

Felton Mathew

Auckland - 23 Aug 1842

[Trove AJCP CO 209 File 19 Individuals Image 269](#)

My Lord,

The calamitous fire which a few months since destroyed the Government Offices of this Colony, together with every Map and document in the Survey Office, impressed me with the deepest regret for the loss and injury which such an occurrence must necessarily inflict on the public service – and excited at the same time a not unfounded apprehension that from the loss of every record of my labours during two years in which I had the honor of conducting the Survey Department, my own reputation might, at some future time, possibly suffer from the imputation of indolence or incapacity.

The two feelings combined induced me to examine my own private notes and memoranda, and to compile at my leisure from them and from one or two sketches which I had accidentally preserved in my own house, a map shewing the work which had actually been performed by myself with the assistance of the very small number of officers at that time attached to the Department.

I feel that I cannot dispose of the result of my labours in a manner more appropriate, or more gratifying to myself, than by respectfully dedicating it to your Lordship: and I trust that your Lordship will lose sight of the unworthiness of the offering, as well as of any defect in the mode of tendering it to your Lordship's acceptance, in a consideration of its probable utility having been kind enough to express his approbation of the work and his readiness to transmit it to your Lordship. I avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded me; and have only to regret that his Excellency's illness prevents him from fulfilling a promise that the map should be accompanied with a letter addressed by himself to your Lordship.

Trusting that your Lordship will excuse the liberty I have taken in thus obtruding myself on your notice.

Fire: 4 Apr 1842 Total Destruction of the Government Offices – NZ Herald 6 Apr 1842

Auckland – 24 Nov 1842

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My Lord,

It has just been communicated to me by the officer administering the Government of New Zealand that a dispatch has been received in which your Lordship has been pleased to direct that the Governor should offer me the appointment of Deputy Surveyor General, that being the only office which your Lordship has, at present, in your power to confer on me, in compensation for the loss of my former situation.

I have received a communication to the same effect from my friend Mr Benett (of Wiltshire) and for the sense which your Lordship was pleased to express to that gentleman of the injustice which I have suffered, no less than for the evidence of that conviction which your Lordship has afforded by placing at my disposal the first vacant office in your gift, I beg to tender to your Lordship my most respectful and sincere expressions of gratitude.

In making known to me the substance of the despatch alluded to, his Excellency the acting Governor pointed out that the office of Deputy Surveyor General and Inspector of Kauri Forests was altogether a useful one; and that in the present state of the Colony, it was highly desirable that no additional burthen should be laid on it beyond what was actually and indispensably necessary.

That extensive reductions have already been made in every Department, and especially in that of the Surveyor General – and it would therefore seem an anomaly to create, at such a time a new office (as it were) at a considerable cost to the Colony: That I already hold an office the emoluments of which are only £100 per annum less than that of Deputy Surveyor General: and as either of them could be looked on in the light of a temporary provision only, the trifling difference of salary was no very material consideration.

In the propriety of these views, I could not but concur; more especially as I am well aware that the late Governor Captain Hobson entertained an opinion of the utter inability of such an office as that of Deputy Surveyor General – an opinion to which I had always assented. I had therefore no hesitation in at once meeting the views of the acting Governor, that the matter should remain in abeyance until your Lordship's further pleasure can be made known.

I beg respectfully to observe that I have had an additional inducement to assent to this arrangement from the conviction that my services are more valuable to the community in which I live, in the situation which I now hold than they could be in that of Deputy Surveyor General. I trust therefore that your Lordship will perceive the motives by which I have been actuated, and that you may be enabled to place me in a situation more beneficial to the public service.

Allow me moreover to express a hope that your Lordship will be pleased to order that I may be repaid by the Colonial Government the difference between my salary in New South Wales and that of my present office in New Zealand from the date of my losing my situation as Surveyor General.

My pay in New South Wales was £400 per annum with forage allowance for two horses amounting to £95 more – while my present pay is £300 per annum without any allowance.

The practice is, I believe, a very common one both at home and in the Colonies, even in the case of reductions: and it may not be deemed invidious to allude to a case in point existing even in this Colony, where the Collector of Customs, who had a salary of £600 per annum in Sydney, is receiving £500 only from this Government in the shape of salary, with an allowance, however of another £100 expressly for the purpose of placing him in the same position, in a pecuniary point of view, as he held in New South Wales.

I should observe that I made an application to this effect to the late Governor, who admitted the justice of my plea but refused my application on the grounds of economy. I beg most respectfully to repeat my grateful acknowledgements of your Lordship's kindness and consideration.

Blue Book 1841:

Surveyor General from 1 Jan 1840 - £400pa; Commissioner of Audit

Blue Book 1842:

Chief Police Magistrate Auckland from 1 Jan 1842 - £300pa; Commissioner of Audit

Blue Book 1844:

Chief Police Magistrate Auckland - £300pa; Deputy Postmaster General from 1 Jul 1844 £100pa; Commissioner of Audit

Blue Book 1845: Chief Police Magistrate Auckland - £200pa
