

in March 1841, having John George Cooke as his cabin mate, and old Armitage Brown followed in the *Oriental* in June 1841. 'I have bought land in New Zealand,' he wrote, 'with machinery to take thither, from pins and needles up to a Saw-Mill and a steam-engine.'<sup>7</sup> Some Keats relics came with Brown, including a copy of the sketch of Keats on his death-bed which Joseph Severn had made, and a 'life-size medallion profile-portrait of Keats', both of which his son Charles afterwards gave to Alfred Domett.<sup>8</sup> As Cooke said, Armitage Brown was miserable in New Plymouth, and angry at Company mismanagement. He died in June 1842.

Cooke's career in the Navy was cut short in 1836 by eye trouble, and he changed to the Army. After a period in Germany, including a Munich holiday with the Wingfields, the Bracebridges, and the Lennard Austens of Kippington, he was commissioned Ensign in the 53rd (Shropshire) Regiment, and took up duty at the depot at Naas, near Dublin, early in 1839. A few months later they moved to Plymouth, and it was here, in the nest of Cornish families involved with the New Zealand Company plans, that Cooke became 'colonially bitten'. At this point his Reminiscences contain many names familiar in New Zealand history. Ned Duppa was there, his brother George sailing in the *Oriental* with Francis Molesworth, Henry Petre, and Walter Mantell at the end of the year. Calmady and Edward St Aubyn urged Cooke to go with them.

Cooke called on his Plymouth relations, the family of Admiral Foote (cousins of the Knights), the Manley Dixons, etc. The Wingfields were visiting the St Aubyns, and Cooke fell in love all over again with Charlotte Wingfield. He stayed with the Lemons of Cardew (cousins of the Bullers) and at Pencarrow, Bodmin, meeting there Sir William Molesworth, various Trelawnys, the Grotes, and the Bullers, Charles and Arthur. He went riding 'over Bodmin Moor, or far or near' with Caroline Trelawny and Mary Molesworth, while his Charlotte flirted – in vain – with Sir William. She was, Cooke wrote angrily some forty years later, 'such a born coquette that she would have fascinated a crossing sweeper had no other game presented itself'.

Her inconstancy was the last straw, and Cooke determined to take his broken heart to New Zealand. After trying unsuccessfully to persuade Robert Greenwood to accompany him, he sailed with his old soldier servant Johnston in March 1841 on the *Amelia Thompson*.

The record of Cooke's New Zealand sojourn is detailed and lively. He took up land at Te Hua and at Henui village, on the north-eastern edge of New Plymouth; for a time he managed work and survey gangs for the Company. He built at Henui a strong little stone house, still, standing, which he sold in 1846 to Bishop Selwyn for Mr Bolland's parsonage. In spite of trouble with the Maoris, he farmed his land at