



As one of the first four professors in New Zealand, John Shand helped shape our higher education system as well as influencing generations of mathematics and physics students at Otago.

Born in Scotland, he was the son of Alexander Shand, a farmer, and his wife Isabella, nee McKenzie. John Shand graduated MA from the Aberdeen University in 1854, and taught mathematics at Scottish academies until he was selected out of 62 applicants for the Chair of Mathematics at the newly established University of Otago. At 37 he married Annie Bell.

They arrived at Port Chalmers on the *Wild Deer* in 1871, and Shand began classes with 31 students in July. His teaching responsibilities included 'natural philosophy' and he shared his enthusiasm about revolutionary discoveries in physics. In 1886 his chair was divided into two and he became the first professor of physics..

As an educational administrator he was said to have few equals in New Zealand. It was said that if he had put his 'extraordinary capacity for business' to other uses he might have made a fortune but instead he helped form and run the university system. He was a member of the Royal Commission of 1878-1880 which investigated the state of university education in New Zealand and its relation to secondary schools. As a member of the Professorial Board of Otago University, University Council, Chairman of the Otago Education Board, governor of Otago Girls' and Boys' High Schools, member of the New Zealand University Senate and chairman of its finance committee, he helped influence the way educational institutions developed. He was awarded an LLD from the University of Aberdeen in 1889 and CMG in 1913.

John Shand died on 30 November 1814 survived by his wife and eight children, and is buried in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery marked by a fine red granite monument.