

First Meetings

A steady stream of ships bearing immigrants appeared in Nelson Haven from February 1842. They soon came in contact with Maori they had heard so much about.



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Te Tau Ihu: First Meetings

“The arrival of women and children was of particular interest to Maori, as their dealings had usually been with parties of European men including the all-male New Zealand Company advance party. Maori who gathered to watch the “Fifeshire” dock on 1 February 1842 are said to have exclaimed ‘.... Kapai Kapai te Wahine’ upon seeing European women landing. But the first meeting between the settlers and Maori was almost a serious misunderstanding.

Alfred Saunders, the first to step ashore from the “Fifeshire”, describes the incident:

‘We strolled on between the hills and the salt water until we reached the spot on which now stands the ‘Salt Water Bridge’, at which we saw some forty or fifty Maoris with eight canoes loaded with ripe tutu berries. We were taking cautious steps towards them when they sent off a woman to meet and to welcome us; but our deaf friend, Mr Trower, unfortunately pulled out an old-fashioned telescope to its full length and levelled it at the woman, upon which she instantly dropped to the ground as if she had been shot, and, for a moment, there was a great commotion among the Maoris. However, after Mr Trower had been duly lectured and his telescope pitched into the high fern, peace and confidence were soon restored, and the woman made as happy as need be. But we soon gave the Maoris another and more real cause for uneasiness by our eagerness to taste their nice-looking tutu berries. They knocked them out of our hands as we lifted them to our lips. They took a handful of the seeds, and turned up their eyes with an expression of horror. They squeezed out some juice through a suspicious looking cloth, and offered us a drink, which was really delicious, at the same time holding the seeds in one hand and fencing us off with the other, which we understood to mean that we must not eat or touch the seeds. We thought that their actions were most likely based on some superstitious reason. We little knew, as we left them, how much real anxiety we had given them, or that we owed our lives to their extreme vigilance.’

Two weeks earlier Maori had given evidence of the effects of swallowing tutu berries as being stupefying and bringing on convulsions at the inquest of William Staith, one of the Company advance party, who was declared to have ‘.....Died by the visitation of God’ after eating tutu berries.”

Source: Mitchell H and J *Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka Vol 2 (2007) p137*

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Te Tau Ihu: First Meetings

Questions

1. How reliable is *Te Tau Ihu O Te Waka Vol 2*? What might be its limitations?
2. What do these words or phrases mean: Kapa Kapa te Wahine, commotion, uneasiness, suspicious looking cloth, fencing us off, superstitious reason, vigilance, stupefying, inquest, visitation of God?
3. How did Maori react at the sight of the immigrants walking from the Port?
4. What misunderstandings occurred as a result of one immigrant's response?
5. What did Maori try to tell the immigrants about tutu berries?
6. What did the immigrants think about what Maori were telling them?
Does their conclusion indicate European beliefs about Maori?

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Lovell Family

“The Lovell family landed at Motupipi in late 1842 after several months in Nelson; Mrs Lovell was reluctant to move there as she feared for her family’s safety, alone among Maori. A daughter who was to be the first European born in Golden Bay (in 1843) records her parents’ account of their welcome:

‘On nearing the shore, the Maoris came down on to the beach in swarms, for the boat landed right in a pah of two or three hundred people. Father had tied a white flag on a stick and as he stepped towards them he waved it gently to and fro to show them he had come in peace, and walked up to what he thought was the chief. He was not able to speak their language, or understand them, either, so with signs and gesticulations he made them understand that he had come to live among them and wanted to live peacefully and be their friend. They consulted together for a time and then, turning toward father, the chief held out his hand, showing they, too, would be his friends. Poor mother was very nervous of them, although she did her best not to show it; for some of them looked so very fierce and would be just as they looked if aroused. However, the chief was a kindly-disposed and good-natured Maori, or else perhaps they may have had a different reception. Your aunt, too was a pretty, little, fair-haired girl of four years, and the Maoris seemed to take great notice of her, thereby making poor mother feel very frightened and uncomfortable at times. But my sister was not at all afraid of them; this, of course, is just what they liked, and made them think a lot of her. The first thing father had to do after getting everything ashore was to prepare a place to sleep. The Maori offered him a whare, but father said no, he would soon make a place for themselves.’

The Lovells had a long, exciting and generally friendly relationship with their Maori neighbours in Golden Bay.”

Source: Mitchell H and J. *Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka Vol 2 (2007) p 139*

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Te Tau Ihu: First Meetings

Questions

1. Where is Motupipi?
2. What did Mr Lovell do to show the family was coming in peace? Would Maori have understood his gesture?
3. What actual signs and gesticulations do you think Mr Lovell would have made to show that he wanted to live there and live peacefully and be their friend?
4. What did the chiefs do? What do you think they would have considered?
5. How did the chief indicate his willingness to have Lovell stay?
6. Why was Mrs Lovell anxious? What expectations did she have of Maori?
7. Why would Maori be particularly interested in the little girl?
8. How did Maori show manaakitanga?

