

had included a stop at Rio provides further confirmation that he was aboard.²⁸ On the other hand, while apparently accurate enough up to this point, Rutherford's own account of his movements thereafter disproves the claim that he arrived in New Zealand this same year.

Craik quotes Rutherford as mentioning a couple of trading voyages from Port Jackson into the South Seas, the second of which was made on the three masted schooner *Magnet*, Captain Vine, and as saying that he left this ship at Hawaii, to be taken on board the *Agnes* a fortnight later.²⁹ Even if the *Agnes* story had been true the date could not have been earlier than 1819. Cumpston lists the *Magnet*, answering Rutherford's description, under the command of G. Vine, as making several voyages between Port Jackson and China on one of which, departing from Port Jackson in September 1819, it sailed first for the South Seas.³⁰ This presumably was the voyage on which Rutherford joined it. On the assumption that having deserted from the *Magnet* at some port of call in the Pacific he was picked up by another vessel from which in turn he deserted at the Bay of Islands, he could hardly have landed there earlier than the beginning of 1820. This would allow him six years in New Zealand, not ten—but still ample time to achieve a reasonable command of the Maori language, to attain sufficient insight into the Maori way of life to excite Craik, and to acquire that facial tattooing.

So far as documentary evidence goes, unless some chance discovery unveils further details of his life, this is as much of Rutherford's unimportant and somewhat unsavoury career as we are likely to be able to hold against him. Speculation on two aspects of it seem nevertheless permissible, even to be called for. One is the reason for his tortuous and, we may now suppose, fruitless efforts to disguise the manner of his arrival in New Zealand and the district in which he lived, and the other is the origin of the tattooing on his body. The first can merely be a matter of guess-work; the answer to the second, on the basis of Rutherford's own story and its supporting evidence, was presumably Tahiti. But some other Polynesian source cannot, on the record of his movements, be ruled out. We can be fairly certain that he was not picked up at Hawaii by a vessel called *Agnes*—or certainly not brought to New Zealand in such a one. We have no independent evidence that he left the *Magnet* at Hawaii, nor that wherever he did in fact desert from it, he remained there merely a fortnight. Six months or a year, reducing his time in New Zealand by an equivalent period, could easily have been spent anywhere in the 'South Seas' at which a trading vessel, in search of sandalwood, sealskins, tortoiseshell or other items useful in the China trade, might call. The question thus poses itself: can that indelible evidence, his non-Maori but apparently Polynesian tattooing, be traced to a particular island or island group?

Fools rush in. . . . This researcher innocently supposed that a com-