

authorship, and about the author, of this story first published in *All the Year Round* in 1862 comprises scraps of information picked up accidentally over the years, the sort of miscellaneous titbits which anyone who digs around in manuscript collections, old newspapers and the like inevitably acquires but which, because of their irrelevance to whatever one was searching for at the time, one tends to forget about until the chance discovery of a related bit of information stirs the memory.

The identity of the author of 'From the Black Rocks, on Friday' is not in itself a matter of great literary moment—though I think it is worth putting the record straight that the story was not written by Charles Dickens—but the manner in which the various bits of the jigsaw have come to light is perhaps worth the telling as an answering piece to A. H. Reed's speculations of over thirty years ago.

I first went through the Clendon Papers² in the Auckland Public Library in 1944 but I doubt whether I actually read the William Clarke to J. R. Clendon letters therein³ until the early to mid-1960s. It is certainly to this latter period that my memory of reference to the Rev. R. Carter relates. I knew of Clarke, the writer of the letters, as a surveyor in the Bay of Islands and Hokianga in the late 1850s.⁴ He left New Zealand in 1860 and from Glasgow wrote gossip letters about New Zealand affairs to his old friend J. R. Clendon who, when Clarke knew him, had been magistrate at Russell but was later moved first to Kerikeri and then to Rawene.

Clarke's first mention of Carter was in his letter of 19 January 1862: 'I have written twice to M^r Carters address but have got no answer—one of the letters was returned as the "*party was not known*" the other was kept. What a fellow he must be!'

But on 24 July 1862 Clarke wrote:

I must tell you a strange story now. Some short time ago I called for a friend in Glasgow. He asked me to pronounce a Maori word which he had seen in one of Dicken's publication(s) called "All the year round" I looked at it and immediately saw the names "Mongonui" and "Rewarewa" & "Wangamumu" &c. It struck me that the stile was like that of our old friend Carter but I couldn't make out from it who wrote it so I addressed a letter to Charles Dickens to ask him if the paper in question was written by the Rev.^d R.D. Carter. He at once told me it was and gave me Carter's address I wrote to him at once & heard from him in reply. Well on my return from London last week I went to pay him a visit at Heydour Vicarage, near Sledford, Lincolnshire. He was glad to see me, and I was I must say very glad to see his old face again. We had a very cosy chat of things now gone by and we learned each other's views as to future movements—Would you believe it—he is actually going back to New Zealand and to the Bay of Islands.

He only arrived in this Country in January last, having spent nearly a year in America. His adventures there are to be published. His story of his adventures at the Bay of Islands was very popular in this country. I will try to get a copy of it & send it to you. But it was very much coloured to make it "take". For one thing he