

Stonyhurst, on the banks of the Hurunui, was the second South Island sheep station to be established by the successful pioneer pastoralists Clifford and Weld. As he walked northwards, capturing his route in journal entries, sketches and later such paintings as 'Near Amuri Dec. 13 1850' (Canterbury Museum) and 'Amuri Bluff 1850' (Turnbull Library), Weld was heading for the partners' first and largest South Island station situated in Marlborough. Now only a fraction of its former size, Flaxbourne was the station which Weld always preferred and it seems fitting that a family association with the area has persisted.

Present day stations and their ownership may seem a long way from a group of watercolours painted by an amateur artist in 1850. Yet the apparent digression is typical of the response which the historian can have to the Scrope/Weld collection now housed in the Alexander Turnbull Library. For these paintings are more than just a record of leisure time activity by a well-educated, cultured, quiet Catholic Englishman. The sketches, intended for family and friends, not for posterity, are also an insight into the varied activities and interests of an unobtrusive yet quite remarkable pioneer. The station paintings are a record of a changing landscape, and of a pastoral invasion moving inexorably over the Marlborough hills and the Canterbury Plains. Weld's enthusiasm for exploration and his determination to find new overland routes suitable for stock droving are depicted in the Upper Wairau sequence. Political involvement also had its artistic consequences. It was a very thankful Weld who escaped from the chicanery and entanglement of the first parliamentary session in Auckland in 1854 and made his way south via Tauranga and Maketu, then inland to Rotorua, Lake



Lake Rotomahana [1854] *watercolour* 13.5 × 34cm *Art Coll. Rack 251*
(*Scrope/Weld Collection*)