

Colonial Treasurer, Maguire's denunciation of Atkinson, and an address by Ives to the electors of the Egmont District. The next editorial predicted a win for Atkinson but with a result 'much closer than will be altogether pleasant' for him (22 December 1875). The following issue devoted four columns to Atkinson's meeting in Carlyle, but the terms in which it was reported, Atkinson's comments 'elicited strong expressions of doubt and incredulity'; his explanation 'seemed however to be incomprehensible to his questioners' surely left no doubt in the readers' minds of the 'correct' way to vote (25 December 1875). The last issue to be published before the election was in the same vein, containing a vehemently anti-Atkinson editorial and reports of two of Ives's meetings.

Whether the final result of 225 votes for Atkinson against Ives's 73 (5 January 1876) was too close a result to be altogether pleasant for the sitting member we can not ascertain. His brother A. S. Atkinson certainly perceived no threat from 'poor Mr Ives, a literary hack now of Patea but formerly of the *New Zealand Celt*'.<sup>21</sup> Ives wrote in the *Patea Mail* not long after nominations had closed that he had as much idea, till very recently, of contesting Egmont, as he had of contesting the Presidency of the United States of America (31 December 1875). The short intervals between Maguire rejecting the nomination, Ives announcing his candidature, and the election suggest this to be the truth. What is interesting though is the manner in which Ives used his newspaper to further his political interests once he had announced his intention to stand.

Immediately after the election Ives was on the move again. He leased the *Patea Mail* to Alexander Black and travelled back to the South Island, to Akaroa. The first issue of the *Akaroa Mail* appeared on 21 July 1876. There is little mention of Ives in its pages in any capacity other than as newspaperman, apart from an occasional notice concerning his racehorse Lord Byron.<sup>22</sup> Ives next went to Ashburton where the *Ashburton Mail* began publication on 12 June 1877, the new proprietors of the *Akaroa Mail* taking charge on 20 July. The move to Ashburton was to signal the start of a period of relative stability for Ives. He retained a direct interest in the *Ashburton Guardian* until 1880 when he leased it, satisfying his newspaper 'planting' urges by starting the *Temuka Leader* in December 1877 at Temuka, about 60 kilometres south 'purely as a commercial speculation',<sup>23</sup> and by starting the *Evening News* in Ashburton to successfully support the Conservative candidate Edward George Wright for the Coleridge electorate.<sup>24</sup> His interest in politics was not, however, dormant, for he stood for the Mayoralty of Ashburton in December 1879, being defeated by Hugo Friedlander by seven votes.<sup>25</sup> It is during this period that we first note accusations of Ives's propensity for paying low wages: