

He had intended 'offering myself once more for the Islands as I have learnt by bitter experience how to labour with mine own hands for my livelihood and I then hoped by my future conduct in some slight measure to try to blot out the past'. He now felt, however, that such an offer would be 'useless and not accepted'.⁷

Mr Carter's acceptance of the Bishop's edict was followed three weeks later by a petition to Selwyn from various inhabitants of Kororareka respectfully requesting 'that the Rev^d. Robert Carter be permitted to perform divine service in the Church of this parish during the absence of any other Minister'.⁸ If any answer was received from Selwyn it was presumably in the negative, and in July 1861 Carter sailed for America in the whale ship *Canton Packet*.⁹

When sorting out papers in the Clendon House at Rawene during Christmas 1972 I was delighted to find another letter from William Clarke to J. R. Clendon, written in January 1866, relating what was probably the final chapter in the life of the Rev. Robert Carter:

I had a long letter the other day from our old quondam friend Carter. It appears that after spending two years in England in the capacity of Curate—he went to New York when he took ill and when he wrote to me he was on his death bed—poor fellow—in an Hospital. He does not say what his ailment was but I think it must have been connected with the brain—to judge from the extraordinary style of the letter he sent me.¹⁰

In all this time I had never carried out my intention of locating a file of *All the Year Round* in the hope of identifying Carter's story therein, and had no idea what the title was. But in February 1975, when reading through the latest catalogue from Smith's Bookshop, the entry no. 210 hit me in the eye:

Dickens (C.)—Ed.

From the Black Rocks, on Friday and A gold Digger's Notes. Foreword by Professor W. P. Morrell, Introduction by A. H. Reed. 63pp 8vo boards. A very good copy in d/w. Reed 1959. \$3.00¹¹

From the mention of the Black Rocks, it seemed obvious that this must be Carter's story. And so it proved, as I found when the book arrived. I must confess that when I read the story my reaction was: the poor old fellow! I was not thinking of the Rev. Robert Carter but of Sir Alfred Reed. This sentiment seemed even more apposite not long afterwards when, searching the files of early 1860s Auckland newspapers—I have forgotten what I was looking for—I came upon 'From the Black Rocks, on Friday', reprinted from *All the Year Round* in the *Daily Southern Cross* of 20 September 1862. A week later, the Russell paragraph 'From our own correspondent' read: