

Early Trade

The arrival of the New Zealand Company immigrants provided a market for Maori-grown produce as well as fish, shellfish, pigs and firewood.



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Te Tau Ihu: Early Trade

Initially barter exchanges dominated transactions; in early March 1842, for example, just after the first colonists arrived:

“The natives are daily gathering around us and bring large quantities of very fine and excellent potatoes, pigs, melons, pumpkins, cabbages etc. These they sell without any view of amassing money as -----exchange the produce of their sales for all kinds of clothing, boxes, printed calicos etc. Blankets are being superseded by European dresses but are still in great demand particularly if large and stout. If the size is small or the fabric light it is immediately pronounced “no good”. Shoes are also very much sought after”

Source: Barnicoat J.W. Diary 15.3.1842 NPM

Bishop Selwyn spent two and a half weeks in Nelson in August-September 1842, both as Bishop of New Zealand and as a Trustee for the Native Reserves. He ordered buildings to be constructed for Maori visiting Nelson on the Tenth Reserves at Auckland Point and added:

“In front of the buildings there will be a low wall with a flat top, for exposure of goods for sale, viz. potatoes, Indian corn, leeks, kumera(sweet potatoes), fire-wood, and pork; for all which articles the English are almost entirely dependent upon the Native supplies.”

Source: Selwyn G.A. Sketch of Native Hostelry. Letter 3 in Letters from the Bishop. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London 1845.

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William Stanton described the scene soon after the wall was built:

“Auckland Point with its convenient smooth dry ‘flat’ was the camping ground of curiously interested Maori visitors, men, women and children with their poakas (pigs) tethered awaiting Pakeha’s purchases, their piles of kits or flax leaved baskets of potatoes maize or mussels a new and attractive source of income in bright ‘Hereni’ and ‘Ihipene’, their bright red and well appointed canoes frequently by dozens moored by the tideway, near to the newly made wall embankment of big boulder stones, was a scene of interest to both races meeting for the first time with conversation essayed under blank difficulties in gesture and pantomime with much amusement and interest.”

Source: Stanton W. ATL Notes on Nelson History. ATL.



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<https://www.theprow.org.nz/assets/Maori/Auckland-Point.jpg>

Te Tau Ihu: Early Trade

Questions

1. What do these words and phrases mean: initially, barter exchanges, dominated, transactions, amassing, superseded, stout, tethered, tideway, essayed, blank difficulties, gesture, pantomime?
2. What is the Maori word for pig? Where do you think it came from?
3. If Hereni is a shilling, what do you think Ihipene means? What are their equivalents in decimal currency?
4. List all the Maori commodities or products named in these passages.
5. What did Maori want in return? What problems would the immigrants face in providing what Maori wanted?
6. Why were the immigrants so dependent on Maori for food?
7. What did Stanton think about the waka lined up near the market?



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Activities

Draw:

The scene at Auckland Point described in these passages
The goods Maori had to sell.

Write:

As one of the immigrants, write your account of your first visit to Auckland Point market.
As one of the Maori vendors, describe the difficulties of selling at Auckland Point.

A paragraph explaining which of the products Maori were selling were native to New Zealand, how Maori would have acquired European animals and crops, how Maori would have learnt to grow introduced crops, and what they would have had to learn to be successful.

Discuss:

What qualities and skills did Maori show in their adaptation to European needs and European crops?

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It may seem surprising that Maori had so much surplus produce to sell to the immigrants, but Maori had been supplying whaling stations in Marlborough during the 1830s whaling boom and had been preparing for the influx of New Zealand Company settlers.

In December 1841 when only the Company advance party was in Nelson, Arthur Wakefield wrote to his brother William in Wellington that if William knew anyone with a team of bullocks and a plough he should send them over to Nelson with seed potatoes:

“... it would teach the Maoris a lesson, who are holding back for more population. They have got 50 tons of potatoes in reserve.”

Source: Wakefield A to William Wakefield 1.12.1841 Letters to William Wakefield ATL.

