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Deposition of Mr James Elder. 18

17

Court House Paramatta

Friday Nov. 12th 1813

Com. Nov. 14/14

James Elder came this day before me The Reverend Samuel Marsden one of His Majesty's Justices of the peace, (and) being duly sworn Deposes that in the year 1800 he sailed from England as a Missionary for Otaheeta in the Royal Admiral of 900 Tons commanded by Mr. Wm. Wilson, The Royal Admiral had 300 convicts on board for New South Wales, after leaving the prisoners at Port Jackson, the Royal Admiral proceeded to the coast of New Zealand for Spars and anchored in the mouth of the River Thames, where she lay at anchor 9 weeks, during this period he saw several natives defrauded by the Europeans which brought on quarrels and were likely to ^{lead} ~~proceed~~ to serious consequences At this time there was also a Sepul

17
lying in the River from Port Jackson trading with the natives and remained the whole time the Royal Admiral were taking her Spars, The Weponeut says he never was on board this vessel, she had put in in great distress for refreshments and stores. and the Weponeut heard that when the natives had supplied them with Potatoes and other articles they were fired upon and drove out of the ship, the natives were very friendly disposed at that time towards the Europeans, and are very numerous in that part of New Zealand. He believes that not less than 10000 had assembled together at one time during the time the Royal Admiral was there, The natives had very numerous Cottages and formed a large village in which they lived, Potatoes were in the greatest abundance, The land was

13

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very rich and fertile, and the Plains level, free from Timber and Underwood and extended further than the Eye could reach, a River running through the middle of the Plains, Himself and the Missionary with him, should not have hesitated to have taken their Residence amongst them, any more than amongst the Natives of Otahuti. The Natives were very kind and friendly to them during the time they staid there, They found two Europeans there, who had staid with the Natives two years and gave a very good account of them, with being kind and peaceable, one of the Europeans came away in the Royal Admiral but the other did not.

No person belonging to the Royal Admiral or the other vessel received any injury from the Natives tho they were dispersed in different parts cutting Timber.

being ~~beach~~ distant from the ship
 30 miles (and upwards), 3 or 400 natives
 were occasionally employed dragging the
 timbers to the River, and seemed very
 willing to render every assistance to
 Capt. Wilson,

In the Year 1807, the ship Gen. Bellesley
 Capt. Dalrymple Master touched at
 Otaheta in which Island he ^{the beh?} had ~~now~~
 resided since the Year 1801. Cap^m
 Dalrymple proposed visiting the Palasees
 and some other Islands about 300 miles
 from Otaheta to ascertain what
 quantities of Bech Lemar, and Pearl
 Shells could be obtained (and requested
 him to go with him as Interpreter
 to this requisition ^{He the beh?} I readily gave ~~my~~ ^{his}
 consent, as I was anxious to know
 the population of the Islands and
 the dispositions of the natives, We

~~we~~ ^{were}

were six weeks among these Islands, (and) minutely explored nine of them, when we were finally leaving them coming - past the end of one of them, called the Prime of Wales's Islands, about sun - set with a light breeze and the vessel under sail, 4 or 500 hundred of the natives composed of men women and children came down on the beach to look at the ship as she past, the Captain wantonly and barbarously and without the least provocation whatever as we had no communication with this Island or the natives, fired five or six large guns - amongst them laden with grape shot, ^{the best} remonstrated with the Captⁿ before he fired the gun, and endeavored to persuade him from such a wanton act of cruelty and inhumanity but he paid no attention to ^{his} remonstrance -

of 1400 Ton, touched at Otaheite in distress
and was bound for New South Wales eventually
as he then stated. Took ^{her} ~~my~~ ^{his} passage in her
for Port Jackson after coming on the
coast of New Zealand and cruising for
about 2 months on the North Coast of
that Island where there were 4 or
5 Ships more on the fishery from England
We put into the Bay of Islands in a
company with three other Ships for
refreshments, the Ships lay there one
week during which time ^{we} frequently saw
Potatoes taken from the natives to a
considerable amount without the
natives being satisfied what they received
in return, tho' their demands were very
small, I also saw the sailors intice the
natives down below as if they intended
to give them something to eat, and then
strip them of their garments (and other

baronies, and when they complained
~~He~~ beat them severely and sent them ashore
 Stripped and weeping, at that time the
 natives of the Bay of Delaudo, were very
 friendly and very ready to supply every
 refreshment to the ships in their power.
^{well} I was often surpris'd from the ill
 treatment, I saw them receive, they did
 not raise and murder us all, ^{Beh} I have
 no doubt, but that the natives would be
 kind and attentive to the crews of the
 ships that put in there, if they were
 treated with any degree of common
 Justice honesty and civility, and that
 the Europeans might live safely amongst
 them, if they conducted themselves with
 propriety.

^{Beh}
 From my long residence at Stabecta
 and from visiting the different Islands
 I have

We
 have received undoubted testimony that
 some vessels trading among the South Sea
 Islands for the sole purpose of gain had
 excited one Party of Natives to destroy
 another, when this would promote the
 Interest of their Voyages. This practice
 is fraught with more ill consequences to
 the Natives than any other act of
 Iniquity as it lays the foundation for
 Civil Wars amongst the Islanders
 when the vessels are gone from them &
 also endangers the lives of other
 unsuspecting Navigators who in future
 visit these Islands, and must totally
 preclude all ^{safe} commercial intercourse
 between them and other parts of the
 World.

Sworn before me the
 12th Day of Nov^r 1813
 Samuel Marsden
 J. P.

James Elder