before leaving Adelaide my Father was appointed Commissioner of Police⁵¹ and authorised to fly the white ensign. I do not recollect much about the re-embarkation, but the trouble of getting out I remember well. They had to kedge the vessels part of the way and tow with the boats.

After discharging the *Dorset*⁵² at Port Lincoln, she was sold to a firm in Sydney and fetched a good price.⁵³ For years she carried a challenge flag at the masthead to sail any colonial vessel for £100. Captain Bishop went with us to Port Lincoln, married and settled there.⁵⁴ He acted as our agent after we left to look after Father's property. He had a store and sheep run and eventually died there. We received a letter from his son announcing his death. I expect some of his family are there still. When we arrived at Port Lincoln, we stayed on the Brig till the house was finished.⁵⁵ The *Porter* was kept running between Adelaide and Port Lincoln in charge of Captain Murray.⁵⁶

In front of our house a flagstaff was erected and two guns from the Brig put one on each side for saluting purposes. The white ensign was always hoisted on Sundays.

⁵⁰ See figure 17. Another description of the house, from 1843, is "...an extensive wooden house of English manufacture erected on the sea beach by Captain Porter..." (Peters 1998:136). The account mentions ascending steps to the door.

⁵¹ In June 1840. He was earlier appointed a Justice of the Peace. The appointment of police to the area was in response to the lawlessness of the French whalers.

⁵² The cargo of the *Dorset* included 70 quarter casks of wine, preserved fish, coal, timber, butter, pork in barrels, cases of wine, merchandise and 3000 bricks.

⁵³ The buyer initially was Charles Smith but he shortly after became insolvent in July 1839 and the assignees offered the ship for sale. She was sold to an Adelaide merchant Emanuel Solomon and Sydney merchant Vaiben Solomon. She was part of the Californian gold fleet in 1850, sailing from Hobart and was wrecked in May 1852 in the Kent Group of islands in Bass Strait. Part of her figurehead survives in Port Lincoln.

⁵⁴ The *Dorset* arrival documentation of January 1839 shows a wife, Mary nee Watkins. A Port Lincoln cottage Bishop built for his son Joseph in 1866, Mill Cottage, is today a National Trust property and a museum to the Bishop family. The Bishop family retained a ship's log of the *Dorset* after her sale.

⁵⁵ The house was on the eastern side of modern Porter St, close to the sea.

⁵⁶ Presumably the first mate promoted to this role.

Father often went over to Adelaide and always stopped at a boardinghouse kept by a Miss Bathgate. There he made the acquaintance of Captain Grey, afterwards Sir George Grey. At that time he had been on an exploring expedition to Swan River. He published a book that brought him into notice.⁵⁷ He afterwards succeeded Governor Gawler in South Australia and later he was in New Zealand. Father also met the late Mr Eyre.⁵⁸ He was also an explorer. He went over to Port Lincoln in the Brig⁵⁹ to look for good country to the westward in which quest he was unsuccessful. Mr Eyre was for some time Lieutenant Governor in the South Island of New Zealand. He was married at St John's College by Bishop Selwyn in 1849 to Miss Ormand.⁶⁰ Her brother Mr Ormand⁶¹ is at Poverty Bay. We were all at the wedding and a grand spread it was in the College Hall. Mr Eyre was afterwards much talked of, on account of his action in suppressing a negro rising in Jamaica, when he was Governor there. There is a book of his on it in the Auckland Public Library.⁶² The country about Port Lincoln was covered with loose limestone. This stone was burnt to make lime for building. My brother had a house built on a section near us.⁶³ The usual plan there was to put up a frame, but instead of weatherboard, laths were nailed on the inside and out. Then between the studs it was filled in with small limestones, then plastered inside and out. The walls of the rooms were painted. It made a very nice house.

A station was started about eight miles out on the country land and all the cattle and horses taken there - also 100 merino sheep. At that time they were called "walking bank notes." A garden was made on one of the suburban sections and a small house put up for a man. We bought two or three of these houses. The sides and ends were in sections, easily put up and very light. The roof boards were covered with felt. This house was painted white so the place went by the name of the "White House Garden". Father also established two young men on Boston Island to cultivate.⁶⁴ I remember going there one very hot day. Father said, "Look out Will, this is a snaky day," and sure enough, a few yards further a big black snake⁶⁵ reared up out of the rocks, hissing and moving towards us. It was promptly shot. The young men had quite a collection of stuffed snake skins.

Melons grew in abundance on the Island and of great size. Game was also very plentiful everywhere. My brother would go out for the day and come back

⁵⁷ Grey, Captain George. 1841 *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery*. Boone, London.

⁵⁸ Edward John Eyre, Lieutenant Governor New Munster 1848–53. He was based in Wellington. The trip referred to was his second exploration trip of 1839, travelling from Port Lincoln to Streaky Bay and returning to the head of Spencer Gulf. His more famous expedition to West Australia went through Port Lincoln in late 1840.

⁵⁹ Sailed 19 July 1839.

⁶⁰ Eyre married Adelaide Ormond in April 1850.

⁶¹ John Davies Ormond.

⁶² Eyre did not himself write about his controversial time in Jamaica.

⁶³ Richard and Rosetta's elder son William Lincoln Field Porter was born at Port Lincoln on July 16th 1839.

⁶⁴ There were lots from the survey association on the island. Porter must have owned land there too. Settlement there eventually failed.

⁶⁵ Probably a peninsula black tiger snake, *Notechis ater niger*, which favour the islands.

loaded with wild turkeys,⁶⁶ pigeons, parrots etc. Opossums and wallaby were only got at night. Kangaroos were also plentiful and quite tame. I have seen them hopping past the house. The big tail made good soup. The hind quarter was the only other part used. We had an old bushman who with the dogs kept us supplied. Boats went to the islands round about in the season and came back loaded with wild geese⁶⁷ and eggs. They tasted rather fishy. Then there were the wombats, a kind of mole that had to be dug out. They were something like a pig, only with very short legs. I don't think they were much thought of.

The natives came about camping near. They made no houses - only a few sheets of bark for a breakwind. They always had a spear and boomerang. Up to that time they had seen very few white people and no white women. My mother and sister were the first to land at Boston Bay. The natives there were of a very low type.⁶⁸ They had no idea of using any vessel – if they wanted a drink of water they would point to their mouths, hold them open with the head thrown back for you to pour water in. A sad affair occurred after we had been there about six months. A young man had a station about ten miles out and with him his younger brother – a boy of about fifteen.⁶⁹ The elder one went into the settlement to get stores, leaving the boy to mind the place. A number of blacks came about wanting to get into the hut. The young lad took his brother's gun and stood in the doorway threatening them. They drew off a little and speared him, putting five long spears through his body. Then they made off. The brave little fellow said when found that he tried to pull the spears out but they were jagged, so he lay down by the fire and burnt off the long ends. He was taken to the settlement and the Doctor did all he could, but he died in three days – his name was Hawson.

Before we left home, Father had the frame of a cutter built – it was put up and each piece numbered - everything complete with spars. Then it was taken down again as there was no room in the *Porter* or *Dorset* for it. It came out after us in the next ship.⁷⁰ Father had a carpenter and with the help of the one from the *Porter* she was soon put together. The planking and deck planks also came from home. She was a vessel of 25 tons, put together on the beach in front of our house. The sails were made in Liverpool and all ready to bind. I was very much interested in the operation when the launch took place. Alice christened her, breaking a bottle of wine on the stern. She was called the *Alice* and a nice, handy little craft she proved.⁷¹ The *Porter* made several trips to and

⁶⁶ Brush-turkeys did not occur in South Australia. The options are Mallee fowls or feral domesticated turkeys. There were turkeys on the *Porter* on the voyage and another record of wild turkeys from 1843.

⁶⁷ Cape Barren geese, which breed on the islands.

⁶⁸ There is no acknowledgement even in 1907 that they had any ownership rights.

⁶⁹ The mortal spearing of Francis (Frank) Tapley Hawson, b. August 8th 1828, was on October 5th 1840. He was aged 12 and a son of Henry Hawson. An elder brother had earlier fired at some aboriginals and the spearing of Frank may have been in response. The police wounded and locked up some innocent aboriginals in retribution. The spearing was after the *Porters* had left Port Lincoln. Its inclusion in the recollections may arise from the 1841 visit of the *Porter* back to Adelaide or from Eyre's published journals or Angus's account of South Australia where the incident was fully reported.

⁷⁰ On the *Orleana*, arrived January 1839.

⁷¹ Built 1839, 25 tons 31'3", 11'1", 6'1"

from Adelaide to Sydney in charge of Captain Murray, the *Alice* keeping up the communication between Port Lincoln and Adelaide.⁷² The Governor and Mrs Gawler came over with Father on one of the trips of the Brig on the 6th of April 1840. The Governor and Mrs Gawler and private secretary stayed at our house. When the Governor landed, a salute of 14 guns was fired from our cannon, a dinner was given in a handsome marquee erected and decorated with flags and evergreens and a table capable of accommodating 24 persons [supplied]. A very good dinner was served. His Excellency held a levee on the 10th at which all the inhabitants of Port Lincoln were presented to him and an address [was] read. In May 1840 there was a population of 270.⁷³

The Governor brought over with him a fine large boat and crew. She carried two large lug sails – we all had some fine trips about the bay with her. We had brought a carriage out from England with us. This was now put into commission with two horses to take the Governor about.

A bank was established⁷⁴ and Richard was appointed manager. A subscription started for a church to be called St Nicholas⁷⁵ after our old church in Liverpool.⁷⁶ Richard drew the plans. Father gave the site. I see by an old paper that I have that the Governor headed the list with £10 and Mrs Gawler £2, then Father with £20. Altogether 51 subscriptions totalled £185.14.0 – not so bad for such a young place but I don't think that church was ever built.

Whales often came into the bay.⁷⁷ Father had two whale boats built by an old boat builder named Gunn. They were fitted out complete and the crews organised. They went once or twice but did not get fast.⁷⁸ The fishing about the bay was splendid. I remember off Kirton Point a particularly good place. I hooked a large schnapper that I was unable to haul in without help.

My sister and myself each had a Timor pony.⁷⁹ Alice's was called "Princess" and mine "Prince". They were spirited little beasts. I was not allowed to have stirrups in case I fell off, which did happen once. We were cantering along when suddenly a big kangaroo jumped out of the scrub. A regular old man as they were called. My pony shied and I came off.

⁷² She was sold in July 1840 to Kilburn brothers merchants of Port Lincoln but they soon on-sold her.

⁷³ Another estimate of the time was 300. In 1841 the population was 195 and in 1844 in the first census the population of Port Lincoln was 96. The departure of speculators is an explanation for some of the decline. Clashes with the aborigines were common when Angas visited in 1844. He attributed it as being one reason for the decline (Angas 1847(I):188-9).

⁷⁴ The Bank of Port Lincoln. Captains Porter and Bishop were executives.

⁷⁵ The foundation stone of St Nicholas Church was laid near Kirton Point but it was never completed. The first Anglican church was St Thomas' built in 1850.

⁷⁶ On the Mersey waterfront. Traditionally a sailors' church. Severely damaged by fire after bombing in 1940, it was rebuilt from 1949-52.

⁷⁷ Probably Southern Right Whales. French shore whalers were based in the area at the time.

⁷⁸ i.e. did not harpoon a whale.

⁷⁹ Timorese ponies were found better suited to Australian conditions than English or Cape horses. They were imported from Timor to Port Lincoln by the Hawson family in 1839. They are the brood stock of Coffin Bay brumbies to this day, an ancestor of Australian whaler horses which were at one time an important source of mounted soldier remounts.

LEAVING PORT LINCOLN

We were only at Port Lincoln about eighteen months. Finding the place hung fire,⁸⁰ there being no extent of good back country, Father decided to look round at the other colonies. It is a curious thing that Port Lincoln with its fine harbour is the only place in Australia that has never gone ahead. They found coal eventually but even at the present it's a place seldom heard of.⁸¹ If my Father had invested the same amount of money in any of the other colonies, he would have been a very wealthy man. But who can foresee? Being a seaman, the fine harbour took his fancy. Our house was let to Doctor Harvey⁸² and he lived in it for years.

I don't recollect much about leaving⁸³ but I remember going through Bass Strait and the big catch of barracouta. The hook was baited with a bit of red bunting. They were very large and strong and with the ship going through the water, it was a man's work to get them on board. We first went to Hobart town and were there about three months. Father took a house in the town. I was sent to school as a weekly boarder as the school was some four miles out of town. The principal was a Mr Braham. He was headmaster of a college in Sydney. It was a large school and we were very well fed. A great thing with the boys was to go to the river to find cornelians.⁸⁴ We got them of all colours but I did not like the school as it was the first time I had been away from home and being a new boy, the others played all kinds of tricks on me. I was longing to be on the Brig and at sea again.

Mount Wellington, at the back of the town, did not appear so far off. It is very high and always has some snow on top. I was not at the school very long before a letter came to say I was to go back as the family were embarking again. Richard had taken a house as he had got an appointment in a bank and decided to stop at Hobart till we were finally settled.

From Hobart we went to Port Phillip, as it was then called. One thing struck me very much at Hobart was the convicts⁸⁵ working in chains and their particoloured dress, one leg yellow and the other gray. The chains were shackled around the ankle and another chain from the middle of that to the waist. The convicts were at work on the wharf taking earth down in small carts.

Before leaving, we took in a deck-load of sheep. I remember the sailors giving them water out of a bottle. As one got it, a piece of rope yarn was tied round its neck as a mark. The next time it was taken off. Melbourne was in its infancy and sheep were very high in price. Father made a good thing out of them. We

⁸⁰ C.f. a gun that does not fire when ignited. Growth had stopped.

⁸¹ Today Port Lincoln is a thriving town, a major grain export port and commercial fishing centre with tuna for Japan a lucrative speciality. Its eventual development followed the 20th century opening of wheat lands in the inland peninsula through rail transport.

⁸² James Benjamin Harvey 1804 -1843. He was also the first harbourmaster. He appears to have been also a property agent as he offered one of several empty houses he had to missionary Clamor Schurmann in September 1840.

⁸³ The Brig *Porter* departed on the 1st of July 1840 from Port Lincoln for Hobart.

⁸⁴ There is a Cornelian Bay in Hobart.

