

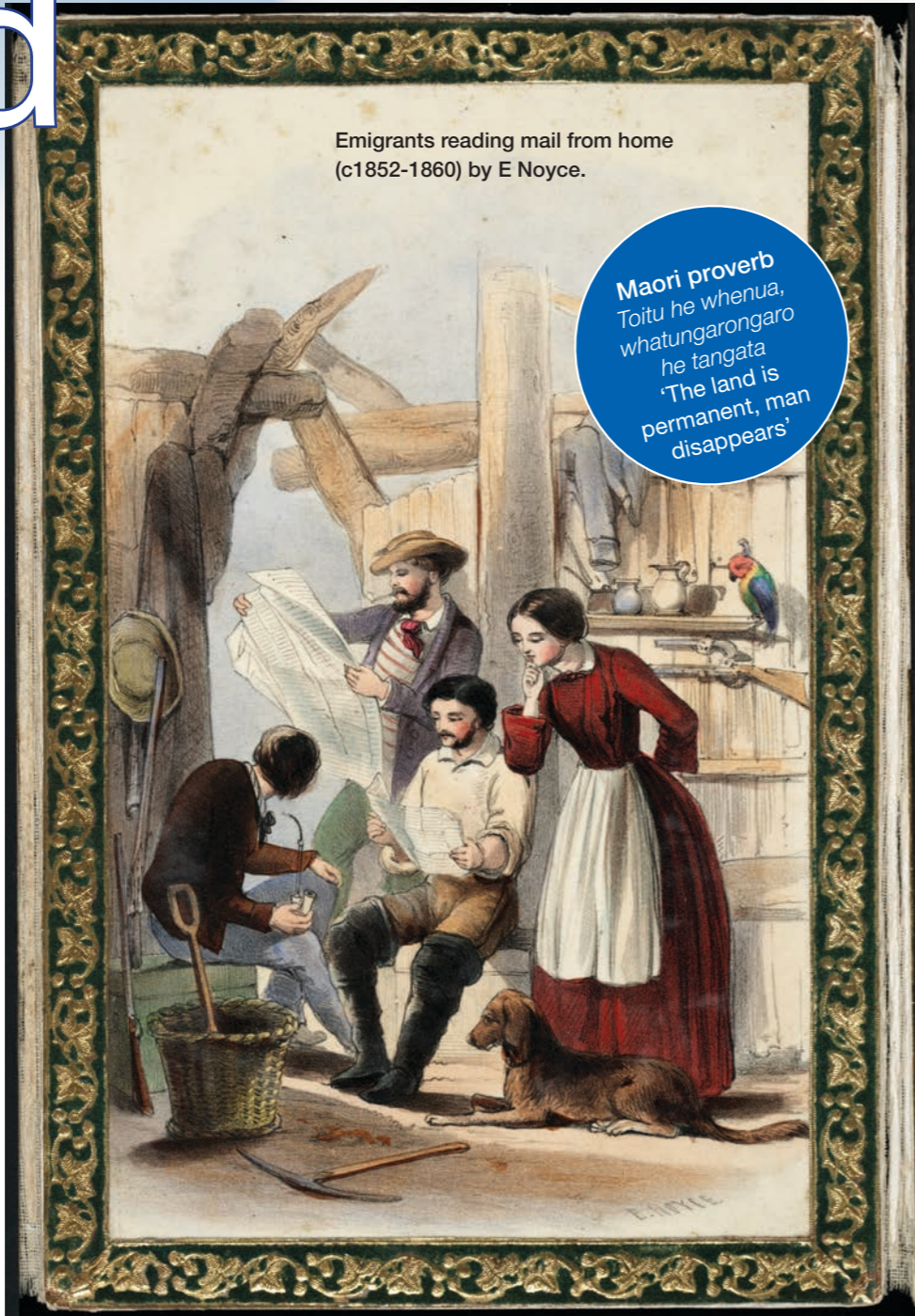
# The land of the long white cloud

In the last of **Emily Manktelow's** series on migration, she looks at New Zealand, known by Maoris as The Land of the Long White Cloud.

**F**rom 1840-1966 the population of New Zealand increased from around 72,000 to 2.6 million. On average 50 per cent of this increase came from British migrants. If your ancestor was a colonial migrant to New Zealand, why did they go? Who were they, and how did they get there?