In January 1842, before the immigrants arrived, Paremata Te Wahapiro and Te Haehaeora, Ngati Tama chiefs, brought three waka from Wakapuaka with gifts for Arthur Wakefield, and expressed their intention of sowing potatoes at Wakatu, the site of the planned Nelson Town. They negotiated the use of some land along the Maitai River, on the understanding that they would relinquish it once the town was surveyed and the sections were available for choice. Their people began clearing the land straight away. They were no doubt hoping to grow their crop close to the market.

Source: Wakefield A Diary 12 and 13 January 1842

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Maori protected their crops.

In April 1843 Barnicoat was in a survey party on its way to Wairau, when their boat was stove in during a storm that forced them into the Ngati Tama land at Wakapuaka. During the layover Barnicoat visited:

"...Waka Pah Waka which is close by. The village is a small one. The natives are all Christians and are now building a large Chapel. As usual they received us kindly. However they did not trust our party so far as to allow them to pass through their gardens" in case we made "...a thief of the melons".

Source: Barnicoat J.W. Diary 17.4.1843 NPM.

Other produce from Wakapuaka included *"large quantities of oysters"* from Pepin Island, sold for 1s. a bushel in April 1842

Stephens S. Letter 16.1.1843, referring to April 1842 NPM

...flax which supplied a European-owned flax mill nearby

Wastney P.V. and N.I. Early Tide to Wakapuaka

...and timber and firewood from which James Mackay said they derived *"...a very fair income."*

Mackay J. Outwards Letterbook 23.3.1861 Archives N.Z.



Wakapuaka 1860s

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The volume of produce was prodigious at times. In September 1843 at Moturoa (Rabbit Island) Barnicoat saw:

"...Two canoes one large and deeply laden passed down the channel today on their way to Nelson"

Source: Barnicoat J.W. Diary 26.9.1843

And in April 1844 Stephens fell in with a:

"...fleet of canoes sixteen in number from Massacre Bay on a trading excursion to Nelson with pigs, potatoes, fish etc"

Source: Stephens S. Journal 23.4. 1844 NPM.



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Questions

1. What do these words or phrases mean: surplus, whaling boom, influx, holding back for more population, in reserve, relinquish, stove in, layover, unwatched, candidly, make a thief of, prodigious?
2. What is a bushel? What does it measure?
3. Were Ngati Tama doing well out of timber and firewood at Wakapuaka?
4. How much organisation would be required to prepare a fleet of 16 waka for a trading expedition from Massacre Bay to Nelson? List all the steps you believe would be necessary. How long would the preparations take?
5. Who were John Wallis Barnicoat and Samuel Stephens?
Would they be reliable sources? Why?

Activity

Write a 200 word biography of either Barnicoat or Stephens.

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Wheat was a relatively new crop for Maori in Nelson districts in the 1840s.

Until the settlement became self-sufficient, flour was imported, mainly from Australia, and expensive. Maori realised that it was a good crop to grow. In September 1846 Reay recorded that Motueka Maori were:

"...all engaged in their grounds" and that they had "....many acres of wheat this year."

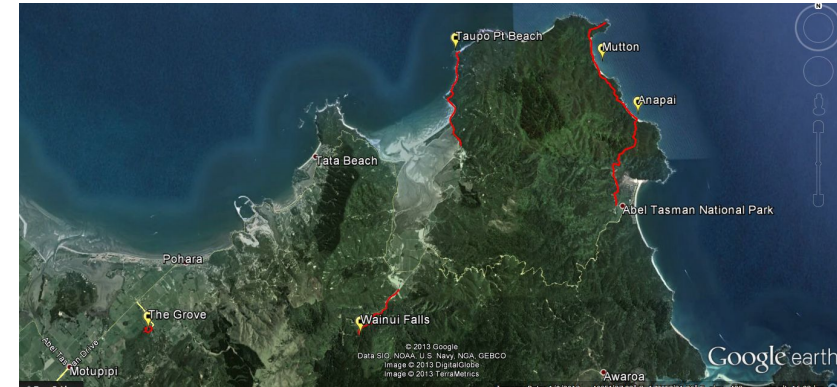
Source: Reay C.L. report to CMS September 1846.