⁸⁵ Transportation of convicts from Britain to Australia was not ended until 1868.

anchored in Hobson's Bay⁸⁶ and the sheep were landed in boats. We were not sorry to get them off, although they had only been on board three days. Everything smelt and tasted of them. We spent Christmas day of 1840 on the Brig in Hobson's Bay. There were several vessels anchored near us. They were firing off big guns. I wondered why the smoke from some of them curled round after it left the muzzle. Father told me the mouth of the cannon had been greased – that was the reason. We went ashore once or twice at Geelong. There was only a pub and a few stores and houses. Large vessels at that time did not go up the Yarra. We all went up the river in the boat and spent a day or two with Mr Orr, a merchant at Melbourne. There was not much of a town.⁸⁷ It was laid out but the streets were full of stumps and standing trees. It had been very dry for a long time - cattle dying in thousands for the want of water. The upper part of the Yarra is fresh. Gangs of men were engaged cutting down the banks to get the cattle out. The poor things came round the boat trying to rest their heads on the oars and sides of the boat. It was a pitiful sight.

After leaving Port Phillip, we went to Launceston. What I remember most about that was the fruit. We anchored in the river opposite a farm belonging to a relation of our new Mate Tooke - Captain Murray, having got command of a ship out of Sydney. Mr Tooke went ashore and came off with a boat-load of fine fruit. It was a great treat. Next day we moved up the river nearer the town. I was greatly taken with the small yachts – quite small boats decked and rigged as schooners and brigs with all the ropes leading aft. I don't remember much of the town of Launceston. There we got the news of the Princess Royal.⁸⁸ The town and shipping were illuminated to celebrate the event.

From Launceston we went to Sydney.⁸⁹ There the Brig was painted throughout. We went to stay at Mr William Abercrombie's⁹⁰ about three miles down the harbour. There were two brothers, William and Charles, both bachelors.⁹¹ They had a fine place called "Glenmore" and a distillery.⁹² We were with them a fortnight. I was greatly taken with the dam. There was a small New Zealand canoe in it with topsides carved, sternpost and bow. The Abercrombies were interested in New Zealand and at that time were building a vessel at Neigles Bay,⁹³ Great Barrier Island. One thing struck me at Glenmore – all the rooms were kept quite dark on account of the heat. Another thing was the mosquito nets to all the beds. We found it terribly hot in Sydney. When the hot winds came with dust, it was unbearable to new chums. The hot winds were called "Brickfielders".⁹⁴

It was decided that we should go and look at New Zealand, although many people said there was no safety for life or property there. Before going to New

⁸⁶ In Port Phillip. Named after William Hobson, by then Lieutenant Governor of New Zealand but previously as Captain Hobson RN of the Rattlesnake, instrumental in the settlement of Melbourne.

⁸⁷ Melbourne was founded in 1835.

⁸⁸ Queen Victoria's first child, Victoria, the Princess Royal, born November 1840.

⁸⁹ The recollections here do not align with shipping records. See appendix 2.

⁹⁰ A William Abercrombie was Porter's London shipping agent in 1830.

⁹¹ A Mrs Charles Abercrombie is mentioned below.

⁹² Near Rushcutters Bay

⁹³ Nagle Cove.

⁹⁴ From the inland.

Zealand we had to return to Hobart for Richard. Anchored near us in Sydney Harbour was a smart ship the *Chelydra*.⁹⁵ Captain Smale was part owner. She had eight guns, having been in the China trade where the Malay pirates were troublesome. There were six cadets. David George Smale, the Captain's son, was one of them. They were all in uniform. A snake worked in gold thread [was] on the collar of the jacket and gold band to the cap and cuff. The Captain also wore the same. The ship had a quilt⁹⁶ snake for figurehead. They carried on duty like a war ship. Everything was done by the Bo's'un's pipe. The Captain had a fine long gig with a crew in uniform. This boat was kept for the sole use of the Captain. The old man bragged about his ship's sailing. Father offered to race to Auckland, to which he agreed. Instead of that he slipped away in the night before we were ready – that was after we came back from Hobart. Captain Smale was engaged to be married to a lady in Tasmania, a Miss Rich, and he took passage with us and also came back with his bride and her father Mr Rich,⁹⁷ who came down to Auckland and was the first man to import pure merino sheep. They were known as the Mt Eden flock. He had a farm at Epsom. His two sons afterwards joined him. The last of them died not long ago. Captain Smale had been married before. He had one son, David George, who died last year at the age of 86. There were also two daughters. One married James Hamblin⁹⁸ - his son is [?was] station-master at Pokino,⁹⁹ [and] now Remuera. The old Captain for some time ran a ketch on the Manukau Harbour and was lost there.

When we got to Hobart we found Richard's wife wanted to go back to England till we were settled. She had a mother, sister and brother near Liverpool. Her father was a clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. Small. A passage was taken for her and her child in a ship about to leave, so Richard joined us again.¹⁰⁰ As we were pulled ashore one day we passed close past two clumsy looking ships. I noticed they had no figureheads. I remarked on it to Father. "Oh" he said, "the figurehead is on the quarterdeck." They were Sir John Franklin's ships *Erebus* and *Terror* on their way to the South Pole.¹⁰¹ It was in a voyage after that to the North Pole in the same ships that they were all lost.

⁹⁵ She was a regular visitor to Auckland, bringing immigrants from Australia on one voyage, under Government charter.

⁹⁶ Sic. Gilt is probably what is meant.

⁹⁷ George Rich an 1841 settler in Auckland.

⁹⁸ James Hamlin.

⁹⁹ ? Pokeno

¹⁰⁰ She did not return but died in England in 1863. Richard then remarried. Their second son was Richard Percival Porter born in 1841 in Liverpool. Richard returned to England in 1848 and brought the elder son William Lincoln Field Porter back to Auckland. Descendants of Richard Percival Porter also live in New Zealand.

¹⁰¹ HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror* were in Hobart from August to November 1840 prior to their first Antarctic visit and from April to November 1841 between visits. The recollections imply the 1841 visit was that observed, but the shipping records only match for 1840. They were under the command of James Clark Ross, not Franklin. Sir John Franklin (1786-1847) the by then famous Arctic explorer was at the time Governor of Tasmania. Confusingly he was later to command *Erebus* and *Terror* on an Arctic voyage when he, both ships and all their crews were lost. He was with his cousin Matthew Flinders as a midshipman in Flinders' Australian circumnavigation voyage. Franklin Harbour near Port Lincoln was named after him by Gawler. The Flinders memorial on Stamford Hill at Port Lincoln was erected by Franklin or more particularly his wife Lady Jane Franklin who travelled there on the *Abeona* in January 1841.

We saw Sir John ashore and Father had a chat with him about the voyage he was going to undertake.

When we got back to Sydney we took in a lot of cargo for Auckland native trade; muskets, powder, iron pots, blankets, blue, red and white, large cloaks, which were very much in demand by the Maoris, blue and red shirts, tobacco, pipes and above all, tinder boxes, holding flint and steel. Most of the trade then was done by barter. We also took in all the gear for Abercrombie's vessel - sails, anchors and chains. Before leaving Sydney we had a trip to Parramatta in the steam boat. There was only one, a small paddle boat, at the time.

When we were entering Sydney on our way back from Hobart, it was a foul wind and we had to work up. There was a large ship ahead of us. We stood close past her stern for a little way, put the helm down and shot ahead of her in stays and crossed her bow on the other tack. The pilot on board her said "that's the kangaroo dog¹⁰² from South Australia. No other vessel out here could do that." At the time we were in Sydney, the New Zealand Government were advertising for a vessel. My Father offered the *Porter*. I think the price was between four and five thousand pounds - but they would not have her. They said she was too large. They bought the *Victoria*,¹⁰³ a colonial built vessel, much inferior in every respect. People told Father that he had not greased the palm of the parties that had the purchasing in hand. I afterwards had two trips in the *Victoria* to Nelson and back in 1843 and 1845. The night before we left Sydney a barge came alongside full of casks. The Abercrombies wanted Father to take some without paying duty. He refused. In spite of that, they sent a boat load off, but Father would be no party to a smuggling transaction, so the boat had to return with her cargo. Mrs Charles Abercrombie was a passenger with us.¹⁰⁴ Before we were allowed to leave, the police came on board to search the ship for runaway convicts. There were some trusses of hay on deck, into which they put their swords. But they found none.

It was about the middle of May 1841¹⁰⁵ that we left Sydney for Auckland. In going down the harbour, we had to make what the sailors call a long leg and a short one. When we were near the heads on the port tack, we stood close in to a high bluff. The water was quite deep right up to the shore. The helm was put down. As she came round, the fore topsail sheet that had been badly belayed, came adrift, flew up and unrove. Not one vessel in a hundred would have stayed¹⁰⁶ without the fore topsail, but she came round alright. It was an anxious moment. If she had gone against the cliff, the vessel would have been lost and probably all hands, as it was blowing fresh at the time.

I think it took us about twelve days to the Barrier Island. Then we went into Neigles Cove, where the ship was being built. She was called the *Stirlingshire*, of about 400 tons burden. She was the first vessel of any size built in New

¹⁰² Presumably comparing the greyhound breed to the speed of the *Porter*.

¹⁰³ Jackson: 1991 frontispiece, has a reconstructed view of *Victoria*.

¹⁰⁴ Recorded passengers are P. Abercrombie, Mr Eastcote, Mr and Mrs Twohey and two children.

¹⁰⁵ May 11th.

¹⁰⁶ Went about in modern terms.

Zealand. Captain Neigle,¹⁰⁷ who superintended the building was brother-in-law to our first Mate W. Tooke. I remember the flocks of goats on the Barrier. The people made butter and cheese from the milk. There was very little room in Neigles Cove. When we left the wind was fair, but no room to swing the ship, so she was backed out stern first. I saw the cliff where the copper was found.¹⁰⁸ It was quite green [with] verdigris. The mine was worked for a time but with no great success. We must have left the Barrier in the afternoon as next morning we were off the North Head and saw for the first time our future home.¹⁰⁹ It was a beautiful morning. We were very pleased with the harbour and surroundings.

AUCKLAND

We had been told in Sydney that the Harbour Master, when he came on board, would be wearing white kid gloves. So we were all on the lookout and sure enough, when the boat came alongside there was a spruce little man and the white kid gloves - Captain David Rough and he proved a very good fellow and a fast friend of ours. He married Miss Short, who was governess to the Governor's children. Short Street was called after her and she was very short.¹¹⁰ Captain Rough died in England not so very long ago at a great age and left no family. There was no pilot in those days. Father went by the chart and lead line. Going up the harbour past the North Shore, there were only two houses - one the Powder Magazine, and the other the Signalman's house. He was a Captain Snow and was murdered there some years after.¹¹¹ This man did not live on top of the hill as at present, but just walked up once or twice a day.

We anchored off Commercial Bay,¹¹² as it was then called. There were two or three vessels in harbour. One was the *Chelydra*. She had arrived the day before - so had not done such great things. Another was HMS *Britomart*¹¹³, an old 10 Gun Brig, two or three schooners and any number of canoes on the beach. I was much interested in the Maoris and their canoes. They were so new to us - their tattooed faces and the handsome mats they wore. The canoe sails were made of raupo. They brought fish, potatoes, oysters and kumeras for sale. They would not look at copper money or silver they did not like much.

¹⁰⁷ Jeremiah William Nagle. Nagle was a pre-Treaty purchaser of land on Great Barrier Island.

Stirlingshire was built at Nagle Cove, Port Abercrombie. John Gillies is usually credited as builder. Launched in November 1848 she was a three-masted 409 ton barque, with two decks and a square stern, constructed of pohutukawa and kauri and was the largest sailing vessel ever built in New Zealand. Nagle published a map of Great Barrier in 1848 with a Porter Bay and an Alice Island. Neither name is on modern maps: they are modern Bowling Alley Bay and Oyster Island. Porter Bay is still a name in use by locals. Nagle's wife Catherine nee Holmes hailed from Liverpool which may have established the connection. *Porter* passenger Mrs Twohey and Nagle were siblings.

¹⁰⁸ Miners Head Great Barrier. New Zealand's first mine, mined for copper 1842-1867.

¹⁰⁹ Auckland was founded in September 1840. The *Porter* arrived on May 29th 1841. The first immigrant ships from Britain (Glasgow) arrived in October 1842.

¹¹⁰ It is a short street, even if originally a little longer before the construction of Anzac Avenue.

¹¹¹ Lt. Snow, his wife and baby daughter were murdered in 1847.

¹¹² The beach below Shortland St.

¹¹³ HMS *Britomart* was undertaking the first marine survey of the Waitemata Harbour.

The cry was, “money – gold.” They were sharp enough at a bargain even in those days. At low water we had to land at what was called Soldiers’ Point, below Fort Britomart.¹¹⁴ The railway goods shed stands about that spot now.¹¹⁵ In 1841 it was a high cliff fringed with pohutukawa. At high water we landed on a sandy beach. There is a stone bonded store there now in Fort Street. On the west of Commercial Bay was another point called Smale’s Point. Captain Smale built a house there on top of the cliff and at high water, goods were hoisted up out of the boats by a windlass. That point would be about where the Waitemata Hotel¹¹⁶ now stands. A small creek ran into the bay at the foot of what is now Shortland Street.

Winter had just set in when we arrived, so our first experience of the climate was not pleasant. We remained three months on the Brig before the house was ready.¹¹⁷ We landed for good on the 11th August 1841. The brig was kept in the Sydney trade in charge of Captain Tom Stewart but sold at last to a firm in Sydney¹¹⁸ and eventually lost going for a cargo of sugar to Manila. She struck on a reef and so strong was she, that for years did not break up.¹¹⁹ We saw that mentioned in a paper.

There were no regular schools in Auckland at the time we arrived – not in fact for years after. Father engaged a person named Powell to teach me for two hours a day, but he was a failure. A German named Dressin started a school in what is now Victoria Street East, close to the present park at the bottom of Bowen Avenue. The old house stands there yet. It is now a fruit shop. There were only five or six of us and we learnt practically nothing. The man would leave us to ourselves. Our fun was to shoot flies with little bows made of whalebone, with a pin in the arrow. After that another man started a school in Parnell. I forget his name, but well remember his bad breath as he leant over us to correct the writing. There were seven or eight boys at that school, all dead now except myself. The house this school was held in stood till quite recently. There were green venetian blinds outside the windows. It was just at the top of the Parnell rise where the road turns round.

Our great game at this time was to go to St Georges Bay Point¹²⁰ and build forts of clay - get a place where there was a small gully and make two forts opposite each other. Each fort had a flag, English and Chinese. The war with China about the opium trade was in full swing then.¹²¹ We mounted the forts with toy cannon and blazed away at each other. China always got the worst of it. Just about this time a Mr Reay¹²² came out. Father had known his friends in

¹¹⁴ Fort Britomart was on a point at the foot of modern Anzac Avenue. The hill was removed for fill when the waterfront was extended.

¹¹⁵ Later a Chinese market and now the site of a supermarket.

¹¹⁶ Corner of Queen and Customs Sts, demolished 1982.

¹¹⁷ See figures 22-25.

¹¹⁸ In August 1841 *Porter* was re-registered in Auckland by William Eastcote.