## Maori & Pakeha

Immigration to New Zealand started very early, around 1,000 years ago when Maori settlers arrived from the South Pacific. In terms of the British emigration we have been exploring in this series however, New Zealand's story starts rather later than its colonial counterparts. At the time of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, there were 70,000 Maoris in New Zealand, and only 2,000 Europeans. The treaty, signed in February 1840 by local Maori chiefs and the British Crown, was supposed to represent the establishment of Crown sovereignty by the British. Problems with the translation, however, as well as the inherent differences between British and Maori concepts of land and land ownership, meant that the Maori believed they retained essential ownership, and the



Emigrants reading mail from home (c1852-1860) by E Noyce.

**Maori proverb**  
Toitu he whenua,  
whatungarongaro  
he tangata  
'The land is  
permanent, man  
disappears'

Images: Emigrants reading mail, Bauerricher & Co 68 Basinghall Street, London, England/E Noyce, 1852-1860, ref. E-079-003 © Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand; illustrated Australian news image ref. PUBL-0119-1878-13 © Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand; map by Henera Technologies © Getty Images/Thinkstock sky background © weareout rannal/Shutterstock

right to management, of their land. This tension remains. In 1975 the Waitangi Tribunal was established to investigate breaches of the treaty, and how redress could (and can) be made to dispossessed Maori in the modern context. Waitangi Day has been a national holiday since 1974, and is still seen as the (controversial) foundation of New Zealand as a nation.

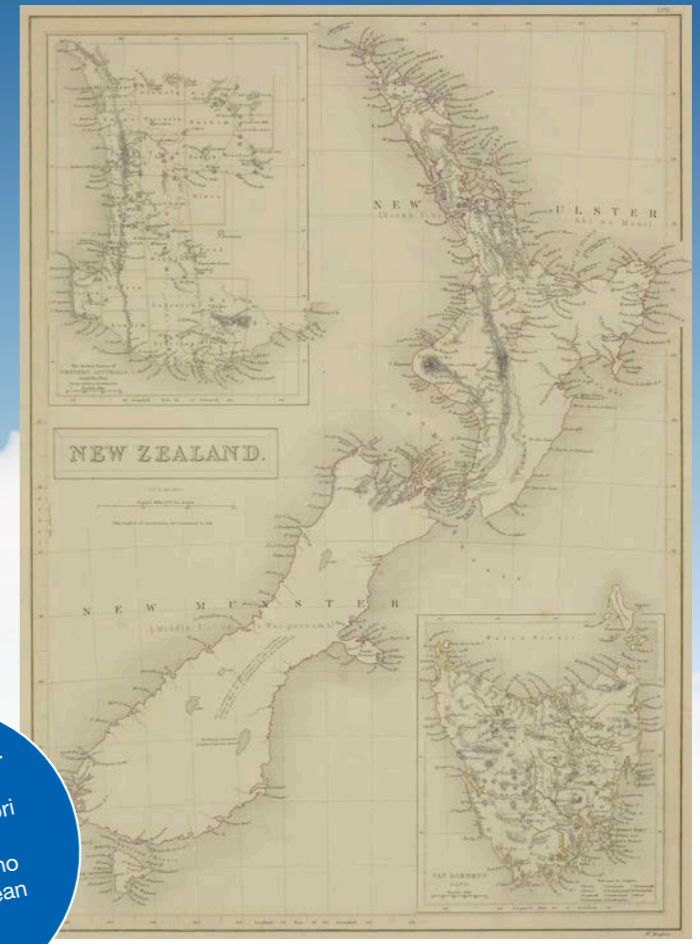
By 1858 Europeans (largely from Britain and Ireland) outnumbered Maoris for the first time with 59,413 of the former and 56,409 of the latter. In 1896 the Maori population had reached its lowest point of 42,113 compared with 701,094 Europeans. In 1966 the Maori population had bounced back to 201,159, but the European-born or -descended population made up around 2.4 million. Of these, in the 1860s immigration accounted for about 70 per cent of the European population; 50 per cent in the 1880s and 30 per cent in 1911. Thus, as Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine slyly note in their book *Migration and Empire* (from which these statistics are taken), 'the European population increased by a massive 50,000 per cent in the half century after 1831', though this is largely 'a statistical trick, since the base line was so low'.

Nonetheless, emigration from the UK to New Zealand was clearly hugely significant, and relied upon the dispossession of the indigenous peoples through violence and disease.