Official returns for 1847 show 3,456 acres of European cultivation in the Nelson Settlement and:

"...In addition to the above, the natives residing in the bay have 340 acres of wheat, 300 acres of potatoes, 80 of maize, and 50 of other crops."

Source: Nelson Examiner 15.1.1848

When Sinclair and Heaphy visited the Tama kainga at Wainui in 1847 they recorded 43 acres in cultivation at Wainui and other gardens along the coast.



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Samuel Stephens commented on the 1847 returns:

“By the Government statistics of the past year it appears that the Natives of the Nelson District alone with the addition of a few residing just beyond its limits, have grown 15,000 bushels of wheat – and supposing they consume themselves 5,000 – they will have 10,000 bushels for sale - this I consider an instance of progression worth recording when I state that not three years ago they had never grown a single bushel. I may add that this has been effected entirely by their own labour and industry – a few only having employed white men to plough up their soil and sow their seed in order to learn the method – I may state that by far the greater portion of the native cultivations are in partially cleared wood land where the plough could not be used – so that nearly all their work is by hand labour in which the women and children assist.”

Source: Stephens S. in Lash M Journal of the Motueka District Historical Society Vol 2

Reay identified the Ngati Tama chief, Ngapiko, as:

“...the only one who obtained European assistance; his lot consists of about 3 acres.”

Source: Nelson Examiner 24. 1.1846

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The 1848 returns show a very large jump in both Maori population, from 615 to 1,426, and cultivations – to 1,137 acres in wheat, 290 in potatoes and 120 in other crops – a total of 1,758 acres, because Marlborough districts were now part of the Nelson Settlement as a result of Grey’s Wairau “Purchase” of 1847.

Source: Nelson Examiner 27.1.1849

As well as selling crops at harvest, Maori had large volumes of wheat milled for their own use and for sale as flour. In February 1847, the Nelson Examiner illustrated the way in which Maori benefited from “...*the regular colonisation of the country by Europeans*”

“During the last fortnight canoes have been constantly arriving in Nelson, bringing wheat to be ground at the mill. This change in their food will be the more serviceable to them this season, as the dry weather has greatly injured their potato crops, and had they as heretofore depended solely on the potato for sustenance, instead of being blessed as they have been with a good harvest, they must have suffered considerable privations.”

Source: Nelson Examiner 27.1.1847

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Large canoes were required to transport wheat to the mill, as one of the Drummonds who lived near the Riwaka mill remembered:

“The Maoris from Aorere, Collingwood, used to bring their wheat up to be milled. The canoes were able to come right up to the mill as it was alongside a tidal creek. These canoes were some 60 and others 70 feet long and carried 14 to 15 paddles on each side. The arrival of the Maoris was a great event for my brother Peter and me. We were very interested to watch them bring their cargoes of wheat and pigs. It took some time to mill the wheat into flour which the canoes, in due time, took back to Aorere.”

Source: Murray H.N. Pioneer Story of David and Jean Drummond NPM



Maori took the wheat industry seriously, responding with other growers to the razing of the Riwaka Mill. A week after the fire Stephens reported:

“...although many of the natives of the District were losers by the fire, having had a considerable quantity of wheat there at the time of the accident, they have voluntarily come forward with handsome subscriptions to aid in defraying the expenses of rebuilding the mill – forming a committee among themselves to collect the subscriptions.”

Source: Stephens S. Journal 31.5.1853 NPM

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Maori used the proceeds from their sales for a variety of purposes.

Barnicoat shared a campsite at Moturoa (Rabbit Island) with a group of Maori returning to Wainui from Nelson in September 1843:

“This party were on their return from Nelson, which they had visited on their usual errand, to sell pigs and potatoes. A large quantity of money must pass into the hands of the natives in this way, which immediately returns to the English in return for Blankets, axes, sugar, rice, flour, clothing etc.” Barnicoat asked one Maori in the party what they had done with the money on this trip and he said they had bought blankets.