¹¹⁹ At Palawan Island in the Philippines, 2 September 1842.

¹²⁰ West of Judges Bay. Since removed when the railway was routed along the waterfront.

¹²¹ The first Opium War was 1839-42.

¹²² Reverend Charles Reay a CMS missionary, arrived in Nelson in August 1842. The school he opened in September the same year was named Bishop’s School by Selwyn in late 1843. The

Liverpool. He was expecting his wife to follow him shortly and asked Father to look after her at Auckland and forward her to Nelson, to which place Mr Reay was appointed. When Mrs Reay¹²³ arrived and was about to leave, she proposed to take me with her, for Mr Reay to give me instruction for a consideration. So it was arranged that I should go with them the next trip of the *Victoria*, the Government brig. Mrs Reay's daughter by a former marriage, Miss Essex, afterwards married Dr Pollen of Auckland. A young woman came out with them as a lady help. Her only name I remember is Ellen. She afterwards married Mr Eyes of Marlborough. I saw his death in the papers quite lately at the age of 90. His wife had been dead many years. Mr Eyes was also a Liverpool man.

Mrs Reay and her party stayed with us for three weeks till the brig put in her appearance. I did not fancy leaving home, as it was my first time of going so far with strangers. We left Auckland [in] 1843, in the afternoon and next morning [we] were off Tauranga.¹²⁴ I forget how long it took to Wellington. One thing I do recollect was that while I was whistling on deck, Captain Richards came up to me saying he would have no whistling on board a vessel he commanded, as we had quite enough wind as it was. It was blowing strongly from the N.E. Going into Wellington it blew very hard in squalls and we sprung our foretop. Wellington was a very small place at that time – one street along the beach.¹²⁵ Our party landed and stayed with the Rev. Mr Cole for three days. It blew a gale and communication with the brig was not possible. At Wellington I purchased a silver watch. I gave 30/- for it and it never went well. Nevertheless I was very proud of it. We left Wellington in the morning with a fair wind¹²⁶ and got to Nelson in the afternoon of the next day, Sunday. The pilot brought off papers. I got one and was studying it when Mrs Reay said, "I do not allow little boys under my charge to read newspapers on Sunday." I thought it queer as both she and her daughter were reading them. I then realised that I was [away] from home.

When we arrived at Nelson, Mr Reay was away from home. He was always travelling about among the Maoris. I may as well mention here that the instruction I received from him was nominal. The parsonage was in the care of a Maori, a very decent fellow, but Mrs Reay being new to the country, was horrified to find him living in the house. Although Nelson had been settled only about two years, a great deal had been done - streets formed and at the port wharves built and a good road from port to town, about two miles. The houses were mostly of wood. The parsonage house was of brick – only three rooms downstairs and three small rooms in the roof. One I had and Miss Essex and Ellen had another. There was another house of brick close to - in it the Rev.

present school building at 43 Nile Street, Nelson mostly dates from 1881 but one wall of the earlier 1844 building is incorporated.

¹²³ Marianne Reay.

¹²⁴ The town of Tauranga did not exist then. The name applied to the harbour. The European settlement there was the CMS mission, Te Papa.

¹²⁵ Wellington was founded in 1840. This was before the great 1855 earthquake lifted Wellington's foreshore from the sea.

¹²⁶ The *Victoria* left for Wellington for Nelson on Thursday April 27th 1843. This is believed to be the sailing, as Mrs Reay is recorded as arriving in Nelson in May.

Butt¹²⁷ and his wife lived. He was Mr Reay's curate. The upper part of this house was one large room. In it Mr Butt kept school. Stairs led down outside to the verandah. Mr Butt had married Miss Serenor Davies, a daughter of one of the early missionaries at the Bay of Islands.¹²⁸ I was only at this school a short time. We got principally religious instruction. There were ten boys and girls there. I saw the death lately of one that was with me at that school – H. Hamond of Grafton Rd. He had been native interpreter.¹²⁹ He was a year older than I am.

At the time we arrived at Nelson, a dispute was going on with the natives about land at the Wairau. Captain Wakefield, the N.Z. Company's agent, held that the whole of what is now called Marlborough was included in the purchase made at the time of the Wellington settlement, but the Maori chiefs thought otherwise. As soon as the news of the projected survey reached Kapiti, Te Rauparaha, Te Rangiharate¹³⁰ and Te Hiko crossed to Nelson and warned Captain Wakefield that the Wairau must not be taken as it was not included in the sale (and no doubt they were right). In reply, Wakefield restated the Company's claim but it was in angry terms repudiated by Te Rauparaha who warned the officials that if they went to the Wairau they would meet with resistance. Te Rauparaha entreated the surveyors not to proceed with the survey but refer the claims to the Native Commissioner but Captain Wakefield was determined, which unfortunately led to the Wairau massacre,¹³¹ when 23 Europeans were killed. Amongst the victims were Capt Wakefield, Capt England, Messrs Thompson, police magistrate of Nelson, Cotterall,¹³² Richardson, Howard, uncle of W.F. Howard of Auckland, Brooks, Capper,¹³³ MacGregor, Mailing and others. Twenty-six escaped, several of them wounded.

Looking back calmly after over sixty years at this event, one cannot help thinking that the Europeans were much to blame for the tragedy and that the Maoris were in the right.¹³⁴ They did not know the New Zealanders in those days, thinking a display of force would frighten them. A lesson was learnt in after years. It was found the Maoris were not to be intimidated by a few half armed untrained men.

In front of the parsonage there was a large green. Here Mr Thompson¹³⁵ mustered the men that were to go on the expedition to assist the surveyors. They were sworn in as special constables and given guns of sorts, although many of them were quite ignorant of how to use them properly. It was found afterwards when they were called upon to fire that not a few had put the bullets

¹²⁷ Henry Francis Butt arrived in Nelson in December 1843 and was the master at the school from January 1844.

¹²⁸ Richard Davis was part of the CMS in the Bay of Islands from 1824, initially as a catechist.

¹²⁹ A William Hammond was a foundation pupil at the school.

¹³⁰ Te Rangihaeata.

¹³¹ June 17th 1843.

¹³² S J Cotterill was the surveyor.

¹³³ Eli Cropper was a casualty.

¹³⁴ The writer's view aligns with that of modern historians. At the time the failure of the Government to exact immediate retribution was seen as outrageous weakness by the settlers around Cook Strait.

¹³⁵ Henry A Thompson.

in before the powder. I saw them leave to go on board the *Victoria* to the Wairau. Mr Thompson ran back to his house, calling out to his wife that he had left his bullet bag. He was the police magistrate of Nelson. He was one of the first killed. Some four days afterwards, the brig returned with the survivors of the expedition. There was great excitement when the sad news was known. Many of the men had families.

It was rumoured that the Maoris were coming to attack Nelson. Every man was mustered and drilled. The Hon. Constantine Dillon¹³⁶ who had been in the army took command. There were several other old soldiers – Mr Stafford, afterwards Sir Edward and Premier of New Zealand, was one in command. Dr Munro,¹³⁷ afterwards Sir David and speaker of the House of Representatives, Messrs Alfred Domett, Tytlers,¹³⁸ Fox, afterwards Sir William Fox, Sinclair¹³⁹ and other gentlemen, having good rifles,¹⁴⁰ were to act as sharpshooters. A low hill in the town was fortified.¹⁴¹ Two large sheds were on it. They were the emigration barracks. Round the top of the hill a deep ditch was dug and a wooden palisade was built with the corners projecting so as to enfilade the ditch in this way. It was built of three inch plank and a few portholes left for the big guns. They were nine and eighteen pounders out of some vessel. Some of the best men were instructed to load and fire. I was told off to carry ammunition and was quite proud of it. There was round shot and all sorts of scraps of iron for grape shot. The guns were on a platform so they ran back with the recoil. There was only one entrance and across the ditch was a drawbridge that when up, closed the gateway. It was loopholed as was also the palisade. All round inside there was a raised platform so that men could fire out of the top loophole. The palisade was about ten feet high. The drawbridge was raised by tackle, a well was dug and plenty of provision[s] and ammunition was kept in the house. A guard was stationed at night and a watch was kept at all the approaches to the town. After a week or ten days of intense excitement, news came that the Maoris had crossed the Straits again and the danger for the time was over. There was a tea given to the widows and children, a subscription got up and a good round sum was the result.

One of the first vessels to arrive at Nelson was the *Arrow*, 250 tons. Captain Arthur Wakefield came out in her. He was agent for the N.Z. Company at Nelson and brother to the noted Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who was the promoter of the N.Z. Company. The *Arrow* brought out surveyors, labourers and stores. One of the surveyors, Mr Bellars, is not long dead at a great age. [Three ships left England in 1841, the *Arrow*, Brig 250 tons, the *Whitby*, Barque, 437 tons, and *Willwatch*, Barque 216 tons. *Fifeshire*, Ship, 557 tons left in 1842.]¹⁴² Between 1841 and July 1842, 67 vessels visited Nelson,¹⁴³

¹³⁶ Honourable Constantine Augustus Dillon, the fourth son of a Viscount.

¹³⁷ Dr David Monro.

¹³⁸ James Stuart Tytler and George Tytler, arrived *Whitby* 1841.

¹³⁹ Donald Sinclair, Nelson police magistrate.

¹⁴⁰ At this date these would have been muzzle loading rifles.

¹⁴¹ On Nelson's Church Hill, named Fort Arthur after Wakefield and demolished in 1848. The earthworks of one bastion of the fort can still be seen behind the cathedral.

¹⁴² As received this section was garbled and has been corrected here.

The *Fifeshire* was wrecked on a rock at the entrance to Nelson Harbour. The entrance is very narrow. A very strong tide runs in and out. It caught the ship on the bow and slewed her on to the rock and it went right through her bottom. She was never got off. I was often on board as it was a grand place for fish. In these days she would have been easily floated as the place is well sheltered and close to the harbour.

A number of the first settlers of Nelson were of good old English and Scotch families. Mr Stafford and his cousins the Tytlers, Dr Munro, Alfred Domett, Mr Clifford, afterwards Sir Charles, Mr Weld, afterwards Governor of Western Australia, Curtis Eyes, Richmond, Fox, afterwards Sir William, the Hon. Constantine Dillon, Seamore and many others. There is a large painting by Alfred Domett in the Art Gallery in Auckland.¹⁴⁴ A number of these were settlers at the Waimea, a place about twelve miles from Nelson. I knew them all well. I stayed with the Dillons at the Waimea for a month on one occasion.¹⁴⁵ They brought out their house from England all ready to put up. I can remember a very large oil painting of their house at home – it was called "Ditchly."¹⁴⁶ A young lady came out with them as companion to Mrs Dillon.¹⁴⁷ I forget her full name - she was always called Dina. Dr Munro lived not far off and came over in the evenings for music. He played the harp and sang. He was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1861 and was Member for Picton. Dr Munro eventually married Dina.¹⁴⁸ The Dillons had a little boy about seven or eight. He was unfortunately drowned crossing the Waimea River in a bullock dray.¹⁴⁹ The river was in flood, the country is low and the river spreads very wide. They got off the ford and the poor little child was lost. That was after I left Nelson.

I was at the Dillons the first summer after I arrived. I remember going with a party pig-hunting. They were not real wild pigs, but ones that had got away and had to be shot. It was made quite a picnic of. They took a bullock dray and a party of ladies. Mr Stafford, Dillon, Domett and Munro that afterwards made history,¹⁵⁰ were of the party. We got three large pigs – one the dogs could not hold. It had to be shot. That was my first experience of that sport. The country was all open and level - cabbage tree swamp most of it. This part was called Waimea West. The first time I held a plough was on the Dillons' farm. It was a

¹⁴³ The writer is clearly reporting from other accounts at this point. The text from here on is less polished and has more frequent references forward in time. It suggests the parts up to here had been worked on for a period rather than written in one effort.

¹⁴⁴ "The Play Scene in Hamlet".

¹⁴⁵ The 'Dillon Letters' (Sharp 1954) amplify the relations of these settlers. Reay and Butt visited Dillon at Waimea taking religious services and assisting a local school. Porter's visits may well have been connected with these.

¹⁴⁶ The English family seat of the Dillons was Ditchley in Oxfordshire.

¹⁴⁷ She was their dairymaid.

¹⁴⁸ Munro married Dinah Secker at Waimea in May 1845.

¹⁴⁹ Constantine Dillon drowned crossing the Waimea on horseback in 1853. The report of a son drowning appears to be a confusion with some other event.

¹⁵⁰ Edward William Stafford and Alfred Domett were both Premiers of New Zealand, Dillon was secretary to Governor Grey for a period. David Munro was the second speaker of the House of Representatives. The writer may be confusing Francis Dillon Bell, usually known as Dillon, with Constantine Dillon. Dillon Bell was then the Nelson agent for the New Zealand Company and was later a minister in several ministries.

two wheel plough drawn by bullocks. I was very proud of learning. There was also a quiet horse that I rode when I could catch him. I did not like going back to Nelson after that.

The next spring Mrs Reay rented a small three-roomed cottage at the Waimea and sent Miss Essex, Ellen, Charlie Reay and myself up there for a month. We had a good time of it. I had the loan of a gun and shot pigeons and parrots in a bush near the house and once I got lost in it for a short time. I particularly remember a harvest home, after the old English style. It was held in two large barns on a farm of a man named Kerr. One was prepared for dancing, the other as a supper room. There were other sheds with lots of straw in them, where some of the guests got a little sleep. I helped to decorate. Dr Munro got a board, chalked on it "Welcome to Waimea". He gave me a gimlet and told me to bore holes to form the letters, then stick flowers in them. It came out very nicely. The cabbage trees were in full bloom.¹⁵¹ There was a quantity of it about the rooms. Even now when I smell that flower I think of the Waimea harvest home. A large number of people were invited from Nelson and they came on horseback, bullock drays, horse carts and on foot. Dancing was kept up till long after daylight. There were few that got sleep. About 10 am most of the people from Nelson started for home but for the Waimea people and others that stayed, a picnic was arranged, as there was plenty of tucker left. I wonder if there are any alive besides myself that were at that spree. I doubt it very much. After the Nelson people left, the bullock teams were yoked and horses saddled. We went five or six miles to the sea beach and got a nice place under the shade of some trees and scrub. After a good feed, most got away and had a quiet nap. At about five we had tea, then yoked up for home.

Cricket was very much played both at Nelson and Waimea. The green at Nelson was a fine ground. There were about six or seven boys about my own age. We were always at it and sometimes played with the grown up people. Mr Reay was a fine bat but a left-hander. Bathing was a favourite sport in summer. The Maitai River is close to the town. There were deep holes that gave fine diving. We would be in the water on and off most part of the day. It was there I became an expert swimmer and it has more than once saved my life in after years. To go down to the Port was another holiday trip. We fished off the wharf with rod and line, with a float. The fish were small – some the shape of schnapper. Garfish we also caught – they were the best. My life at Nelson on the whole must have been pleasant from a boy's point of view, although I did not think so at the time. Do we ever enjoy the present? Miss Essex and myself were great chums. She was only three years older than I. She afterwards married Dr Pollen¹⁵² of Auckland. I saw the announcement of her death in the papers about four years ago. They had sons and daughters – I see the name sometimes now.

