

against Rutherford which W. L. Williams was able to establish sixty years later.

Briefly stated, and ignoring discrepancies between the two versions, Rutherford claimed that in 1816 the American brig *Agnes* on which he was serving had been sacked by Maoris at a bay called 'Tokomardo' on the east coast, the captain and most of the crew killed and eaten, while the few survivors were forcibly tattooed. Thereafter Rutherford's shipmates vanish from the scene, he himself was married to the two daughters of a local chief with whom he took part in various tribal wars and expeditions, until the appearance of another American vessel in 1826 gave him the opportunity to escape. In 1890, however, W. L. Williams reported that he could find no Maori tradition of any such dramatic event as the sack of the *Agnes* on the coast, nor of the chiefs Rutherford names or the events he describes. Williams points out that though Rutherford claimed to have met Pomare at East Cape he appeared to be quite ignorant of other Ngapuhi invasions which brought devastation to the district. Rutherford's actual knowledge of the east coast, he remarked, appeared to be limited to one name only, Tokomaru. Obviously therefore his story must be treated as fictional. To this it may be added that among all the records available today no vessel of the name *Agnes* is reported to have been in New Zealand waters during the period concerned.

It is also apparent that Rutherford had only the haziest knowledge of New Zealand's geography. He places Taranaki on Cook Strait, thus discounting any possible reliance on his account of a remarkable journey to this imaginary destination.¹¹ The only geographical details indicated with reasonable accuracy are the relative positions of the river Thames, the Hauraki Gulf, the Hokianga, the Bay of Islands and the site of the battle of Te Ika-a-Ranganui, at which he claimed to have been present.¹² W. L. Williams presumes that the whole of Rutherford's account of his life in New Zealand was designed to conceal the actual truth: that he had deserted from a ship in the Bay of Islands and had spent his years there. Whether or not this assumption is correct Rutherford was certainly able to provide Craik with sidelights on Maori life—particularly the seamier aspects of it—and embedded among the fictional details of his life are references to actual people and events.

A difficulty in disentangling these facts from the fiction lies in the rendering of Maori names. That of his patron is given as Aimy and those of his two daughters, whom Aimy is said to have given him as wives, Eshou and Epecka. The name of another chief who appears several times is spelt Nainy while a third is written as Plama.¹³ These may all be invented names, though Nainy could be a rendering of Nene. But of Rutherford's list of chiefs killed at Te Ika-a-Ranganui, on both sides, only Hongi's son, 'Charly' (Hare) is recognisable as a known casualty. Ewannā, Nainy, Ewarree, Tometooi, Ewarrehum and Erow do not correspond with any