

greater maturity and experience of a practical serving officer; Collinson, aware of the limitations of his narrow professional training ('being only a soldier with some smattering of science from Woolwich Academy'), was fascinated by this young Oxford intellectual with the famous name and the endless flow of 'Jacobinical' ideas. In the bachelor parties at Wellington where Tom Arnold sang the 'Shan van Vocht' to the delight of young Irish officers of the 65th, while Domett declaimed 'Of Nelson and the North', Collinson must have been a relatively sober figure – cast, in his own words, for 'the rôle of representative of the Church and State'. But he was far from being a stuffy or conventional Tory.

The Arnold children who had grown up at Fox How regarded themselves as northcountrymen; Collinson 'was born and bred at Gateshead on the coaly Tyne', and apparently kept his accent. (He tells how the cook's daughter at the Cockatoo Hotel exclaimed, as soon as he opened his mouth, 'Smash! mother, he's a Geordie!'). After leaving Woolwich he had been engaged on Ordnance survey work, largely in Ireland and the north of England. In 1843 he was posted to the brand-new colony of Hong Kong, where he made the first exact survey and maps of the island, and fitted in short visits to Amoy and Canton. In 1846 he was transferred to Wellington, which he reached via Sydney and Auckland by the end of that year.

In Auckland, Collinson was quickly on intimate terms with Governor Grey ('a slight young looking man in delicate health' whose 'heart was in his head'), with Bishop Selwyn ('a model missionary bishop'), and with Alfred Domett (a disciple of T. Carlyle's 'heroic school', who told the young sapper that 'the Maories were still savages'). He stayed for a month in 'The College at Bishop Auckland', gained a much more favourable impression of the Maori character, and took passage for Port Nicholson in the brig *Victoria* in company with Tamihana, son of Te Rauparaha. Soon after his arrival there was an 'alarm at Wanganui' and he was ordered to take up 200 men of the 58th Regiment; they sailed in *HMS Calliope*, on which old Te Rauparaha was still held prisoner, and Collinson made a pencil sketch of this distinguished captive. During 1847 he was on active service in the troubles at Wanganui, and was involved in the death-sentence on five Maori rebels (for which he was sternly rebuked later in a letter from Bishop Selwyn). Early in 1848 he returned to Wellington, where he more than once shared lodgings with Domett. This, then, was the modest but experienced Captain of Engineers Tom Arnold met in his first week in Wellington.

By the end of August 1848, Tom Arnold had cleared part of a 'bush section' on the Porirua Road, and built a small whare: he was still determined to be a settler and work with his hands in a new democratic