¹⁵¹ Cabbage trees flower in November. The celebration is unlikely to have been a harvest home. Monro and friends had organised a "Bachelor's Ball" at Waimea on 24th November 1843. It was probably this event.

¹⁵² Dr Daniel Pollen, Premier of New Zealand in 1875, a minister in many ministries and an early industrialist.

I had been nearly two years at Nelson when the *Victoria* arrived again from the north. Captain Richards¹⁵³ brought a letter to Mr Reay requesting that I should be sent home. Mrs Reay demurred, saying my things were not ready but the Captain said he had instructions to bring me and he would carry them out. The fact was Mrs Reay did not like to lose the payment.¹⁵⁴ We came back by the west coast and called at New Plymouth. There we took in three passengers - one was Mr Percy Smith¹⁵⁵ who is still alive. Another was a boy going to St John's College - his name was Wickstead. His father was one of the very first settlers at Taranaki. Another was John King, also going to the College. He was afterwards shot in the war in 1863. There was no breakwater at New Plymouth at that time. The landing was all done with surf boats, mostly from the Waitara. We left in the evening, went round the North Cape and got to Auckland in the afternoon. I don't recollect how long it took.

When I got back, I found Mother and Father had moved to the farm at Waiparora and Alice was keeping house for Richard in Grafton Rd.¹⁵⁶ Word had been left with Captain Rough, the Harbourmaster, that I was to go to Richard's till the boat from the farm came up. Next day Father came up to fetch me. The first thing he did was to take me to a tailor's to get a new rig. My clothes had been very much neglected. So ended my schooling at Nelson. It was so much time lost, besides the expense. I think it was in November¹⁵⁷ I got back and I went to St John's College in March.

GOING BACK TO BEFORE I LEFT FOR NELSON

At the first sale of country land Father bought 200 acres at Tamaki West.¹⁵⁸ It was on the sea beach called Waiparora (Duckwater).¹⁵⁹ It had long frontage to the bay. The first plough in the Auckland district was started there in 1843 – a man Pearce did the ploughing. It was a small wooden plough. The top part of the mouldboard was wood. It was brought out from England by Mr William Atkin,¹⁶⁰ our next neighbour. He brought out two of the same kind. The team consisted of two working bullocks. They were red with white on face, just alike – could hardly tell one from the other, Redman and Nidu. The other two were a

¹⁵³ Captain of the *Victoria*.

¹⁵⁴ The financial state of the Nelson settlement was parlous in 1844, after the collapse of the New Zealand Company. Captain Porter's financial state was likewise.

¹⁵⁵ Stevenson Percy Smith, 1840-1922, later Surveyor General and Secretary for Lands and Mines also a Maori scholar, is the well known Percy Smith. He was not resident in New Plymouth until 1850 so this may be a different Percy Smith or a faulty memory of a name.

¹⁵⁶ Land purchased by Richard Porter in 1843.

¹⁵⁷ The possible sailings of *Victoria* are 31 October 1844 from Wellington cleared to Auckland, 31 December 1844 from Wellington, but she was at New Plymouth on January 2nd on the way to Auckland which hardly leaves time for a Nelson stop, or from Wellington on 8 February 1845 cleared to Taranaki. The first seems the most likely given the recollection of a November return.

¹⁵⁸ February 1842, see figure 27. It did not reach 200 acres until a second lot was added in December 1842.

¹⁵⁹ Simmons' *Maori Auckland* gives the name as Waiparera and locates the name to the stream at the eastern end of St Heliers. *Parera* is a grey duck.

¹⁶⁰ William Atkin, a neighbour to the west. Remembered today by Atkin Ave in Mission Bay.

bull, Billie and a cow, Dairymaid. The cow was a splendid worker, but hard to milk. Cattle were scarce and high in price. The two bullocks cost £40 and were imported from Sydney.¹⁶¹ I worked them for years after I left school. After the land was once broken up, the two bullocks were enough with the light plough. They went like horses – would come round at the word and did not require a driver. Later we got two steers - that made a good team of four for heavy work. The bull went in the cart shafts and was very good at holding back down hill with a big load on.

As soon as the land was bought, men were sent down to clear, fence and drain. Timber was got and two carpenters to build the house.¹⁶² It was quite close to the beach with a high cliff at the back. The house is there yet after sixty-five years, showing how good the timber was. There are also two large willow trees - one of them I planted in 1846. We had a large boat that had been the *Dorset's* long boat. She was built of teak. A very fine boat. She was rigged with spread¹⁶³ sail and jib – also a jigger with boom out of the stern. In her I had my first lesson in boat sailing after I returned from Nelson in 1845. I learnt to handle her well even by myself. Soon after work was started at the farm, a party of natives came round from Okahu and pointed out a spot where they said some of their ancestors were interred. Father collected some of the workmen and told them to get posts and rails and fence the place in at once. One of the Maoris understood a little English. When they saw what was going to be done, he said, "Give money, gold, then you plant potatoes there." It is needless to say that they did not get the money gold. They came again one day in a large canoe loaded with potatoes in kits. Stacking them two high along the beach the chief, Te Kauwa¹⁶⁴ stood out, saying, "Homi nomi"¹⁶⁵, being literally translated meant, "You give me, I give you". Two large boxes with good locks had taken his fancy and they were proceeding to walk off with them. Unfortunately for them the owners did not see it in the same light and at last they had to be satisfied with a fig of twist tobacco on each kit, the regular price at that time. Each kit held about 50 lbs.

In 1842, there was no road cleared from West Tamaki to Auckland – only an old Maori track part of the way. Father had gone down to Waiparora in the boat and wanted to go back overland to see the country. He started about 2 pm. It was in June and the days were short. The track led down into the gully to the Purewa Creek, then up through what is now part of the cemetery. For some distance the track was well defined but before coming to where Green Lane now joins Remuera Rd, it became very faint. He got off the track and instead of keeping along the ridge towards Mt Hobson, he got down through fern and titree to what is now Ellerslie. By this time, it began to get dark so he let the horse have its own way (one of the few then in Auckland). About 11 pm he came to a sort of road, that afterwards proved to be Manukau Rd and at last sighted a house. It proved to be a Mr Rich's¹⁶⁶ – one of the very first settlers at

¹⁶¹ In 1847.

¹⁶² See figure 26.

¹⁶³ Perhaps sprit sail is meant.

¹⁶⁴ Te Kawau, a Ngati Whatua chief central to Auckland being settled.

¹⁶⁵ *Homai, no mai.*

¹⁶⁶ Owner of the Mt Eden flock.

Epsom. They kindly gave my Father a shake-down for the rest of the night. After dark, rain had come on in showers and he fully expected to be out all night. It would have been rough on him as he was then 57 years of age. Fortunately, he had a good-sized pocket pistol.¹⁶⁷ The contents of that kept him warm. Mr Rich's farm was about opposite the present Junction Hotel,¹⁶⁸ on the Mt Eden side of the road. In 1843 all the land from what is now Orakei Road to Newmarket was all a black birch¹⁶⁹ bush. Only a Maori's track was cut, where now the electric cars¹⁷⁰ run.

I have seen wonderful changes in my time in 67¹⁷¹ years. What may my grandchildren and great-grand-children see in the next 60 years?

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¹⁶⁷ A pocket flask for spirits.

¹⁶⁸ On the corner of Great South Rd and Manukau Rd.

¹⁶⁹ Birch is a bushman's term for beech, *Nothofagus* sp. There was no beech on the Auckland isthmus.

¹⁷⁰ Trams, commenced service in 1902.

¹⁷¹ It is not obvious what was being measured. He was 76 years old. He had been in New Zealand 66 years. It could be either that was meant.

Appendix 2: Captain William Field Porter – a biographical sketch

This note is written to complement the recollections and does not repeat information from them other than where necessary.

England

William Field Porter was born in London in January 1784 and christened at St Mary Matfelon, Whitechapel.¹⁷⁹ It was a sailors' church. His parents William Porter and Elizabeth nee Field who had been married in the same church, were resident in Lambeth St.¹⁸⁰ and had all their children christened at St Mary. The Field Porter name, which has persisted to this day,¹⁸¹ originates from their marriage in 1783. There is a seal in the family possession with a crest which is associated with "Porter of London". William's paternal grandfather had been born in Holborn, London and his great-grandfather in Northampton. Elizabeth Field was a more recent arrival in London, from Kent. The Whitechapel area then had a maritime focus. There are few reminders of this today other than Trinity House, built 1793-6, home of the Britain's lighthouse managers. The area was a centre for the British West Indies sugar trade in the late 18th century. The sugar trade went hand in hand with the slave trade. London was a major port of origin for slaving voyages. William Field Porter's paternal and maternal grandfathers were mariners, which may have lead to William's maritime career.

William's mother died in 1794 and his father in 1796 when William was about 12, leaving four surviving children. We can surmise Porter must have commenced a career at sea well before 1805. An entry for future Naval officers was as a midshipman and twelve was a common age of entry. Midshipmen then did not have the status of crew but were part of the Captain's entourage. Equally there were sea roles on merchant ships available at an early age. For children with the basics of writing and arithmetic, apprentice openings could offer the opportunity to advance. We do not know which route Porter followed but one or the other seems likely given the family circumstances. For the second son Thomas there is a bare record that he died at sea in 1807, but no other detail. There is no family record of the lives of the two daughters. It is likely William lost touch with them. The only clue to the fate of the orphans is that a portrait and a silhouette of the brother of his mother Elizabeth, survives in the family possession.¹⁸² He is pictured in late middle age so he may well have survived his sister and taken some role in the orphans' upbringing.

¹⁷⁹ Literally the White Chapel. The most recent church on the site, of Victorian age, was destroyed in the Blitz in 1941. It was not rebuilt.

¹⁸⁰ An 1819 street guide has Lambeth St in Goodmans Fields, Whitechapel. An early 19th century map has a Lambert St east of the former Goodmans Fields running parallel with Leman Street. The street no longer exists.

¹⁸¹ Field has only ever been used as a second Christian name. Porterfield is an unrelated and much more ancient name.

¹⁸² His Christian name is not recorded with the portraits – Elizabeth's brothers William Field and Thomas Field were witnesses at her 1783 wedding so he is presumably one of these.

As a young man Porter is supposed to have been at the Battle of Trafalgar (October 1805) but the only record is from much later.¹⁸³ He would have been 21 years old, but by then he could have been at sea for almost a decade. In the Napoleonic times non-commissioned seamen shifted readily from the merchant marine to the navy. The information in the letter in Appendix 1 also suggests 1805 as the year he was an under-officer on a merchant voyage to the West Indies, already a skilled navigator.

His command career first records him as master of the Liverpool based three masted ship *Tiger*, 386 tons¹⁸⁴ (see figure 11), for a voyage to Africa in 1807 and again in 1808, 1809, 1813 and 1814¹⁸⁵ - all the latter for voyages to Barbados. Subsequent to his command the ship was lost off Ireland in 1819, inbound from Barbados with a sugar and cotton cargo. He was not the owner. On one visit to Barbados (probably 1813) he was the defendant in a trial, but no more details are known of that. The other Porter relatives (figure 8) did not have Liverpool associations. The reason for Porter's move to Liverpool may simply have been work opportunities and perhaps the sugar/slave trade connection of his birthplace was material as both London and Liverpool were centres for the trade.

The African departure is significant. The British slave trade was ended in 1807 by its prohibition using British ships. There were a flurry of slaving voyages in 1807 to take the last legal opportunity to trade. Liverpool was a centre for anti-abolitionists. Local MP William Roscoe voted for the abolishment and on his return to Liverpool he was met with violence. Most of the people of Liverpool saw the abolishment of slavery as "an end to their happy and profitable existence". The Abolition of Slavery Act came into effect on May 1st but ships that had cleared an African port with a cargo of slaves by then could finish their voyage. Prior to that there was a triangular trade, Liverpool to west Africa, Africa to the Americas with slaves (the "middle passage"), then back to Liverpool, typically with a tobacco, sugar or molasses cargo on the last leg.¹⁸⁶ Coffee from Jamaica also became a major item. The slave trade became illegal for United States ships too, at the end of 1807.¹⁸⁷ Barbados was a centre for the slave trade and for the export of sugar back to Britain. Owning slaves was not made illegal in the West Indies in 1807, just their carriage in British ships. Barbados was a natural entry point for British ships being at the eastern end of the West Indies and a long settled British port. Slaves from Barbados were on-traded to Cuba and the southern states of the USA. The owners of the *Tiger* are known to have been slave traders. It is very likely that Porter was a participant in the last days of the British maritime slave trade. It is

¹⁸³ Trafalgar crew lists have two William Porters but neither of the right age or birthplace.

¹⁸⁴ Built Liverpool 1800.

¹⁸⁵ The war with the United States from 1812-15 was not a great interference with trade as the British retained sea power through it, despite losing some frigate on frigate encounters.

¹⁸⁶ Liverpool was supplanting London in this trade, however slaving did not dominate Liverpool shipping. Some ships traded directly with the Americas as well, the competition meaning the third leg of the slaving triangle did not always carry cargo.

¹⁸⁷ Outfitting slave ships in the US and landing slaves from US owned ships in the US had become illegal earlier but had not stopped US participation.

unlikely he would have been sent as master on an African voyage if he did not have prior experience there.

Tiger was armed with twenty 9pdr guns and later with an additional two 18pdr carronades. The 9pdr guns are not large but they were numerous. She was well equipped for being a privateer, but Liverpool's heydays as a privateer port were in the Napoleonic wars and later in the War of 1812. Any new outbreak of war could have seen Dutch, French or United States privateers operating against merchantmen. The first indication of a new war received by a merchantman might have been the appearance of a privateer, so a merchantman could not go unprepared even in a period of peace. There was an 18th century privateer based in Liverpool called the *Tyger*. Perhaps the owners of *Tiger* might be characterised as careful rather than opportunistic, but the aggressive name of the ship does rather suggest otherwise.

In 1810 Porter married Alice Roper of Liverpool, in Liverpool. Presumably the *Tiger* initial voyages had been profitable and set him up for having dependants. The Ropers were a Liverpool family. They had four children, Richard Field, born in 1812, Richard carrying on a maternal Christian name, a William born in 1819, who died at less than a month old, Alice born in 1824 and William, the writer of the recollections, born in 1830. The birth spacing of these children is remarkable for the time and while a seaman would be away at sea a lot, no doubt returning for only brief periods, there is no record of Captain Porter sailing as a captain after 1818, so this is only a partial explanation.

