

First Reference found pertaining to the Accordion in New Zealand - 1839

A reference exists in the journal of Edward Jerningham Wakefield (1820 - 1879), one of the earliest English visitors who arrived in Wellington on the boat the Tory. His entry from the 24th of September 1839 contains an amusing reference to his use of an accordion.

"One named Te Kaeaea diverted us much by bringing a long pointed wooden spear within inches of our bodies; then retreating with a roar of laughter every time he saw us shrink from the thrust. I repaid him his surprise the first day that he came on board. I had got an accordion under a large cloak, and kept time to its notes with my mouth, so as to deceive him and twenty other natives into the idea that I was uttering the various sounds. They showed a profound respect for my oratorical talents, until I let them find out the trick, a day or two afterward. The accordion in question was called my mouth for a long time afterwards"

(From Adventure in New Zealand by Edward Jerningham Wakefield. Original version was published in 1845).

