

Featherston also 'paraded' before him other notable chiefs, including Tamihana Te Rauparaha and an unidentified sister of the great Te Rauparaha himself. 'As I could work wet collodion here I got two groups of them on negatives.' The party then visited the Maori church, called on Mrs Hadfield (the Archdeacon was away) and continued on to the ferry at the mouth of the Manawatu. Here, by arrangement, was the Resident Magistrate, Walter Buller, to escort them up-river in canoes, but heavy rain, an unpromising outlook—and Sir Francis... very complaining'—prompted their withdrawal from the Gorge purchase ceremony to which Featherston and Buller with the golden bags continued separately.

The commissioners continued up the beach to Scott's Ferry at the Rangitikei where they crossed 'squatting down in a Maori canoe'. In the morning there were striking views of both Egmont and Ruapehu, i.e. 'Tongariro the great mountain in the interior covered with snow... there seemed to be on its side an open crater for a cloud would constantly form and disappear upwards, shortly afterwards again forming...'.²⁸ Lunch was twelve miles on, inland at Te Arataumihi²⁹ 'on the middle Rangitikei', after which Docker, who had been on horseback for the two preceding days, took to the van; the carriage seems to have been left at Pauatahanui. A further fifteen miles saw them at Turakina for the night, from where, next day, they proceeded, partly by a 'fine macadamised road', to the Wanganui River and another ferry into town.

Here, as Docker noted with amusement, 'the distinguished individuals', in the words of the *Chronicle*, were received only by Colonel Logan, commander of the 700 men of the 57th Regiment stationed there, and the Police Magistrate, Major Durie. 'We have to stay here a few days to investigate their claim to the seat of Government which I do not think will take long to dispose of but we must go through the form.'

Sir Francis, however, 'being in a very restless humour & dissatisfied with our stay in Wanganui... said he would go up the river in the steamer'.²⁹ It will be recalled that the *Rangatira* was at their disposal and although a perusal of the passenger lists makes it clear that the ordinary traveller could take advantage of her presence in Wellington, Wanganui or Picton to hitch a crossing, the Chairman's wishes would naturally have had priority.

On two counts this was the day of the young secretary from the Defence Office, Fred Eaton. Instructed by Sir Francis to discuss the practicability of the up-river excursion with Captain Mundle and find out 'when the tide would suit', Eaton sensibly thought it politic 'to ask a few of the principal people to go with us...'. However, without further consultation, Eaton 'in our name' invited over a hundred and ordered 'a magnificent luncheon'. As most of the invi-