He moved on to ship ownership by 1816, as the owner of an American built brig, *Alice*. It is likely she was a prize in the 1812 war and bought and renamed by Porter. She is recorded as having Porter and variously Messrs Evans and Cool as co-masters. Voyage destinations include Guadeloupe, New York and Newfoundland in 1816 and New York and Jamaica in 1818. He is also on record on a voyage including Jamaica and Charleston in 1817, on the *Alice Porter*. The record of the latter name is from a contemporary letter from his father-in-law rather than a maritime source. It is very likely the same ship. The transition from sea captain to shore based merchant / ship owner was a classic Liverpool path of success.

Another brig *Alice* was built in Chester in 1818 and Porter is recorded as the owner from 1823 through to 1833. She was registered in Sydney in 1836 but must have been sold by Porter before then.

He was involved in the construction of several ships (see appendix 4). As well as the *Porter* in 1824, Bland and Chaloner built the Brig *Rapid*, 241 tons, in 1822, three masted ships, the *Nandi*, 315 tons, in 1827 and the *Mary*, 308 tons, also in 1827, all built for Porter alone. In 1829 the same firm built a three masted ship the *Bland*, 593 tons, but the owning partners included Messrs Ashley and Bland along with W. F. Porter. The succeeding firm Chaloner and Sons built a brig, *Frank*, 167 tons, for Porter in 1831. Wm Dickinson and Co. of Liverpool built yet another *Alice*, 302 tons, for Porter in 1834. She was a three masted ship. Dickinsons also built a ship *Tiger*, 375 tons, for Porter in 1835. She was lost on a voyage to Bombay in 1837. The recollections say the *Dorset*

was built in the family's own yard and implies the ship *Lancaster* was recently built likewise and for their business's own use.

The dates certainly suggest operation of a fleet of ships, no doubt employing many masters. The common mode of the day was for the owners to also be the providers of cargo, so the master of the ship had the responsibility at ports of selling goods and securing new cargo to on-trade. The *Nandi* with her Indian name was licensed for the Indian trade.

Other destinations recorded for the ships owned by Porter are Jamaica, Calcutta, Bengal, Bombay, Montreal, Buenos Aires and Valparaiso. The text records Richard as travelling in his father's ships "to most parts of the world". Liverpool was an export port for manufactured goods particularly from around Manchester. The return cargoes from Calcutta / Bengal would have been Chinese tea but also raw cotton or cotton yarn, from Valparaiso silver and copper, (only such high value cargoes justifying that long voyage), from Charleston rice and cotton, from Buenos Aires tallow, hides and salted beef. Porter is recorded in a later source as being involved in the China trade but there is no detail to support this and it seems unlikely he was directly involved in trade there, but return cargoes from Calcutta would have included goods from China as Calcutta was a trading and transshipping point of the China opium and tea trade. Some of the outward sailings were from London where Porter used shipping agents.

Porter was a member of the West India Association, a body which promoted the interests of shipping and trade to the West Indies. At some stage he had an office in Lancelot's Hey, a warehouse area on Liverpool's waterfront now lost to more recent development. By 1836 the shipping business was representing itself as W.F. Porter and Son so Richard, then in his early 20s had an active role.

In 1817 the family had an address of Town Row, West Derby, which is a village east of Liverpool. As the recollections state they were living at Mosley Bank prior to the departure and as Alice was born there, at least from 1824. The recollections note the land there had been owned for 30 years. A contemporary map shows Mosley Bank as owned by W.F.Porter (figure 13). It is set in countryside. Mosley Hill and Aigburth Hill are adjacent estates. Matching this map onto a modern street map suggests the house was sited about where Penny Lane (of Beatles fame) crosses the railway at the western end of the lane. Figure 12 is a representation of the house in the family collection. The rural setting is consistent with the old map and the direction in which the view was taken can be reconstructed from the map. The house no longer exists.

It is not clear where all the farming knowledge that went into the purchases of livestock and plants came from. The family home was outside the town among farms. It had orchards and grazing for a cow and horses so perhaps it was not extensive farming experience but rather that of country residence, using some land productively.

Porter was registered as a voter after the Reform Act of 1832 – as a merchant of Aigburth. In an election of the same year his voting is recorded – for the two more liberal candidates. Several sources say he was a past Mayor of Liverpool, but this is not correct.¹⁸⁸ There is no known public office that Porter filled in Liverpool. His rapid ascent to office in South Australia and New Zealand may have been from some prior experience, or it may just have been his age and experience in colonies otherwise dominated by youth.

The loss of the new *Tiger* in 1836 must have been a major blow. A family tradition is that when Porter was in financial difficulties his creditors allowed him to keep the *Porter*. This is hinted at in the text. One source has it that Porter had bought the *Porter* back from the bank but had a mortgage of £3000 on it.

The planning for the emigration neatly parallels the Wakefield scheme which operated at much the same time to New Zealand and South Australia, with bonded emigrants with useful trades taking goods, plants and animals for settling a new land. While the voyage was not part of the scheme, Wakefield's emigration ideas must have been influential in the way the trip was planned. A remarkable number of Porter cousins also migrated to South Australia at about the same time (see figure 8). There is no mention of them in the recollections. Perhaps the relationship had been lost and only re-found through genealogical research. The selection of South Australia by them as well may relate to the Wakefield promotion of that colony. The Australian colonies where transportation was still operating were less favoured for migration.

South Australia

Of the later lives of passengers on the brigs little is known. The Crawfords on the *Dorset* settled at Adelaide. The terms of their passage then did not require them to settle wherever Porter chose. They must have been free agents once in Adelaide.

The camp at Adelaide mentioned in the recollections was at South Terrace. Goods were advertised for sale, as was the intention to commence trading in the *Porter* to Launceston. However the announcement that there was to be a special survey at Port Lincoln changed this plan and the next sailing of the brig was advertised as for Port Lincoln on March 7th but it may have actually left somewhat later.

The Porter involvement in the Port Lincoln settlement story is somewhat confused between the many fragmentary accounts. At about this time there was an agreement to sell the *Dorset* to Charles Smith, who was also a leading light in the Port Lincoln special survey company. Benjamin Shaen, Smith's business partner may also have been involved in the purchase.

Port Lincoln commenced with a special survey. These were licences granted by the Governor for individuals on payment of £4000, to survey off 4000 acres

¹⁸⁸ West Derby is a possibility. It was a separate borough until 1835.

at a designated place and subsequently up to a further 15,000 acres adjacent to that site. The individuals had to cover the cost of the survey, the details of which were subject to the approval of the Governor. A special survey company was founded for Port Lincoln in rivalry with the South Australia Company. The former won the right to undertake the survey. Its trustees were Charles Smith and John Bentham Neales, the Government Auctioneer. Charles Smith was a fellow Liverpudlian. There is a Liverpool Street in Port Lincoln.

Porter was a shareholder in the survey company. Its creation attracted attention of speculators as well as intending settlers. Smith advertised that he would be despatching the *Dorset* to Port Lincoln. Smith and Henry Hawson took out the survey licence on February 27th 1839 on behalf of the survey company. Henry Hawson was a Londoner who had moved to Newfoundland where he became well off and started a large family. They moved on to Brazil, Western Australia and then Adelaide in their brig *Abeona*, the master of which was by this time his eldest son Henry Cowell Hawson.

The contracted surveyor and some settlers were transported to Port Lincoln on the *Abeona*, sailing March 11. *Abeona* was chartered by the proprietors of the survey company. March 19th is commemorated as the founding date of Port Lincoln when *Abeona* landed the first settlers. A flag raising ceremony was held at the founding of the settlement. There is a plaque at the first landing site at the northern end of the town (near Shaen St) to commemorate the settlement and an annual commemoration is held there by the Caledonian Society (figure 18). There is a Porter Bay, a Porter St and a Dorset Place in the town, as well as Abeona Terrace, Bishop, Shaen and Smith Streets. North of Thistle Island at the entrance to the Spencer Gulf is Porter Rock, first observed by Captain Porter.

Porter was a passenger on the *Dorset* when she sailed to Port Lincoln on March 26th. He was sworn in as magistrate at Port Lincoln on March 30th addressing the meeting "... stating his determination to repress, to the utmost of his ability, any outrage that might be committed, and to be equally open to the complaints of the poor as the rich – to the weak as to the strong (cheers)." The recollections state he only became a shareholder after an inspection of Port Lincoln. He was certainly an owner of land lots by early April.

An advertised March 7th sailing of the *Porter* to Port Lincoln may have been the earlier inspection referred to but a contemporary newspaper implies that the *Porter* arrived on the same day as the *Abeona*, March 19th, using the southern entrance. Alternatively there was a sailing of the *Dorset* to Port Lincoln advertised for March 15th. The *Porter* and *Dorset* were at Port Lincoln on April 13th after landing settlers, but their arrival dates are not clear. *Porter* completed a further voyage from Adelaide on March 29th.

The initial survey was of half acre waterfront lots which were allocated to the company members. Subsequent ballots were of town and country lots. Delineation of the 15,000 acre additional block was commissioned of a surveyor in June 1839. Not all the lots were allocated to the survey company shareholders. Some were retained by the company for subsequent sale.

Porter held one of the initial waterfront lots jointly with Henry Hawson. Six other waterfront lots were taken by Porter alone. He must have had land from the surveys both on Boston Island and inland, for a station eight miles from the house is mentioned.

The terms of sale of the *Dorset* were disputed and there was a falling out between Smith and Porter. There is a record that Smith announced he would not shake Porter by the hand. One account has it that Porter wanted faster settlement on the vessel than first agreed. In late June Smith was advertising a *Dorset* sailing from Adelaide to Port Lincoln under the command of Thomas Robertson. The same paper announced the appointment of assignees for Smith and Shaen's partnership as traders in Port Lincoln. On July 3^d the *Dorset* was offered for sale by Smith's assignees. It is not known if Porter was paid in full for the brig. By July 27th when the *Dorset* was re-registered in Adelaide the owners were Solomon and Solomon, still with Robertson as master. The account in the recollections of the unloading of the *Dorset* at Port Lincoln and of her sale obviously leaves out much detail.

A second ballot of land was held on June 18th 1839 with paired draws of further water frontage lots and town half acres. Porter was present at this Adelaide meeting of the shareholders in the special survey company. The newspaper account mentions the "great services done by him as an early settler of Port Lincoln". The earlier draw as reported there, had errors and part of the business of the meeting was to correct those. There also appears to have been some need to re-examine script used in payment, which could be either of shares in the company or of land purchased from the company other than by ballot. The account noted that Charles Smith announced that some of the previously drawn waterfront lots standing in the name of a John Richardson were in fact the property of Shaen or Shaen and Smith. This may be one of the errors, or indicate that Richardson was a nominee, or that the lots had since been purchased from Richardson, or there was some further dispute over the survey. It is not clear. In any event the insolvencies of Smith and Shaen must have soon presented a problem enough over the ownership of their lots.

Porter was a promoter of the advantages of Port Lincoln, sending two letters about the merits of the port to Adelaide papers and a further report to the Governor which was also published. In early June 1839 Porter was described as having made "great progress in building, gardening, cattle stock, digging wells, etc." The well had excellent water and the plants mentioned are potatoes, an orange tree, parsley and a "variety of vegetable seeds" making an appearance. His horses, sheep and cattle are reported to be thriving and the Chinese and Neapolitan pigs mentioned in the recollections likewise thriving, foraging for themselves.

The sale of *Dorset* was not the only problem. The Governor, prompted by the settlers, deciding that land near Kirton Point should be reserved for port use, changed the survey in May 1839, somehow allocating the land on which Porter had built to Smith. How this was resolved and the effect Smith's insolvency had on this is not clear, but Smith did offer to swap land to resolve the matter.

When Porter left in 1840 he left the house rented which may indicate it had not been resolved or it may be that the property value was depressed.

We know from another's reminiscence that Porter was not enamoured of the inhabitants of Adelaide, describing them in March 1840 to a fellow sailor as "...thieves, robbers and blacklegs of all descriptions." The reference to Happy Valley as the valley of discord in the recollections may relate to the effects of the Shaen / Smith insolvency, or disputes over the survey, or simply to the failure of the settlement to sustain its initial progress. Alice was used to haul building stone, wool and fish to Adelaide in 1839 – a list which does not suggest a great depth of enterprise to build on. Captain Bishop acted as agent for Porter after his departure, selling stock for him in 1842. These were 250 sheep and lambs, 30 head of cattle, two horses and three foals. As the recollections note some land was sold by Porter's son William decades later. Indeed it appears some was never sold but was lost through non-occupancy.

Captain Porter also took up 320 acres at the town of Gawler but there is no indication he ever occupied it. Porter was the chair of a meeting of the Gawler survey association in July 1839 when the land there was balloted. There is a Porter St there as well.

Australian Wandering

A sailing of the Porter for Launceston was advertised in South Australia in early 1839 but seems not to have eventuated. A trading voyage was made by Porter to the eastern states in 1839 departing 18 August under William Murray, with stops at Hobart, Sydney (not originally intended but forced in by weather), Newcastle, Hobart and leaving there for Adelaide and arriving there on the 8th or 9th of December. Coal was carried from Newcastle. Passengers were carried on all legs and on the homeward journey the cargo included horses, timber, shingles, spirits, wine, tea and potatoes.

The Porter left Port Lincoln with the family aboard on July 1st 1840. The sequence of stops in the recollections is Hobart, Port Phillip, Launceston, Sydney, Hobart, Sydney then New Zealand. However the shipping records show this sequence has been distorted in memory, the last visit to Tasmania was to Launceston rather than Hobart and there was even a return trip to Adelaide.

	From	Departure	To	Arrival
1840	Port Lincoln	1 July	Hobart	8 July
	Hobart	25 Sept	Sydney	4 or 5 Oct 1839
	Sydney	12 or 13 Dec	Port Phillip	19 or 20 Dec

¹⁸⁹ With dates drawn from newspapers there is often a lack of clarity on exact dates.

1841	Port Phillip	2 or 5 Jan	Hobart	8 Jan
	Hobart	25 or 28 Jan	Adelaide	6 or 7 Feb
	Adelaide	1 / 2 March	Launceston	12 March
	Launceston	25 or 26 or 29 March	Sydney	5 April
	Sydney	11 May	Great Barrier Island	-
	Great Barrier	-	Auckland	29 May

Interestingly the Porter was offered for sale by auction in Hobart in late August 1840, suggesting there might then have been an intention to settle there, but the sale did not eventuate nor the settlement. After that the stops were short and Porter was clearly making trading voyages for 5 months, which must have been an uncomfortable existence for the family still aboard.

