

and striking with their spears and muskets and leaving the pretended dead lying about as they charged over the Island. It was a most extraordinary scene. I then went to the rebel part & got a view of the Island. In the Council house or runanga was a depression in which they had placed Capt Lloyds head out of the skull of which they all drank and which they pretended spoke to them. We had with us the policeman [probably Te Moro] who killed the false prophet Mateni [Matene Rangitaurira] and we stood on the stone on which he was tomahawked. We had also with us the man whose leg was afterwards amputated [Tamehana Te Aewa], at every pa we came to, he was seated with his wife at his knee and all the women came and stood in a half circle before him making "tangi", the most melancholy sound you can imagine and the tears streaming in torrents; the sound at a distance resembled an Aeolian harp. They then commenced rubbing noses or rather glueing them for they would keep them in contact for half an hour. I am sure no leg was ever so mourned over before... We have seen more pure Maori life and customs than we could possibly have done in any other manner and at the pah above Moutoa we saw the two large ovens which the fanatics had prepared to bake their adversaries who they fully expected to mesmerise by their incantations and in which they are themselves buried... A girl was standing on the verandah (of the house I used) during the battle when a chance ball came from the Island and struck her in the forehead killing her instantly....

The press added a detail. At the Catholic Mission they were hospitably entertained by Father Lampila who provided home-made claret which they pronounced 'to be of a very superior kind'. Lampila's lay brother, Father Euloge, had been an accidental victim of the battle.³⁴ There was promise of another excursion to the interior, with magnificent scenery, 'so the camera goes too'; however these plans fell through and the two men returned to Wellington by the *Rangitira* on 6 September. Sir Francis's crossing to Picton had been marred by a south-easterly gale which had obliged the vessel to seek shelter in Pelorus Sound before making port.

In Wellington there was time only for one more excursion before crossing to the South Island. On Thursday 10 September the Commissioners 'ascended the Rimutaka' to snatch a glimpse of Wairarapa. Whether anyone told them of H.S. Wardell's ironic plans for a new capital beside the lake is unknown.³⁵

Once over the strait, with word of a vessel leaving Nelson for Sydney on 3 October, Docker had time for only one last hasty note home with passing reference to yet 'another escapade of our Secretary...'. In the event they signed their report on 3 October and sailed the same day. The *Nelson Examiner*, however, fully covered the operation and pending the discovery of further primary source material the party's movements may be summarised.

They reached Picton from Wellington on the 13th³⁶ and next day went 'towards the Grove' with the Superintendent, A.P. Seymour, and Messrs Baillie and Godfrey. Readers were reminded that many years ago the Valley of the Grove had been pointed out 'by parties well qualified to judge, and by men holding high official positions,