

considered a lengthy report from its own Seat of Government Committee. The principal recommendation was that an immediate address be sent to the three Governors concerned 'protesting in the strongest terms against any interference on their part with the administration of the internal affairs of this Colony... such interference being unconstitutional and uncalled for'. There was an overt threat—any decision 'must prove unsatisfactory to the greater portion of the population... [and] will never be acquiesced in by them!'.¹²

Grey sensibly and politely waved aside the appeal while formally transmitting it with the invitations to the respective Governors to nominate individual commissioners.¹³ The first choice of Sir John Young (New South Wales), was the State's distinguished servant, Sir Edward Deas Thomson, who declined on health grounds. The availability of Joseph Docker, 'a distinguished member of the Legislative Council', was formally advised on 14 April. From Melbourne Governor C.H. Darling notified the willingness of Sir Francis Murphy to act, and Sir Thomas Gore Browne from Hobarttown, for whatever reason, took a little longer to decide and Ronald Campbell Gunn left Tasmania with his letter of introduction dated 20 June.¹⁴ They were an interesting trio; all immigrant settlers with pastoral experience, two with medical training, and the third of strong scientific interest and knowledge; all with political and administrative background, but there the similarities ended.

Sir Joseph Docker (1802-1884), surgeon, landowner, architect and designer of *Thornthwaite*, his homestead in the upper Hunter Valley, was also an artist and pioneer photographer—not to be confused with his Victorian cousin of the same names (1793-1865) of *Bontharambo*. Although it was his experience in various Cabinet posts which provided the grounds for his appointment, his interest to us now is as a recorder and tiro photographer. He had brought with him from Sydney the somewhat bulky camera and equipment for the collodion or wet plate process to record the tour.¹⁵ In his own judgement the results were uneven and although some local scenes and portraits may still survive unidentified in New Zealand collections the main body of his plates appears to have been an Australian library casualty.

Sir Francis Murphy (1809-1891), like Docker, was at the outset of his career a surgeon and later a pastoralist. From a magistracy at Goulburn he moved to Port Phillip with his family in 1846 and took up another run. He was in the Victorian Legislative Council from 1851 to 1855 but after the establishment of representative government was elected to the House and was Speaker for fifteen years, his incumbency when appointed to the Commission. He was plain,