New Zealand

Captain Porter had a prominent public life after his settling in New Zealand. He had more mixed fortunes in business but eventually success as a farmer.

He arrived in Auckland just after the first sale of land by the Government. This was the reselling of part of a substantial block purchased for very little from the Ngati Whatua.¹⁹⁰ He therefore had to buy from the initial purchasers. He bought from Willoughby Shortland, the Colonial Secretary in the government, second in rank only to the Governor, in a private transaction, agreeing in July to pay £1200 for a block that had cost Shortland far less.¹⁹¹ The officials including Shortland, had been first allocated land at Officials Bay for modest sums. Controversially they were bidders and purchasers in the first auction of other land as well, helping along with many speculators, to drive prices up well above the expected level. Of the land he sold in part to Porter, Shortland had selected lot 11 of section 3 prior to the auction and it did not go to sale. He had to pay the average per area sale price for section 3 from the auction. This right was granted to the officials but they were limited to one lot by this method and limited in the land area. They were to use the land themselves. Moreover to prevent abuse they were to have no titles until two years after the sale.

The auction was a success in that it raised a substantial amount of funds for the Government short of any other source. In other ways it was a disaster. The prices were absurdly high, showing the government had underestimated the

¹⁹⁰ Ngati Whatua desired the establishment of Auckland as the capital. The transaction is sometimes described as a gift.

¹⁹¹ The sale was of lot 11 and half of lot 12 of section 3. Shortland paid £339.14.1½ for lot 11 and £315.13.0 for the adjacent lot 12, purchased at the sale.

demand. It started Auckland off as a land speculator's haven. Worse, many of the commercial lots were too large and subdivision commenced immediately, requiring new narrow access lanes which have plagued down-town Auckland ever since. Only a 10% deposit was required immediately and many lots were re-sold within days. The greatest problem was that about a third of the land sold ended in the hands of the officials, many of them the same officials expected to administer the difficult issue of issuing titles to land sold by Maori prior to 1840, where there were huge problems over establishing the reality of sales and of the boundaries. The officials by being land speculators themselves, immediately lost the trust of the old land claimants and in particular of the New Zealand Company. This was to poison relations between the Government and many residents, particularly those in the Company settlements for the next decade, long after the first officials had left their offices.

Prices for land rose immediately after the sale so Porter's paying far more than the sale price was not unusual. The site must have appealed to Porter with its water frontage, though there were from the outset plans to fill the shallow bay, which would leave it landlocked. The filling commenced after Porter's ownership of land in the bay had ended.

The land was between Shortland Crescent (now Street) and the beach, then called Fore Street, later Fort St, (figures 20,21). Its address was Fore Street. The first house referred to in the reminiscences was built on this land. On the foreshore below was a two storied store owned by Captain Porter. Shortland Crescent was not a practical access to the lot until it was lowered in level over the next few years. The two buildings feature in several early renditions of the Auckland waterfront. On the drawings the store looks to have no coherent design as if it had grown in several stages, but it appears complete in the earliest drawings. It was for a period a bond store. There was also a cottage somewhere on the property by 1843 when it was advertised for rent by Porter.

The 1842 police census has two dwellings on the Porter property, one timber and one raupo.¹⁹² The household total was seven persons. There were two adult males in residence, both classed as professionals (no doubt W.F.Porter and his son Richard) and there are three domestic servants. There is one juvenile male, no doubt William.

Today the former state broadcasting studio built in 1935 (now the Auckland University's Kenneth Myers Centre), stands in Shortland St on the upper part of the site. It is a heritage building in an art deco style. There are three commercial buildings in Fort St on the lower part. The lot boundaries do not meet the streets perpendicularly, just as they were originally laid out. This awkward lot arrangement is still apparent in either non-rectangular buildings with sides conforming to the boundaries, or wedges of unused land around rectangular buildings.

¹⁹² A water rooted plant with a thick stem, used for short lived buildings by Maori who also built them for colonists.

The purchase of this property proved to be difficult. Porter paid only £400 of the agreed price and was to pay the rest on delivery of title. No doubt the experience of titles in Port Lincoln had made him wary. Shortland as an official was only supposed to buy property by pre-selection for his own use, on which he must build and not sell inside two years. Lot 11 was almost twice the size he was allowed to buy under this scheme. His sale of lot 11 to Porter broke all the requirements. As a result Hobson was directed in a dispatch from London of January 1842, issued by Stanley, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies not to issue a title to officials for land which was not in compliance with the rules.¹⁹³ Hobson had earlier written to Stanley in London that Porter was a tenant on the land, not the owner – a statement which scandalised the editor of the *Southern Cross* when it became public. By the time the instruction arrived Shortland was the Governor in effect. He was in this role for some of the time from Hobson's stroke in March 1840, from which Hobson made only a partial recovery and he was officially Administrator from Hobson's death in September 1842. Shortland did nothing about the instruction, leaving Porter in limbo, with buildings on a property to which he had no title and with a dishonoured transaction with the man who was effectively the all-powerful Governor. Porter got to hear of the lease story and sent copies of the transaction documents with a letter to Stanley, which corrected the misinformation. Shortland then accused Porter of harassment, "every species of annoyance", in particular over seeking appointment as a police magistrate (a salaried position). Shortland is not credible on this exchange given his other behaviour.

A deed in the family papers of March 1842 shows Porter transferring his interest in half of lot 12 to his wife, the part he should by then have had title to, which suggests there may have been settlement with Shortland for this part at least.

Fitzroy arriving in December 1843 as the new Governor, promptly engineered Shortland's resignation but justified this on the basis of his broad maladministration. Shortly after, Major Bunbury acting in Fitzroy's stead in the latter's absence on a southern trip, found the instruction negating the sale and proceeded to act on it. It appears he put pressure on Shortland to win the resulting auction and complete his transaction with Porter.

Completing the sale though was difficult for Captain Porter. In the mean time he had come to have a substantial bad debt from George Cooper, a turbulent and opportunist sometime official who it seemed ran up debts with many residents and whose assets were eventually sold in September 1843. His former official colleagues protected him to some extent it seems, even allowing him to sell land he had agreed to purchase but never paid for. Porter was left exposed by Cooper's unrecoverable debt of some material amount, sufficient that he lacked ready funds to complete the property purchase from Shortland. When the balance of the purchase price was due there was a fire sale of the

¹⁹³ Several other officials had breached the requirement, most infamously Felton Mathew, the Surveyor-General who was the official directly instructed to administer the rule. Shortland's and Mathew's were the most blatant breaches and only they did not receive title to their respective lots.

Porter household effects to raise the money. This occurred in late 1844. There is a suggestion that some citizens sympathetic to Porter were generous in their bids. Certainly the Bank was tolerant of some debt Porter had to them at the time.

It is not clear what happened with the purchase. By 1845 Porter was shown as the owner of most of the eastern half of lot 12 and only a small part of lot 11 on the Fore St frontage. This would have been where the store was. The balance of lot 11 on which the house was built is shown as in the ownership of Shortland, so perhaps there was a settlement for part only of the land.

In modern practice Porter would have been able to claim substantial damages from Shortland, but none are known. Porter issued a writ against Shortland before the latter left the country. This may have forced the completion of the transaction. Porter was through this transaction a central figure in the most notorious of the land speculations by the Government officials.

He had earlier commenced trading from the waterfront store. Goods for sale were advertised in July 1841 while they were still living on the *Porter* so the store's completion must have preceded that of the house. A great deal of trade then was with Maori visitors, who gained the wealth to trade from sale of produce, timber, firewood and land, labour in building temporary houses for residents and general labouring, sometimes trading in cash, sometimes by barter. We know from the recollections, the *Porter* had been loaded in Sydney with goods for this trade. Major merchants had to arrange to import their own stock. A sailing of the brig to Sydney was advertised by Porter for September 1st 1841. As the family were living on board until August this must have been the first planned trip subsequent to that. William Eastgate was recorded as the owner in August 1841. It is unlikely then that Porter was involved in her use subsequent to August. She arrived in Sydney on 1 October having sailed on 19 September. A smaller vessel appears to have been found to replace her, for in March 1842 Porter was advertising a sailing of the "fine fast sailing schooner" *Shamrock* for Sydney, "touching at the Bay of Islands".¹⁹⁴

Rivals, partners Brown and Campbell and partners Henderson and Macfarlane had stores back from the waterfront on the south side of Shortland Crescent. Porter must have had the advantageous position for the trade with Maori but the early advertisements soon fell away. An 1841 advertisement included cedar boards, rice, tobacco, casks of beef and pork, butter, salt, doors, windows, glass, paint, rope, bedsteads, blankets, shirts, waistcoats, horse rugs, coats, mops, handkerchiefs, haberdashery, fur coats, scotch bonnets, shawls, dresses, hose, port, sherry, brandy, rum, arrack, cape wine, porter, beer, blacksmiths' tools and copper. The last advertisement noted in the *New Zealand Herald and Auckland Gazette* was in February 1842, for Van Diemen's Land flour. The February editorial attacking Porter may have ended any commercial relationship there. Other traders advertised vigorously after

¹⁹⁴ William C Daldy brought the *Shamrock* to Auckland from Liverpool via Australia arriving in July 1841. She was registered in Liverpool with McNair as the owner and Daldy as master, through to 1845. Possibly Porter was a shipping agent or he had leased the vessel.

that in the *Southern Cross*, but not Porter. It would seem the store was not a great success.

The house and store can be still be seen in an 1852 watercolour by Charles Heaphy. Neither was in Porter ownership by then. The land by this stage had more buildings, including some on the Shortland St frontage. The house is still there in an 1880's view but the Fort St store had been replaced.

There was a further Government land sale by auction in June 1841. Porter purchased two suburban lots and two cultivation lots in this, 18 acres in all for £220 all up. He purchased land in a further three sales in 1842. Two were lots in Lower Federal Street. A block on the corner of Khyber Pass and Park Road was bought in a new Crown grant subdivision in 1843 and held until 1853. The Tamaki blocks bought in 1842 are shown on figure 27, some of which were bought initially in his wife's name and later transferred to Porter. The western boundary of this block was disputed by Ngati Whatua but this disputed area does not seem to have extended as far as Porter's lot 30. In 1843 he offered for sale a 20 acre lot at Mt Eden – "next to Mr Mason" (the prominent Auckland architect and settler). These purchases mostly seem to have been for speculative purposes.

Prices for land fell from the 1841 speculative heights, eventually leading to a financial crisis in the new Government, which had little source of funds other than the re-sale of land. The development of Auckland slowed until it was reinvigorated after the war in the north. We know that rival traders Brown and Campbell made but small profit in the period through to 1845 and they had better access to capital and they imported goods directly from Britain rather than the more expensive Australia. Brown and Campbell were eventually to profit enormously from export of supplies to Melbourne in the gold rush, a profitable market through to 1855, from the presence of troops in Auckland and from their investments in land. It would seem Porter had to realise on much of his land investments for little profit before this boom.

His purchase of land to use was at the western end of modern Kohimarama¹⁹⁵ in February 1842, paying £112 for the 106 acre lot 30. Unsurprisingly the land bounded the harbour and he built a house on the waterfront, with a view to the Mt Victoria shipping signal station (figure 26). Over the course of several years he accumulated part or all of three adjacent blocks, adding lot 29 in December the same year, ending up with a substantial holding which was farmed. By this time the *Porter* had been sold so the capital free from that may well have gone into the new land. At some stage he moved to the new house and ceased to trade from Commercial Bay. He was resident at Waiparera by late 1844 and later quit the Fore St property, being last recorded as owner there in 1845.

The police censi match this. In 1843 there was a Porter household of 6 persons at Fore St. Again there was a timber house and a raupo house and there was one professional (presumably Richard) one shopkeeper (matching Captain Porter) but domestic servants had reduced to one. There were no juvenile males – William was in Nelson.

¹⁹⁵ The name originally applied to the bastion islet at Bastion Point – since quarried away.

In 1844 there was no Porter household in Fore St but in 'Suburbs' we find a Porter household of three, with one farmer (matching to Captain Porter) and one domestic servant. It is not clear from the census where this was. Suburbs were other than the City, such as Freemans Bay, Official Bay, Mechanics Bay, Parnell, Epsom and Tamaki. Possibly it is the Glen Ligar house owned by Richard in 1845. In early 1845 a property was being advertised by an agent in the *Southern Cross* described as having a two-gabled house and a substantial store on the lower part of the property. It is described as being in lower Queen Street.¹⁹⁶ This sounds like the Porter property though the address may have been deliberately vague.

By 1845 the census was more sophisticated, recording land owners and tenants. The Porter household itself was now at Tamaki, resident in a wooden dwelling. Porter is described there as a farmer. In the household were three agricultural workers, but now no domestic servants. In Fore St Porter as owner, was described as a farmer and had two properties, one a storehouse – presumably on the remnant of lot 11 - which was untenanted and a second (further west, not on the original two lots) tenanted by Daniel Pollen, surgeon. In Shortland Street was a separate property in a lane on the south side tenanted by a shoemaker. In Princess St were two tenanted properties, one let to a saddler, the other to a surgeon/dentist. A further small property in Parnell was let to Gilbert Mears, a settler. Richard is now a householder in his own right in Glen Ligar – now the Queen St valley to Karangahape Rd area. This presents a picture of somewhat straightened circumstances with the Fore St holding not able to be retained in whole, of domestic servants not being retained, but land holdings diversified into a wider variety of dispersed lots and a move in occupation and residence to farming at Kohimarama.

Porter had not finished with the ownership of vessels. He was the owner of the Dandy¹⁹⁷ *Patiki*, built in Auckland in 1842, up until her being wrecked in 1849. In 1843 a small vessel of his, lent to some Maori was wrecked "on the coast". An IOU was signed by the Maori to acknowledge recompense was due. This loss may have contributed to Porter's 1844 financial crisis. He was not alone in having problems. Auckland was the scene of many bankruptcies in that year. He is reported in 1859 as the owner of a "flat bottomed schooner" hauling stone from Rangitoto for the construction of the Melanesian Mission buildings at Kohimarama.

Porter resold some of his speculative land at Tamaki in 1843 and 1844 but for little profit.¹⁹⁸ Governor Fitzroy abruptly switching government revenues from import duty to land tax in 1844 may have occasioned the later sales and it certainly would have suppressed market values. As well his opening of land to direct sale by Maori in 1844 brought much new land to settler ownership and hence to the market, no doubt suppressing values as well. The outbreak of Heke's war, the war in the north, in the Bay of Islands in 1845 had a further

¹⁹⁶ From Wellesley St north on contemporary maps.

¹⁹⁷ A two masted cutter.

¹⁹⁸ But not a 2 acre strip of lot 1, apparently surveyed off for an access. The family forgot about this parcel and it was resumed by the Crown without compensation in 1945.

dampening effect on Auckland. Some residents chose to leave, others came into Auckland from outlying settlements and speculative investment in land was slowed.