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Hodgkinson Family

“Mary Ann Hodgkinson, who had been drilled in self-defence on board ship and warned about the possibility of attack, stood on the beach with her three children (George 10, Lydia 6 and Emma 3), while her husband unloaded their gear from the “Thomas Harrison” in October 1842:

‘I was feeling very shaky and stood gazing in wonder at the bush clad hills when along came a dark tattooed Maori advancing violently towards me with a club. My worst fears of cannibalism seemed to be realised. After such a long journey thus we were about to die. Lydia and Emma promptly disappeared under my crinoline. This astounded the Maori and at his next approach he bent down, eyes popping with astonishment, burst into laughter and said ‘Just like the hera” (hen). George promptly punched him on the nose. At the flowing blood I felt more alarmed than ever but a happy looking Maori woman rushed up, shook my hand and explained that we were really being welcomed. We went on foot to the depot erected by Captain Wakefield on what is now Church Hill..... Back and forth to the port carrying bundles we went, helped by the same Maori who had greeted us so violently on arrival. His wife came too and attached herself to little Emma. Their names were Wera and Winnie and no kinder folk ever existed on this earth.’

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Hodgkinson Family cont.

After a stay at the Company's depot in Nelson, the Hodgkinsons started for Wakefield:

'When our men returned we set off for our new home down past Nelson port around the rocks and beach then up through the fern to Wakefield. Winnie and Wera went with us and helped with the bundles. Captain Wakefield's men lent us a little donkey but the going was slow because of the children. We were four days and nights getting there, sleeping under trees with fern for beds, covered with our roll of rugs. Wera kept a roaring fire going taking turns with Winnie. They sat by the fire big eyes glancing right and left into the bush, sometimes a muttered word – what they feared we never knew, but waking and seeing those fierce tattooed faces grimly alert I felt a new safety as if their eyes and ears were aware of events miles away. Finally we arrived on our land, made a fire and cooked a meal of potatoes. The men soon had a hut of slab and fern to shelter us and after catching a supply of silver eels and kaka, Winnie and Wera took leave of us, tears streaming down our cheeks. I gave Winnie my lovely paisley shawl. She afterwards wore it proudly in Wellington.' “

Source: Mitchell H and J. *Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka Vol 2 (2007) p 138-139*

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Te Tau Ihu: First Meetings

Questions

1. What misunderstanding occurred as Mary Ann and her children stood on the beach? What is this custom called? Where do you see it now?
2. What did Mary Ann think was about to happen?
3. What made Wera laugh?
4. What did Mary Ann think would happen when George punched Wera?
5. Who saved the situation? How do you think she made herself understood?
6. List all the ways Winnie and Wera showed manaakitanga to the Hogkinsons.
7. Were the Hodgkinsons grateful for the help? How do you know? How did Mary Ann thank Winnie? Did they stay in touch?

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Te Tau Ihu: First Meetings

Activities

Write:

A letter back to the UK describing one of these incidents in your own words.

A description of a crinoline. What risks and difficulties did a crinoline create? How practical would it be for starting a new life in Nelson? Give examples.

Draw:

A picture of one of these incidents.

A comic strip of one of these incidents.

Role Play:

Split the class into three groups to enact each of these first meetings.

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Resources

The Hodgkinson family story:

[A Grandmother Remembers | NZETC \(victoria.ac.nz\)](https://www.victoria.ac.nz/nzetc/a-grandmother-remembers)

[Pā and Kāinga \(theprow.org.nz\)](https://theprow.org.nz/pa-and-kainga)



[Motupipi River - Nelson Provincial Museum \(nelsonmuseum.co.nz\)](https://nelsonmuseum.co.nz/motupipi-river)



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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>By the end of Year 8</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 or lead to disputes over rights and responsibilities, with differing consequences.</p>	<p><u>By the end of Year 8</u> Gather information from primary sources, considering their reliability and identifying their limitations.</p> <p>Identify how language and messaging can be used to inform, or misinform, and to position people alongside particular values and perspectives.</p>

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Reference List

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

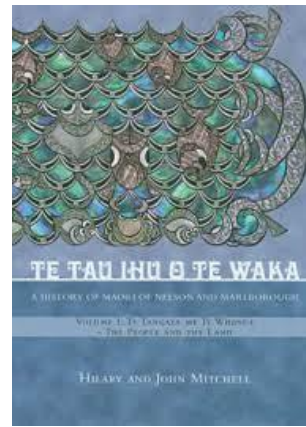
Recommended Readings:

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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