

The position of Chief Surveyor in the unexpected dilemma of satisfying absentee owners and clamant emigrants from the restricted and disputed acres of Colonel Wakefield's purchase would have been no sinecure. It is not therefore surprising that his temper and patience failed him on occasions. But the records of his labours qualify any inference that he was lazy.

In August 1844 the Company's operations in New Zealand appear to have been suspended or severely cut back and Colonel Wakefield was unable to continue payment to him for the full three years ending February 1845 in accordance with the Agreement. In view of the Revans comment quoted earlier the ensuing negotiations with the Principal Agent may have been difficult; they were certainly protracted, but as will be seen, were eased by the Colonel's recommendation to the Court of Directors to waive all claims on Brees's sketches.

As was to be expected he had apparently made good use of his time, even when fully employed, in recording his impressions of New Zealand. In accordance with the sixth clause of his agreement all his sketches were the property of the Company and Wakefield had already sent some home to the Court of Directors. He set the situation out fully in a despatch which would doubtless have travelled home on the same vessel as Brees himself: 'Mr Brees, the Company's late Principal Surveyor in this settlement, having, during the last year of his engagement had much leisure time in consequence of the completion of the work in the surveyed districts, employed it in executing various drawings and sketches in this neighbourhood of a similar description to those I forwarded from him to the Court of Directors last year.

'According to a clause in the agreement . . . all such performances belong to the . . . [Company]; but, upon my coming to a settlement of accounts with Mr Brees and in consideration of my inability to discharge the balance of salary due to him otherwise than by the orders of which I send you copies under cover of my letter of the 30th April, Wellington No. 18/45, by which circumstance he may have suffered some inconvenience, I allowed him, at his request, to retain these drawings in order that he might deliver them personally to the Directors, with which he begged me to acquaint them.' . . .¹¹

Coincidentally two days later a note in the *New Zealand Spectator* drew attention to the 'portfolio' and acknowledged the favour of 'examining the series of drawings he has prepared of Port Nicholson and the adjoining districts . . . These sketches are remarkable for their correctness and truth to nature, and the subjects are happily selected. From them our absent friends will be able to form a more just conception of the settlement and the march of improvement . . . We hope Mr Brees, on his return to England, may be induced to publish them in a serial work, which we think from the interest of the subject would