

possession of our new house, which was in a sadly dilapidated state for our purpose. – The house stands on, and overlooks a very steep declivity at the back, where instead of a yard, we have a wooden gallery, which Commands a magnificent view of Auckland and the harbour. – The house contains two rooms, the front one well lighted being Constructed for Photographic purposes. There is a trap door . . . on the Floor, underneath which is a large space of ground below the house where we kept our fire wood. But like the ‘Martha’ our new premises have one universal and crying evil, viz – the want of a House of Commons–”

From the 13th to the end of the month they made extensive repairs and commenced taking portraits. “Numerous people patronized us, we had a few failures, but in general the oracle was found to work well. – [Throughout October] Continuing taking portraits, and every prospect of making a considerable amount of cash if my brother would only go a little more ahead with the concern. I seldom went out of doors, my department consisting of ‘Cooking’ and sundry other little matters . . . The Camera sometimes baffled all my brothers efforts to obtain a portrait, and one time in particular for two or three days, for some reason or other, the attempts were dead failures – The vexation of this occasioned my brother to close the establishment and we prepared ourselves for a journey to Papakura in quest of land to commence farming . . .”

Papakura was a disappointment but on their way they enjoyed the hospitality of Captain Ligar,² former Chief Surveyor who recommended Whangarei. However John brooding on his photographic failures thought that he had found the technical fault so on their return the business re-opened, successfully at least for a period. Robert undertook to go north to look over land in the Whangarei district and embarked on Captain Robert Mair’s cutter *Petrel*.³ Also passengers were Henry Walton of Maungatapere and Lloyd of the Bay of Islands who with Te Tirarau the chief of the district between Whangarei and Kaipara had recently had their portraits taken by John Anderson. On their way north in the middle of the night they hailed the schooner *St Kilda* with whose Maori owners “we had a conversation for about an hour . . . in the Maori language, both vessels running before the wind. How singular indeed Mr Lloyd one of our passengers recognized us. It was he who kept the sly grog tent at Meredith and served us with supper the night John and I were on our way to Ballarat and on the occasion of our escape from a bushranger . . . The Captain had a splendid flutina on board and kept me playing nearly all the voyage.” The voyage itself lasted twenty-four hours. The men went ashore, first at Aubrey’s “resident Magistrate and Customs collector on the North side of the river and afterwards to Henry’s⁴ Public house on the opposite side.” The next day they weighed anchor at 6 a.m. and sailed up river