Source: Barnicoat J.W. Diary 26.9.1843 NPM

Dr Greenwood of Motueka wrote in 1845:

“...They are apt scholars. Four years ago they lived entirely upon potatoes, dried fish and fernroot; they have this year 300 acres of wheat and a dozen horses, an English breed of pigs, and two boats which are to cost L100 each.”

Source: Greenwood J.D. to Mrs Field 24.9.1845 ATL

Other Maori were investing in weatherboard homes at their pa, and building chapels and churches. One later crop was reported by Alexander Mackay in 1876:

“The Natives of Motueka have commenced hop-growing on a small scale, and will no doubt extend the cultivation should success attend their efforts, as the soil and district are exceedingly well adapted for the purpose.”

Source: Mackay A. to Under-Secretary, Native Department, 17.5.1876. AJHR G-1 1876

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Questions

1. What do these words or phrases mean: engaged in their grounds, consume themselves, instance of progression, effected, labour and industry, serviceable, heretofore, depended solely, sustenance, privations, handsome subscriptions, defraying the expenses, apt scholars?
2. How many paddlers were needed for the waka from Aorere?
3. What did Aorere Maori do with the flour when it was milled?
4. What did Barnicoat list as the main Maori purchases in town?
5. What did Dr Greenwood believe was the Maori diet before Europeans arrived?
Do you think his description is accurate? How had Maori acquired potatoes?
6. What did Dr Greenwood give as examples of what Maori were using money for?
7. What do you think of the Examiner's claim of Maori benefiting from "...the regular colonisation of the country."?
8. Was hop-growing a good idea?

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Activities

Draw:

The scene as Aorere Maori arrived at the Riwaka mill

Some of the things Maori bought with their money from selling produce

Write:

A research report about the history of hop-growing in the Nelson region and the current state of the industry. Make sure to record your sources.

Stage a class debate between chiefs in 1847 discussing:

“That the arrival of the New Zealand Company and immigrants has benefited Maori.”

Think of all the ways European settlement has affected Maori and Maori lifestyle.

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Resources

[Nelsons Auckland Point – a significant trading post \(theprow.org.nz\)](https://theprow.org.nz)

Richmond flour mill on Queen Street:

[Croucher's flour mill and bakehouse \(theprow.org.nz\)](https://theprow.org.nz)



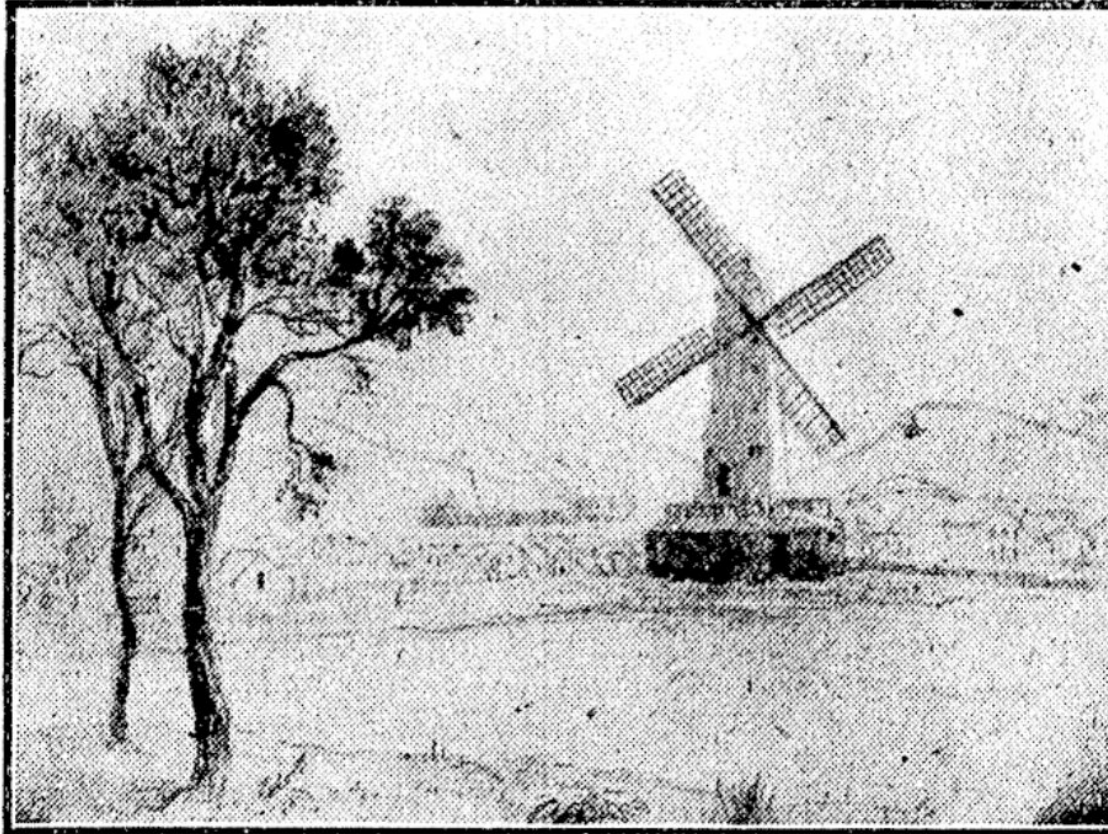
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Resources



