

Many of the early cartoonists were anonymous, but Arthur L. Palethorpe, a more competent draughtsman than most, signed his name boldly and in full in the *Wellington Punch* (1868). Frank Varley signed his initials in the Wellington magazine and then the *Auckland Punch* he part-owned and ran in 1868–69.

Palethorpe and J. H. Wallis, a less skilled practitioner, drew for a Wellington-based *New Zealand Punch* that appeared for 32 weeks in 1879–80. Another *New Zealand Punch* appeared fleetingly in Dunedin in 1888.

However, none of these gentlemen could claim to be the country's first political cartoonist. Although his pencil and pencil-and-wash cartoon prints did not appear in any publication, James Brown, born near Glasgow and apprenticed early to a calico painter, trained as a pattern designer. He then worked at the craft in Manchester before sailing for New Zealand in 1850, and a successful and prosperous career as an engraver in Dunedin. Brown had a considerable Otago reputation as a visual commentator from the early 1850s:

He was a born caricaturist, and gave free scope to his bent as opportunities arose; and these were numerous enough in the stirring little community of Dunedin during the first ten years. The cast of his mind was keenly, humorously, observant. He judged quickly of character, and was seldom very far out—the very salient peculiarity or oddity of the individual or individuals coming under his notice evoking the faculty of graphic, minute, and truth-like representation.⁷

Several prominent nineteenth-century settlers and visitors dabbled with cartoons. Charles Heaphy, the surveyor artist, was an amateur cartoonist. 'The notebooks he kept during the New Zealand wars and gold rushes contain cartoons crowded with stick figures and comments on personalities and attitudes.'⁸ Gustavus von Tempsky, the German-born soldier-adventurer-artist, submitted a cover design for the projected *Wellington Punch* in 1868. Frank Varley's final design, although different, clearly cribbed von Tempsky's centrepiece group of soldier, businessman, lawyer, Māori, and clergyman. Nicholas Chevalier, remembered in New Zealand for his romantic oil and watercolour landscapes, was reputedly Australia's first cartoonist. 'Chevalier's work [in the *Melbourne Punch*] appears to be tremendously variable: some of it [...] scratchy in technique; other work appears tight, and very detailed.'⁹

New Zealand's early newspapers generally left illustration of any kind to the magazines, which had the time to engage in the laborious—and costly—process of engraving on wooden blocks. Artists drew on a block of smooth, close-grained wood; an engraver cut or engraved by hand; and then the resulting raised surface was inked for printing. Much depended on the engraver's skill, and the cartoonist's distinctive style was often submerged in a mass of shading and cross-hatched