## Why, who, where?

**Why?** The reasons for migration consisted of pushes and pulls: poor conditions in Britain, and (apparently) better opportunities in the colonies. Emigration was seen as a particularly effective remedy to urban poverty (in this case, in Ireland during the famine). In New Zealand, migrants were promised a land much like England, but with 'a much better climate, free from pauperism, more free from prejudices of class, and, therefore, opening to the industry and ability of those who have not the adventitious aid of family connections to help them, a better road to advancement', not to mention 'some of the most magnificent scenery in the

**European roots**  
Pakeha is a Maori term for New Zealanders who are of 'European descent'.



world' (Julius Vogel, *The Official Handbook of New Zealand* 1875).

**Who?** The vast majority of immigrants to New Zealand were British (including Irish) in the 19th and 20th centuries. This was no accident. Like most of the settler colonies in the British Empire, New Zealand too introduced increasingly strict legislation to limit the non-white immigration to its country. Thus laws were passed in 1881, 1908, 1919 and 1920 designed explicitly to exclude particularly Chinese immigrants. In terms of occupation, New Zealand usually sought farm labourers, agriculturalists, craftsmen and, as usual, domestic servants. The opportunities seemed to be endless, with Charles Hursthouse talking in 1852 of 'a boundless field of lucrative enterprise and occupation'. '[I]n a word, our want is, people' (*Emigration: Where to Go and Who Should Go* London, 1852).

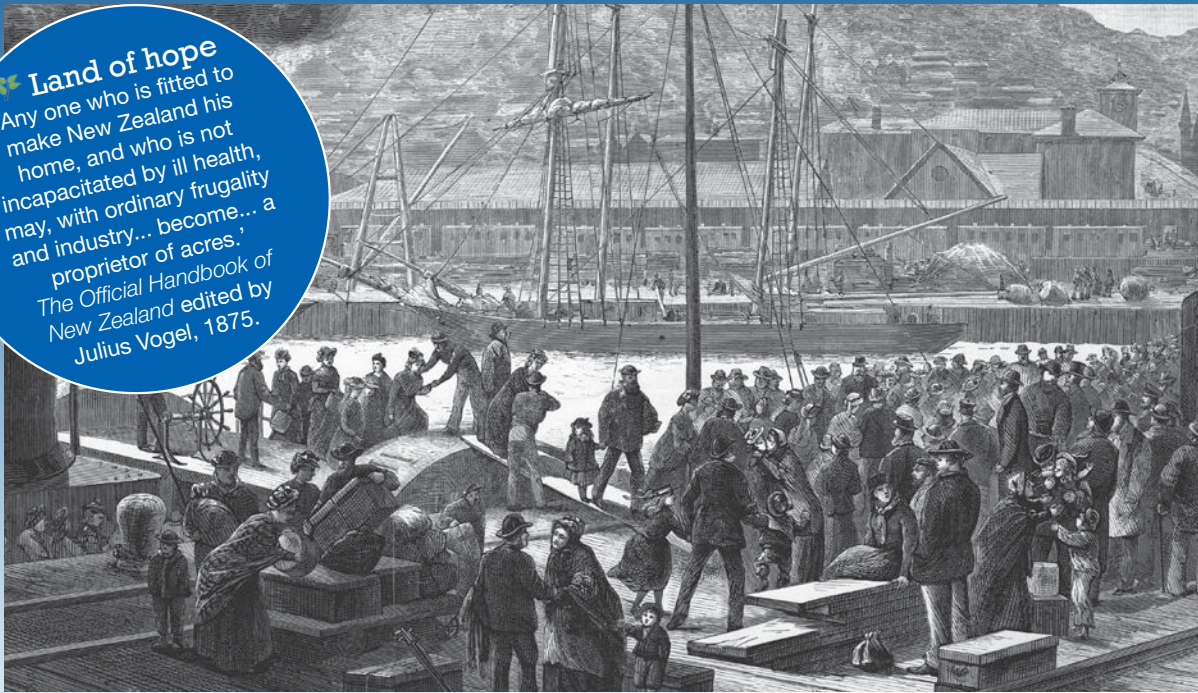
**Where?** Assisted migration took various forms in the history of New Zealand, from commercial enterprises such as the New Zealand Company,

to charitable and even religious settlements, such as the famous Anglican experiment in (aptly-named) Canterbury. Meanwhile, local provincial governments also attracted migrants with free passages, or offers of land upon their arrival. But by the mid-19th century Auckland, a non-state-planned settlement, was home to approximately 12,000 people. In the same era, the New Zealand Company's various settlements housed around 20,000. Clearly, New Zealand was attractive enough for non-assisted