THE WINDMILL.

From a sketch by E. Harris. The windmill was erected by Dr. Bush to supply power for his flour mill near the Maitai in Trafalgar street.

[Papers Past | Newspapers](#)
[| Nelson Evening Mail | 4](#)
[October 1930 | Page 40](#)
[\(Supplement\)](#)
[\(natlib.govt.nz\)](#)

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Social Science/ANZH Curriculum Progress Outcome Links

Understand	Know	Do
<p>Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand's histories for the past 200 years.</p> <p>People hold different perspectives on the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.</p> <p>People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold.</p>	<p><u><i>By the end of Year 8</i></u> People use different ways to sustain and evolve their culture and identity.</p> <p>People's connections to places, resources, and environments can generate cooperation...</p> <p>Individuals, communities, and societies experience and manage scarcity in different ways and make trade-offs with differing consequences.</p> <p>Iwi and hapu experimented with new economic opportunities to enhance their mana. In doing so, they built extensive trading networks domestically and with Australia.</p>	<p><u><i>By the end of Year 8</i></u> Gather information from primary and secondary sources, considering their reliability and identifying their limitations.</p> <p>Use historical sources with differing perspectives on the past, giving deliberate attention to matauranga Maori sources. I can recognise that the sources may not fully answer my questions, and that my answers are themselves interpretations.</p>

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Reference List

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based on text taken from '*Te Tau Ihu o te Waka Vol 2*'
(Huia Publishers 2007, written by Maui John Mitchell and Hilary Mitchell)

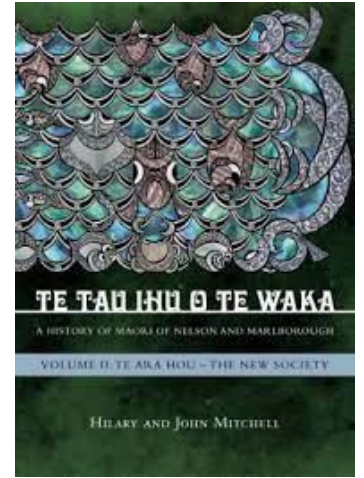
Recommended Readings:

Ruth M. Allan
'*Nelson - A History of Early Settlement*'
(AH & AW Reed, 1965)

Patricia Burns
'*Fatal Success - A History of the New Zealand Company*'
(Heinemann Reed, 1989)

Max D. Lash
'*Nelson Notables*'
(Nelson Historical Society, 1992)

June E. Neale
'*Landfall Nelson*' (1978)
'*Pioneer Passengers*' (1982)



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