In 1845 he had a land claim settled in his favour. As land claims related to purchases from before 1840 this must have been an interest he bought speculatively on the hope of a settlement. Possibly it was for some land at Piako bought by George Cooper and Felton Mathew from William Webster who had bought it before the Treaty. A part was on-sold to by Cooper and Mathew to Porter. This was a wildly speculative investment by all of Cooper, Mathew and Porter.

We know something of his farming activities. A broad range of produce is listed as fare at a 1846 harvest home, of which some must have been local products but it is not clear which. Fresh peaches and gooseberries are mentioned but it was perhaps too soon for newly planted peach trees to be fruiting. He was on the committee of the Auckland Agricultural and Horticultural Society in 1848, exhibited apples and a plough and a prize winning bullock team in 1849. A testimonial he gave to a Maori farmhand in 1850 mentions reaping, so some grain crop was being grown then (his son had earlier planted wheat, barley and oats), ploughing, mowing, churning, ditch digging and fencing.

The family appear to have enjoyed warm relations with its neighbours and the residents at St John's College with reciprocal entertainment and assistance in trips to town by boat. It would seem by about 1848 his financial troubles were behind him and he was content to be a farmer. The canoe borne, abortive Ngati Paoa invasion of Auckland in 1851 must have passed his front door at Waiparera, but we know nothing of what alarms it may have caused there.

His adult son William and daughter appeared to have had an active social engagement in Auckland and the Captain and his wife retained their social role despite their rural residence. They returned hospitality, the activities for guests at their harvest home of 1846 included cricket, other games and a charade. From this rural home his daughter Alice was married in 1853 to Captain John Salmon in the original St Thomas's Church¹⁹⁹ in Tamaki.

In 1854 a land survey was undertaken for Porter at Orapiu on eastern Waiheke. He was involved personally in helping clear the survey lines. It was a block of 363 acres with good water access. It was the subject of a land grant by the Land Claims Commission to W.F. Porter Esq. in the 1860's.

Public Life

Porter held many official roles in Auckland. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace in October 1841 soon after his arrival. He was reappointed to the role regularly even after moving out of the town. Prior to 1856 the Governor operated with an appointed Legislative Council. Captain Porter was an

¹⁹⁹ Built by the residents of the district as a non-denominational church. Its modern replacement is Anglican.

appointed member of the first Council, serving from October 1841 to March 1844 when he resigned. The Governor held all powers irrespective of the Legislative Council, which considered matters only at his pleasure. The Governor was still accountable to the Colonial Office which could overturn decisions of which it did not approve.

Hobson's controversial Land Claims Bill stirred the new colony greatly. Pre-Treaty claims were to be reviewed by commissioners under a set of rules which left little scope for large claims. Porter and the two other independent Councillors initially opposed the measure which disadvantaged the pre-1940 land purchasers, many of whom had large areas under claim and in particular the New Zealand Company. The Bill was withdrawn and shortly after a new Bill was submitted. Porter and Clendon²⁰⁰ (who had been granted a large land block in South Auckland from the Crown in compensation for land taken in the Bay of Islands) then changed their position to support the revised measure. The third Councillor George Earp from Wellington remained defiant. He published an anonymous attack on the other two in the *New Zealand Herald and Auckland Gazette*²⁰¹ in February 1842, but his authorship was soon discovered. In it he implied that Clendon had become sympathetic to the second Bill because of the Clendon land grant. Earp elsewhere said he had been offered a land deal by Clendon so advantageous it was seen by him as a bribe. A series of challenges to duels resulted from the discovery of the authorship. Porter was not involved in these, but he moved a motion of no-confidence in Earp in the Council. Earp was soon after dismissed, further exacerbating relations with the New Zealand Company settlements.

Meiklejohn suggests that the second Bill in fact corrected most of what the old land claimants had found objectionable in the first Bill but that distrust of the officials was so deep that Earp could not see this. A fairer view of Clendon and Porter's conversion may be that they could. All this was to little avail as the Colonial Office disallowed the legislation as being inconsistent with its instructions to Hobson.

The investors in the *Herald* included some of the officials, who were enraged at Earp's attack on the land bill. Critically they had a majority on the *Herald's* governing board. They acted to have the editor Dr Martin dismissed.²⁰² He later sued for loss of two years salary for early termination of his contract. He joined Porter in the action. Somehow Shortland, who like Porter was not a director of the publishing company, was also joined. The defendants countersued for libel but lost in both cases when they were heard together in mid 1842. Porter appears not to have been involved in the cases by the time they went to court.

The Legislative Council never met under Shortland's administration of over a year. Perhaps a factor was that Shortland did not want to have to meet with Porter with whom he had the land purchase business outstanding. The Council

²⁰⁰ James Reddy Clendon.

²⁰¹ Despite the name, not the ancestor of today's New Zealand Herald.

²⁰² The dismissal was not much in the interest of the paper they owned, but it was overcome by the sale of the printing press to the same government as they served!

recommended meeting in early 1844 under the new Governor Fitzroy. Porter was a vocal opponent of a new land claims bill introduced by Fitzroy, opposing an acreage limit to land settlements and speaking of the "hard and unjust treatment of the land claimants".²⁰³ This outraged the editor of the *Southern Cross*, none other than Dr Martin again, who said the same resistance two years earlier would have been better timed. Fitzroy, shortly after his arrival, sought to put his own stamp on the Legislative Council. McLintoch suggests the appointed members were seen as a cipher by the public and in the long absence of meetings, well they might. His view may have been occasioned by Porter's earlier compliance over the land claims bills matter. He also suggests they were unpopular but this may be a convenience in Shortland's or Fitzroy's despatches. Porter's steward's position in a March 1842 regatta does not suggest unpopularity. The land claims matter certainly would have made him no friends in some quarters but Porter won popular elections subsequently. While Porter resigned in 1844 there was no doubt the expectation placed upon him to do so, as Clendon also ceased to be a member. The termination of both was gazetted on the same day. Porter's financial embarrassment at the time may have weighed as well. Later in the 1860's he was to have land claims of his own ruled on by the Land Claims Commission. Porter had a central role in the big issue of 1842 and onwards, of how to deal with the pre-Treaty land claims.

In 1852 there was to be a partial election to two Legislative Councils for the two provinces into which New Zealand was to be divided. Porter stood for the Council of the Province of New Ulster and was elected but never took his seat as the system was abolished before it was completed. An elected national House of Representatives was established in 1854 to parallel the national Executive Council. Porter stood in its first election, was elected for the Suburbs of Auckland and sat for one term until 1855. In that first parliamentary term he was the oldest member and regarded as the father of the house, a term which now applies to the longest serving member.

There was no ministry in this first term. Until 1856 the power remained in the Executive Council appointed by the Governor but from 1854 three elected members of the House of Representatives served on it by appointment of the Governor, but without portfolio. They did not include Porter. By 1855 Captain Porter was 71 years old so his not continuing in Parliament is not a surprise. In the next term there was responsible government exerted by the Parliament.

Perusal of Hansard for the first term shows that the modern style of speeches of set duration did not apply. Rather there were many short contributions to a debate in a style similar to modern local government deliberations. Porter's recorded contributions were short. He successfully proposed the establishment of a committee to consider combating bribery in elections but its work was foreclosed by a government bill on the matter appearing subsequently. He objected to the continuation of an ordinance which could fine squatters occupying Maori land, on the grounds that the South Island squatters suffered

²⁰³ But by this time Porter may have been the owner of an interest in land claims so he was perhaps not disinterested.

no like penalty. He was defensive of Auckland interests, objecting to a bill which might compensate the New Zealand Company for some of its more dubious land claims, on the basis that no benefit ever flowed to Auckland from that company. Similarly he objected to subsidisation of a pioneer steam vessel operating in the central part of the country on the basis Auckland would have the least benefit. He was dubious that a proposal to allocate waste lands to working men on the basis that it would be impossible to decide who was a working man and "the principle was decidedly wrong." He questioned if value for money had been received for the construction of the Queen St wharf in Auckland and if the funds applied had been voted for that purpose. An instance where a bill was to give power to regulate brought his response that new regulations should be with the sanction of the house.

Some themes which would be familiar to members of Parliament today are apparent: distrust of excessive executive power, propriety in expenditure, equality before the law, a parochial interest in ensuring one's electorate was not disadvantaged and fairness in elections. The opposition to redistribution of wealth to the poor would put him on the conservative wing then and now. However the sessions of this first parliament were brief and marked by frustration at the lack of power and manoeuvring for that when it eventually came.

Captain Porter also was an elected representative in the first Auckland Provincial Council, representing the Suburbs of Auckland from 1853 to 1855. The overlap between the two elective roles is not surprising. The bodies then met for relatively short stretches of time and with only a one month overlap in their meetings in their first terms. Both meeting in Auckland, this could be easily accommodated by Auckland members and indeed most other provincial assemblies ceased to meet while the national parliament met so people elected to both could attend the latter. The provincial superintendent was directly elected and the election in Auckland was the occasion of an intense competition.

In his provincial government term he was a very active member serving as chairman of committee of the Council when it was considering Bills. He proposed several committees of investigation, most of which lead to bills, proposing committees to enquire into facilities at Auckland for shipping, into slaughterhouses (hygiene seems to have been the concern) and into the importation of diseased sheep. Provincial Acts resulted from all of these. A select committee he chaired into the best means of carrying out public works recommended a Board of Works be established assisted by an engineer. There was a Harbour Board Act passed and it named Porter amongst a long list of commissioners. In 1854 he was elected chairman of the first board of the harbour commissioners. The Harbour Act was passed at the same time as a City Council Act. The latter was struck down as unconstitutional before the Council was formed. This Harbour Board did not ever function so presumably it had the same problem, as it was not until 1871 that the Harbour Board was finally formed.

His committee looking at the port proposed a tidal dock for small vessels. A carry-over here from Liverpool perhaps, but not appropriate to Auckland's much smaller tidal range.²⁰⁴ He proposed money in the estimates for clearing the Awaroa River, the Waikato side of the Waikato – Manukau Harbour portage. This was important for Maori trade from the Waikato to Auckland. Porter opposed the sessions of the Council opening with prayers, not because he was agnostic but did not want to impose the practices of some on all.

The Auckland Province was at this time intending to petition London to be an independent colony. Porter sought twice to delay this being forwarded until after the national parliament had met and also attempted an alternative petition seeking a liberal constitution for New Zealand with set rights for the provinces. All of these moves failed. The petition was sent and of course it too failed. We can see here a belief in secular government, in national government rather than tiny independent provinces and also concerns not unfamiliar today, in biosecurity and in infrastructure development and how best to achieve it.

After his legislative career the capital moved to Wellington in 1865 and the provincial councils were abolished in 1876. Captain Porter was then a pioneer of New Zealand elected representation at the time when responsible government was being established. His vigorous involvement in issues large and small, shows the capability for self government was there and responsible government's time was due.

Other posts were held. In 1841 he was appointed a founding director of the New Zealand Banking Company, which started in 1840 and commenced business in Auckland in 1841, Porter serving until 1844. The bank was voluntarily wound up in 1845 after returning all deposits. In March 1842 he was steward of the St Patrick's Day Regatta, a separate event from the January 29th event of the same year which commenced Auckland's ongoing anniversary regattas. In 1848 he was on the committee of the Auckland Agricultural and Horticultural Society.

The predecessor to the Auckland War Memorial Museum opened in 1852. Its first board was formed in 1853 with Captain Porter one of the three trustees. Subsequent minutes show he was not a regular attendee at meetings being "absent in the country". Still the Museum secured some funding from the provincial government and Porter was an important member of that assembly so perhaps his function as a trustee was funding rather than governance. He appears to have left the board by 1855.

Later Life

In 1860 the important Kohimarama Conference was held adjacent to his land, attended by the Governor Gore Browne and many leading chiefs. Porter attended the opening. The conference ran for four weeks. The Government's motive was in part to divert attention from the King Movement. The first Taranaki war had started and Tainui leaders who were sympathetic to the Maori cause in Taranaki were not invited. It was at this conference that the

²⁰⁴ Auckland's mean springs tidal range of 2.6m is about a quarter of that of the Mersey.

Treaty of Waitangi was accepted by some of the tribes who had originally declined to sign in 1840 and crucially for their later role in the New Zealand wars, by Arawa. The Governor reaffirmed the central nature of the Treaty at the opening of the conference and the Crown commitment to it. It was an important occasion in establishing the constitutional validity of the treaty.

The Waiparera land was offered for sale in whole or part that year. Visitors to the conference were seen as a marketing opportunity but the first sale of part only to the Melanesian Mission, was not until 1861. The Mission moved from Mission Bay to Norfolk island in 1867 but much of the land remained in Melanesian Mission Trust hands as an investment for long after.²⁰⁵

Porter was still looking for opportunities in land. In the family papers is a deed of 1859 signed at Matamata agreeing to lease land from the Maori signatories for grazing over the next two years. Given the deterioration of Maori / settler relations there in the next two years it was unlikely to have been a happy arrangement.

Daughter Alice bore two daughters but died in Auckland in 1857 aged just 33. Captain Porter's wife Alice Porter died in 1862 at her son-in-law, Captain Salmon's house in Grafton, Auckland. Both Alices are buried in the Symonds St Cemetery.

In 1863 Porter sought a letter of introduction from Governor George Grey to the captain of HMS *Himalaya*,²⁰⁶ seeking the opportunity to take some "natives" aboard to show them, as Grey's resulting letter to the naval captain expressed it, "the power of Great Britain". This was during the height of the Waikato War so the gesture, while no doubt well meaning, could only have been futile as loyalties were by that time well set. His son Richard had not given up his maritime interests either, being the joint owner of a schooner *Paraninihi* from 1860-64. Richard remarried in 1864, retiring the next year from his government post. He too was a Grafton resident.

The remainder of the Waiparera land with the house was sold in 1864 and Captain Porter moved to his second son's residence at Mangatangi. The Kohimarama land block boundaries remain in some of the modern town plan. Kohimarama Rd is on the southern boundary. The western side of the northwards extension of Kohimarama Rd to the sea is at one point the western boundary of lot 30. Likewise Allum St is in part on the eastern side of lot 28. The name Waiparera has long gone from use.

A photograph in Jackson's book illustrates a house formerly at 175 Tamaki Drive which was reputed to be Porter's house. It is quite different in form from the 1844 illustration, but it was apparently modernised in the early part of the 20th century, surviving until 1954. Some supporting circumstantial evidence is that there was a willow tree alongside until 1950 (see the recollections). The house when modified, was found to have had a substantial cellar. This is consistent with early colonial practice. The mission houses in the Bay of

²⁰⁵ Melanesia Ave in modern Kohimarama records this association.