## A flourishing colony

'I appear before you... in the plain capacity of a colonist... to [draw] the attention of intending emigrants to... the very finest emigration-field now open to their choice - and one in which... the emigrant may plant out a family, and create a happy home... the most flourishing of our colonies - the magnificent islands of New Zealand.' *Emigration: Where to Go and Who Should Go* by Charles Hursthouse (London, 1852).

**Land of hope**  
 'Any one who is fitted to make New Zealand his home, and who is not incapacitated by ill health, may, with ordinary frugality and industry... become... a proprietor of acres.'  
 The Official Handbook of New Zealand edited by Julius Vogel, 1875.



A picture from the *Illustrated Australian News* showing immigrants landing at Lyttelton, New Zealand, in the 1870s.


migration, as well as its state-aided counterpart. After all, as 'A Female Emigrant' wrote to her sisters back in Scotland in 1874, there 'Father could get land cheap, and it costs nothing to keep the cattle... Wood is cheap, and father could build very nice wooden houses... I am surprised at the easy way the men work. The food they get is also something very superior to what they have... been accustomed to at home' (*Chambers' Journal*, 18 July 1874).

### Post-war migration

In 1922 the British Government passed the Empire Settlement Act, designed to help Britons to emigrate to the colonies of settlement, and thereby to increase the post-war ties between colony and metropole. During World War I New Zealand sent 112,000 men to fight in Europe, of whom 17,000 died (from a population of 1.1 million). Meanwhile, after the war, between 1919 and 1922, 13,349 ex-servicemen and their families were assisted in their migration to New Zealand; 44,745 immigrants benefited from the Empire Settlement Act between 1922 and 1935. As we saw in the case of Canada, child migrations were also popular in this period, with some charities directly targeting war orphans or those whose fathers had been killed in action. Between 1951 and 1961 meanwhile, 40,000 Britons were assisted to New Zealand (plus about 150,000 independent migrants),

and in 1965-1970, 15,000 were state-aided. Assisted migration did not cease in New Zealand until 1975, when the attractions of the country's domestic, social and economic life, plus the technological advances in terms of travel, made New Zealand a desirable enough location for totally independent migrations.

### 'We and They'

This series has explored the complex history of British emigration to the colonies of settlement within the British Empire. The idea of empire was extremely important for Britons, colonies and emigrants alike. As James Anthony Froude wrote portentously in 1886: 'Greater Britain is not a mere empire, though we often call it so. Its union is of the more vital kind. It is united by blood and religion, and though circumstances may be imagined in which these ties might snap, yet they are strong ties, and will only give way before some violent dissolving force.' In the immortal words of Rudyard Kipling, one of the British Empire's most famous wordsmiths: *Father, Mother, and Me Sister and Auntie say All the people like us are We, And every one else is They. But if you cross over the sea, Instead of over the way, You may end by (think of it!) looking on We As only a sort of They!* 

### Find out more

- [www.teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration](http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration) History of immigration on The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand (*Ta Ara*) website.
- [www.nzhistory.net.nz/taxonomy/term/211](http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/taxonomy/term/211) New Zealand History Online, which has more information about British immigration. You can find genealogy links at [www.nzhistory.net.nz/hands/links-genealogy/genealogy-links](http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/hands/links-genealogy/genealogy-links).
- [archives.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Migration\\_-\\_A33044\\_0.pdf](http://archives.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Migration_-_A33044_0.pdf) Archives New Zealand's helpful Migration research guide.
- There are a wealth of contemporary books about migration to New Zealand freely available from online libraries. Start with The Internet Archive at [archive.org](http://archive.org) and search for 'The New Zealand Company', for example. PDFs can be downloaded for free and be read on your computer or e-reader.
- Read *Migration and Empire* by Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine (OUP, 2010).

### About the author

**Emily Manktelow** is lecturer in British Imperial History at the University of Kent. She is a co-founder of the Family and Colonialism Research Network, which publishes family history research guides at [colonialfamilies.wordpress.com/colonial-families-research-guide](http://colonialfamilies.wordpress.com/colonial-families-research-guide).

