

Te Kāhui Mātauranga o Puke Ariki

Post-visit information

Plymouth Company 2021

New Entrant – Year10

All Year



Credit: Christopher Aubrey (1896), Untitled (Inglewood), Collection of Puke Ariki (A96.982)

Thank you for visiting us. Below is some information that we hope is useful to you on your return to the classroom.

Key Questions

- **Why did people choose to migrate to New Zealand?**

People chose to migrate to New Zealand to make a fresh start in a new land. The promise of fertile, cheap land and guaranteed employment would have been very enticing to escape the hardship of where they were living. During this time the industrial revolution was sweeping throughout the world causing great wealth for some but considerable poverty for others including parts of England, Ireland Scotland and Wales. Many people were struggling to get work, running out of food and living in poor and unhealthy conditions.

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- **What were the conditions like on board the ships that sailed to New Plymouth?**

Life on board the ship was very different for passengers above and below decks. The upper class cabin passengers enjoyed privacy, space and good food. Those in steerage were packed in like sardines and had to eat, sleep and dress in full sight of other passengers. They were also below the water line so there were no portholes or fresh air, and fear of fire meant lamps were hung in the safest places and locked until needed. Bunks with fabric stretched over them stood 3 high against the walls. Single men and woman were separated and given specific sleeping places. Laundry and everything else was done in a bucket. Diet was plain – mainly biscuits, salt meat, flour, rice and potatoes, which everyone cooked for themselves. The ships' hull sweated with condensation so everything was damp and the sound of the sea hitting the ship, people moaning from sickness and the rattling of tin dishes made it difficult to sleep. Personal space and extra room for provisions was very limited and passengers had to endure all manner of illnesses, disputes and weather conditions at sea and were required to follow specific rules including obeying the captains orders at all times. The voyage to New Plymouth took from 113 – 164 days. A number of deaths occurred on the voyages with the ship 'William Bryan' being the only one that had no deaths on board.

- **What were the names of the six ships that brought people from England to New Plymouth?**

William Bryan	Arrived 31 March 1841	147 people	132 days
Amelia Thompson	Arrived 3 September 1841	186 people	162 days
Oriental	Arrived 7 November 1841	190 people	138 days
Timandra	Arrived 23 February 1842	211 people	113 days
Blenheim	Arrived 19 November 1842	158 people	140 days
Essex	Arrived 23 January 1843	115 people	142 days

- **How was life different in New Plymouth to what they had been told prior to departing?**

Emigrants were shocked with what they found when they arrived. They were promised a harbour (for safe passage), surveyed sections and well – paid work. Instead they landed on a wild coast blanketed with dense bush, harakeke (flax) and fern. Accommodation was in make shift shelters, food and paid work were in short supply and it was not until the mid-1840's that the towns' future seemed more positive.

- **How dependant were the early settler ships occupants on local Māori when they arrived?**

References from (Taranaki) journals during this time period do not mention where food initially came from. Whether people chose not to write about this or food was mostly provided by incoming ships is unknown. It is noted that while still on the ship considerable trading with Māori was occurring swapping biscuits for potatoes etc. A lot of trade and interactions would have occurred including intermarriages which would have been mutually beneficial. It must be noted that during the early years up until 1848 not many Māori lived in Taranaki as most were gradually returning from exile (Wellington and Waikanae). It is only the Missionary Riemenschneider who mentions that

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Māori were bringing flour and pigs to New Plymouth as payment for flour mills. Most settler diary extracts describe how they started planting potatoes, building beehives, sowing wheat and oats and going hunting for pigeons and pigs and whaling.

In other parts of New Zealand for example Pūhoi (north of Auckland) Te Hemara Tauhia (Ngāti Rongo) sent waka-loads of food to the new settlers which prevented them from sure starvation. They also jointly made whare out of nīkau, cut racks through the bush and helped each other to set up on individual homes on allocated sections.

- **What were some of the events and actions that disadvantaged Māori during early European settlement?**
- In pursuit of acquiring land Government officials /New Zealand Company went against Māori tikanga over land ownership and accepted the sale of land from individual Māori when the majority of hapū/iwi did not consent to the sale. In 1860 the illegal sale of the Pekapeka block triggered the First Taranaki Land War.
- Another action was to exclude the majority of Māori from political decision making. The passing of the NZ Constitution Act 1852 which required that one could only vote if they were male, aged over 21 or owned freehold land or leased land for more than a year. Most māori traditionally owned land on a tribal basis and only a small minority owned or leased freehold land in the 1850's. This resulted in European voters far outnumbering Māori.
- Diseases had a significantly greater impact on the Māori population. In 1919 the influenza epidemic caused the death of 4% of the Māori population in only 2 months, the highest mortality rate in the world.
- Māori were encouraged to build flour mills which proved to be a bad investment as steam driven mills in Auckland and Napier outproduced them. A number of tribes through the north island including Taranaki found themselves in debt with capital assets of no value.
- Māori were expelled from New Plymouth at the start of the first Taranaki Land War (1860) and had to leave nearby Te Kawau Pā. Any Māori who wished to enter New Plymouth had to apply for a pass.

Weblinks

[Biography: Edward Gibbon Wakefield](#)

[British & Irish immigration, 1840 -1914](#)

[New Plymouth Kete includes lots of info such as origins of NP Street Names](#)

[Waitapu Urupa influenza memorial, New Plymouth](#)

[Te Māori i te ohanga-Māori in the economy](#)

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Puke Ariki Education Resources online:

Taranaki Stories:

[A Cairn that tells a tragic tale - the sad story of William Marshall](#)

[Letters to family from recent Immigrants to New Plymouth.](#)

[Frederic Carrington Part 1](#)

[Frederic Carrington Part 2](#)

[The Perfect Settler - Sir Harry Atkinson](#)

Puke Ariki library:

- Lambert R & Henry G. *Taranaki an illustrated History*, Auckland, Reed Publishing, 2000.
- Puke Ariki. *Taranaki Fortunes: lost and won*, Puke Ariki, 2009.
- A large amount of easily accessible and photocopyable information including diary entries, newspaper clippings and articles can be found in the **Taranaki Research Centre** in the vertical files. Searching under the settler ship names. Searching under the settler ship names. For example [settler ships passenger lists](#).

Suggested activities

- Get students to research their (whakapapa) family tree and see how far back in their ancestry they can go.
 - Q) Are they descended from one of the early settler families?
 - Q) Are they descended from one of the ancestral waka?
 - Q) Are they descended from another line of ancestry?
- Research, write and recite a pepeha. 'A pepeha is a way of introducing oneself in Māori'.
- Research what life is like for new migrants to New Zealand compared to the arrival of early settlers migrants.
- Research some of the challenges facing new migrants into New Zealand today?
- What was agreed under the original (Māori version) Treaty of Waitangi mean?
- Discuss the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi today.

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