²⁰⁶ Himalaya was launched 1854, iron hulled, steam and sail, purchased from P&O as a troop ship. She landed the 50th regiment in New Zealand, in November 1863.

Islands had cellars like these. Today number 175 Tamaki Drive is a tower block of apartments.

Captain Porter died at Mangatangi on March 30th 1869 at the age of 85. An obituary reported that up until twelve hours before his death “*he was going about as usual in excellent health, hale and hearty.*” He was survived by two sons and had seven grandchildren. In his will he gave a bequest to his two granddaughters by his daughter Alice and left the balance of his estate to his younger son William Porter.

Another obituary included: “*...the universal regard in which the revered gentleman was held by both settlers and natives, who had the highest regard for him, in our opinion are higher honours than those from which his position, sagacity, and wisdom were naturally put upon him.*”

His public service in later life was certainly exemplary and counters the early involvement in the slave trade. We might charitably note that commencing at sea as an orphaned teenager he may have had little choice in the direction of that stage of his career.

Captain Porter is buried in the family plot in the Symonds St Cemetery in Auckland, now overshadowed by Grafton Bridge. The plot is within a stone's throw of those of Governor Hobson, Charles Heaphy V.C., Baron De Thierry and the controversial missionary William Fairburn. In the same plot are his wife, son Richard, daughter Alice and her husband. Today the plot has lost its headstone, but from it grows a fine young totara tree.

Appendix 3: The author, William Porter – a biographical sketch

This note is written to complement the recollections and does not repeat information from them other than where necessary.

Compared with the richness of the recollections of his trip to New Zealand and the time immediately after, relatively little detail is currently known of the rest of the life of the author of the recollections. Unlike his father he did not aspire to a public life or high office. His elder brother Richard took that role in the family. William was born at Mosley Bank, Liverpool on April 18th 1830. We can presume he had some formal education before he left Liverpool. It is apparent from the recollections that his schooling thereafter was broken and sometimes ineffectual.

We know of his emotion as an eight year old on leaving Liverpool for extraordinarily his cousin Elizabeth Saunders recalled the event in 1920 when she was aged 97: *"I was just fifteen - I picture the chief cabin of the Porter and my Aunt and Uncle and Alice who was two years my junior, and little Willie like all boys running about full of excitement, elders all grave and sad with the farewells, and they never met again."*

From his first two years in Auckland he also recalled witnessing the construction of the Britomart Barracks, the funeral of Governor Hobson, the construction of St Paul's Church, being allowed to see the convicted murderer Maketu courtesy of the gaoler in the Queen St Gaol and the stocks at the gaol in use. In late 1841 he witnessed a demonstration by a Maori warrior party led by Te Kawau against the arrest of an accused Maori thief, Te Mania and his removal from the court by the party.

He moved to Nelson early in 1843 to further his schooling.

As the recollections note he returned from Nelson in late 1844 to complete his schooling at St John's College and then worked for his father on his Kohimarama land. Of his time at the college he recalled the personalities of the staff, clergy and fellow students. The construction of the college buildings and the travel by sea from Purewa Creek to the city were matters of importance to him which he recorded in his other reminiscences. The school food was, as with all boarding schoolboys, a subject of some attention. Eel pie was a treat, but the standard fare was bread, pork, potatoes and occasionally pumpkin. Games and activities were rowing, boxing, cricket, rounders, quoits, hockey and there was swimming in a creek dam. Non-academic tasks were gardening, tree planting, collecting firewood, road making, printing and woodworking. Some Maori pupils who were unable to pay had been accepted so the school ran in part as an industrial school to help make it self-sufficient. The European and the Maori scholars had separate classes but the practical content was similar. By 1846 the school had extensive and productive fields and gardens.

William would have commenced at Purewa then moved to the new college site in his second year. However he had left by the time of the typhoid outbreak at the school in 1847. The school struggled to attract non-Maori pupils after that and closed in late 1852 after the discovery of prevalent homosexuality amongst the non-Maori pupils, which it was suggested were not new to the school. An imported English public school tradition? This though was not the stuff of the reminiscences.

The nearby church of St Thomas's had been built in his absence in Nelson. While he was at college the church was fortified. This was during the War in the North, as a refuge for the settlers against the risk of a Maori raid. The settlers were drilled in using arms. William was pressed into service casting bullets.

A diary kept for a period in 1847 after he had left school records a vigorous life clearing land and planting crops. He was not an enthusiastic church-goer, illness seemingly striking often on Sundays in the midst of weeks of vigorous activity. Among his plantings were wheat, barley, oats, corn (presumably maize), potatoes, peas, beans including horse beans, melons, gooseberries, raspberries, peaches, plums, apples, figs and limes. Battles with fowls and neighbour Mr Atkin's turkeys for the newly planted seeds are mentioned. At one point he employed a Maori assistant. The wheat was ground in small batches, seemingly as required.

Frequent trips to town in the boat are recorded with neighbours, father and sister Alice. A canoe, a punt and fishing are also mentioned as is gathering mushrooms. The spelling and the writing in this diary indicate that many broken periods of schooling had left their mark.

A collection of press clippings from 1851 and 1852 of social occasions in Auckland also exists, most annotated that he attended them. Sometimes Alice too is noted as an attendee. In 1854 he was recorded as a Waiparera resident in the electoral roll. From 1858 through the 1860's there are several letters surviving from his nephew William Lincoln Field Porter, sent from Nelson and later Canterbury. The earliest starts "Dear Uncle" but they move on to being addressed "Dear Will". The branches of the family seem to have lost contact after that.²⁰⁷

At some point he became resident at Waiheke. The land at Orapiu is the likely location, but his brother-in-law, Captain Salmon owned land at Stony Batter in 1863. Possibly it was there. The family had an ongoing association with Waiheke for summer holidays through into the 20th century.

In 1864 he married Ann Munro.²⁰⁸ She was a Nova Scotian immigrant to Waipu travelling there with her sister and widowed mother. At the time of her

²⁰⁷ William Lincoln Field Porter had a large family and now has many hundreds of descendants. In 1931 a grandson of William Lincoln Field Porter, A.D. Porter living in Taranaki, sought information on the will of Captain Porter believing as the direct male descendant he might be a forgotten beneficiary. He was not.

²⁰⁸ He was 33 years old starting a series of late marriages in his immediate descendants. His direct line male descendants in succeeding generations married at 31, 45 and 34 years old.

marriage she was a ward of her uncle. They were married at Waipu by the patriarch of the Waipu settlement, Rev. Norman McLeod.

They had three children, all boys, William Field Porter, Henry Roper Porter and Herbert Munro Porter, all with second names preserving female ancestors' maiden names. The place of birth of the eldest, William Field in 1865, was registered as Waiheke. At the time his father was recorded as William Porter jnr. It would appear he adopted the Field Porter variety later in life. Of the other two boys, Henry Roper was born in Auckland in 1866 and Herbert Munro was born at Mangatangi in 1868.

Before 1868 the family had moved to Mangatangi to land they owned there. His widowed father joined them there after 1864. One record has the land holding in association with a party Chamberlain as 10,000 acres.²⁰⁹ Land at Miranda was purchased from the local Maori after the New Zealand wars. The Mangatangi holding originated from that. Captain Porter may have been the first owner but if so it passed to William in his estate.

An account records "... a substantial home and out-buildings, a fine orchard and farming flourished." The land was sold in several blocks in the 1870's, with one to the Vining family in 1872. The Vinings were then long term residents at Mangatangi. Their name is commemorated in the Vining Block on the southern margin of the Hunua Ranges, donated as a bush reserve a century later.

Several early family portrait photographs were taken in Thames and their eldest son married the daughter of a Thames battery manager, so the family must have had Thames as the town to visit as much as Auckland. Henry Roper Porter may well have qualified in mining engineering at the Thames School of Mines.

His brother Richard wrote to William Porter in 1872 attempting to assist in a dispute over a land sale to an Auckland resident Mr Lang which had not been completed. The letter refers to flax on the land so it was possibly some low lying coastal land at Miranda. When Richard Porter died in Grafton Rd in 1881,²¹⁰ William Porter is listed on the death register as a master mariner but little is known of his marine career other than that he was owner of a schooner, *Maggie Robertson* in the period 1874-75.

In 1883 William and his two elder sons were trustees of the Miranda Public Library. All are described as settlers. William Field Porter was the chairman of the library committee. In the same year William Field Porter was chairman of a meeting which founded the Kaiaua School committee and he served on the committee until 1887. His address in 1886 was Kaiaua. *S.S. Lily*, a small coastal vessel, is cited in one source as being operated by William Porter's

²⁰⁹ There is a Mrs. C Chamberlin (note spelling) picture in the family photograph album. The Chamberlin family has a long association with nearby Ponui Island and knew Captain Porter. The Waiheke land was adjacent to Ponui. Charles is a Chamberlin family name over several generations.

²¹⁰ His will made a specific bequest to his son William Lincoln Field Porter and left the remainder to his second wife Christina. The lack of a bequest to his second son Michael Percival Porter suggests he was no longer in contact with him though a death notice listed two sons as surviving descendants. In 1900 Christina was living in Melbourne, her lawyers seeking copies of Richard's will with an authority signed by her mark.

sons, trading to the Kaiaua coast. She had a cutter rig as well as a 12hp engine and was owned jointly by W.F. Porter junior and senior from 1887-1890 (figure 28).

His son Henry Roper Porter (Harry) married Catherine Smith in 1893 and in 1896 his eldest son William Field Porter married Maggie Wolff. The youngest son Herbert Munro Porter (Bertie) never married. In 1899 Bertie was involved in the unsuccessful salvage from the *SS Tasmania* which sank at Mahia in 1897 so he too may have had a maritime career. The vessel used in the salvage, a schooner *Perseverance*, owned by Herbert Munro Porter, was wrecked at Oreti Point in the Bay of Plenty in October 1898 which must have been a setback to the enterprise.²¹¹ At some time in the 1890's William and Annie were resident in Onehunga, perhaps already living with their son Henry. William would have been 60 in 1890. The long 1880's depression may have forced a move off the Miranda land.

In 1893 Annie Porter was registered as a voter in Osborne St Newmarket. It was the first election in which women could vote.

In 1896 William is reported as being a farmer at Karamu, which is on the Waipa. In 1897 some reminiscences of Auckland in 1841 and 1842 were published in an Auckland paper under the pen name *Kaumatua* (elder). They were by William Porter and covered only a few of the events later covered in the recollections. They do though cover some of the prominent events of those years curiously missing from the recollections. Most likely the 1907 recollections were written to complement what was already published.

Their eldest son was a mariner involved in the south seas, pearling around the Aru Islands (Wood 1972) and in other trade. He was based at Thursday Island around the turn of the century. With his wife and their first daughter, another Alice, aboard his schooner *The Crest of the Wave* they survived a cyclone in March 1899 at Bathurst Bay by Cape Melville in far northern Queensland. The schooner was dismasted in the storm. It decimated a pearling fleet at the Bay. Deaths included many of the crews of the 152 vessels wrecked and an estimated 100 local aborigines. It was the greatest death toll of any natural disaster in Australian history. Over 400 people lost their lives. The storm surge of about 13m is still cited as a world record. The slow arrival in Auckland of news of their survival caused William and Annie distress while they waited.

In 1899 they were living modestly in Arawa St in Grafton. Annie describes her husband as being too deaf to go to church. Annie died on October 4th 1900 at her eldest son's house *Clyndon*, at 52 Arney Rd. Remuera.²¹² She is buried at Purewa.

By 1905 William was resident at Huntly. In May he made a visit to Rotorua for several weeks, taking the "health bath" three times a week and attending a

²¹¹ The incentive was the stock of jeweller Isodore Rothschild lost with the ship. Much of it was eventually recovered by Kelly Tarlton in the 1970s (Sale 1988).

²¹² They initially lived at 139 Arney Rd then moved to No. 52 on the other side of the road after the birth of their twins in 1900. The house at 52 stands there still, little modified. No. 139 was demolished in 2006.

political meeting by William Herries, the local member of Parliament, recording with enthusiasm Herries' opposition to the Seddon government.

Their middle son, Henry Roper Porter is recorded as the mine engineer for the Taupiri Coal Mines Ltd at Huntly, responsible for machinery. He qualified as an engineer and had worked previously at Thames and was for a period a fitter at the Onehunga Iron Works. He was resident in Huntly by 1896. William Porter then had moved to reside with or close to this son and his family after his wife's death. Ralph's Mine at Huntly, run by Taupiri Coal Mines, was an underground coal mine. It was later the scene of New Zealand's second worst mine disaster in 1914 when an explosion killed 43 men. It closed in 1917.

These recollections were written in Huntly and dated 1907. In the same year *Kaumatu* was again in print in an Auckland paper, this time recalling St John's College in the forties, reminiscences which add neatly onto the end of the period covered in the recollections.

William Porter died at his son's house at Huntly on October 16th 1910, aged 80. He is buried with his wife, eldest son William Field Porter, youngest son Herbert Munro Porter and other descendants, in the family plot at Purewa.

Appendix 4: Ships owned by Captain Porter

Craft	Dates	Notes
Alice, Brig	American built, owned 1816-18.	Likely to have been an 1812 War prize and renamed on purchase.
Alice, Brig	Built Chester 1818, owned 1823-33.	Bishop was master from 1832. Re-registered Sydney 1836.
Rapid, Brig	Built Liverpool 1822, owned until 1828	
Porter, Brig	Built Liverpool 1824, initially co-owned with John Irlam then wholly owned until 1841.	Re-registered Auckland 1841, Sydney 1841, wrecked Palawan Island 1842.
Nandi, Ship	Built Liverpool 1827, owned until 1831	Licensed to the India trade by the East India Company.
Mary, Ship	Built Liverpool 1827 for Porter. Other owners from 1827.	
Bland, Ship	Built Liverpool, 1829. Co-owned with Bland initially then shown as sole owner until 1830.	
Frank, Brig	Built Liverpool 1831, last record 1832.	
Alice, Ship	Built Liverpool 1834, last record 1837.	
Tiger, Ship	Built Liverpool 1835.	Wrecked on Astove Atoll in the Aldabra Group of the Seychelles on a voyage to Bombay, August 1836.
Lancaster, Ship	The recollections say built in Porter's yard before the Dorset.	No record in Lloyds. Advertised to sail from Liverpool in 1839, but there must have been a different owner by then.
Dorset, Brig	Built Liverpool 1838, sold 1839.	Re-registered Adelaide, then Sydney 1840.
Alice, Cutter	Built Port Lincoln 1839, sold 1840.	Registered Port Lincoln, broken up 1860.
Patiki, Dandy	Built Auckland 1842, owned 1842-49.	Lost 1849.

Research credit: Bob Sexton.

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